

We oppose to the "New Flight Operation (NFO)" system

Maintenance Division, Japan Federation of
Aviation Workers' Unions (Kohkuren)

6 June 2016

In January 2016, All Nippon Airways (ANA) introduced the New Flight Operation (NFO) system intended to abolish a 'through flight check' which means to conduct inspection by licensed mechanics between block-in and block-out for their aircraft of which listed in manufacture's maintenance manual as such check is not required.

In 2008, the 3rd Committee of Aviation Safety Standards under the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) of Japan, announced the Update Program of Aviation Safety Standards including abolition of a through flight check by mechanics, which leads to pave the way to the NFO system. But a strong demand was arisen to maintain a through flight check by licensed mechanics together with flight crew members is essential for early detection of defects, and at the same time, to maintain skill of mechanics. Major airline companies, however, continued having licensed mechanics conduct a through flight check to ensure safety.

In April 2011, Japan Airlines (JAL) proposed that a through flight check for B737-800 could be done without licensed mechanics. However, the Japan Airlines Union, an affiliate of Kohkuren, insisted that a through flight check for all types of aircraft should be done by licensed mechanics and such check is still continued as a part of their maintenance system. J-AIR, a subsidiary of JAL, recognizes they need licensed mechanics at all the local airports to maintain the level of safety and punctuality of flight schedules.

ANA says that introduction of the new operation system is to use the licensed mechanics effectively to enhance the quality of repair work, irregular treatment and reduce significant delays. There is shortage of mechanics in the background of introduction of NFO, and they are trying to