

reduce the required number of licensed mechanics by removing them from local airports without stationing new mechanics. The real aim is personnel cut to reduce the unit cost to enhance their cost competitiveness.

The most serious problem of this issue is deterioration of flight safety. ANA says that troubles which can affect airworthiness could be detected by flight crew members and/or ground handling staffs. They seem to have no such point of view that the presence of mechanics leads to early detection of troubles.

There is another problem. It is very important for mechanics to know the normal condition of aircraft. In the traditional flight operation system, well trained line mechanics watch and confirm the normal condition at every through flight check and communicate with the crews to get the condition of the aircraft to find troubles, which is the way they can maintain and improve their skills as a line mechanic. If licensed mechanics are not stationed for a through flight check, the chance of their skill improvement will be largely reduced. .

Mechanics observe the condition of aircraft by through flight checks using their five senses. They are professionals having a full training. There is no doubt that a through flight check by mechanics is directly linked to flight safety. It falls into line with the fact that crew members recognize the safety assurance of aircraft is realized by mechanics together with flight crew members who conduct an inspection work during pre-flight check in the cockpit and other places in a brief time before departure of flight.

Following is an example of showing the role of well-trained mechanics who are familiar with the aircraft played in a through flight check:

On 20 August 2007, a Boeing 737-800 of China Airlines burst into flames in Naha Airport, Okinawa. At 10:32 am, the aircraft stopped at the apron No.41, and a 'Fasten Seatbelt' sign went off and the passengers started taking their baggage out of the overhead bins. Then, a mechanic (contract mechanic from Japan Transocean Air) on the ground found fuel leakage