

# MEMORANDUM - Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, AFL-CIO

To: Executive Board

cc: International Officers  
General Counsel  
Department Directors

From: Kevin P. Creighan, International Secretary-Treasurer

Date: November 13, 2018

Subject: **Executive Board Role in Establishing Local Councils**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this memo is to explain the Executive Board's role when a request is made to establish a new council or when an existing council is being re-aligned. It is anticipated that the guidelines and the factors in this memo would be used when an agenda item is presented to establish or create a new council is submitted to the Executive Board, or when an MEC is considering re-aligning the membership within existing councils.

**CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENCES:** Articles III.A. and VI.B.1.i. of the AFA-CWA Constitution and Bylaws (C&B) addresses the authority of the Executive Board to establish Local Councils. Section I.I. provides further guidance related to the minimum size of the Local Council to be established, as well as the minimum size of the overall Airline before an additional council is established.

**INTERPRETATION:** The Executive Board firmly believes that representation where Members are based is the desired structure of the Union. At any airline, where the size of the membership at the Local Council and at the Airline is at a level to support a new council, and a positive level of activism is present, then the addition of a Local Council helps to ensure the highest standard of representation.

The Executive Board has the authority to both "...establish Local Councils and to create new Councils." Most commonly, this authority is exercised when the Executive Board acts on an agenda item requesting the creation of a new council. Beyond just creating new councils, the Executive Board also has authority over formation or re-alignment of existing councils. In either situation, whether it is creating a new council, changing an existing council or realigning and existing council, "...the final determination shall be made by the Executive Board."

**FACTORS to CONSIDER:** For an MEC, the process normally begins when there has been a change in the location of members, as a result of a decision by airline management to open a new base or to significantly increase the size of a smaller base that is currently part of an existing Council. This increase could be the result of natural growth or shifting of flying among other bases. Regardless of why the base has increased, the MEC then must determine the best way to provide representation to the members at the location. In most situations, this involves deciding to attach the new base to an existing council, or, depending on the circumstances, the consideration of a new Council.

For the Executive Board, ensuring the best representation of Union members is the primary consideration.

**CHECKLIST:** The main bullet points below provide a checklist for the Executive Board to assist in the determination of either creating a new council or changing an existing council. These may be used as guidelines to determine if a location is prepared to open a new Council. The Executive Board should use its discretion based on the information provided by the MEC.

- Has discussion with the International identified constitutional provisions and options
- Has the size of the membership exceeded the minimum for the Base and Airline
  - Membership should exceed Section I.I minimums and remain stable
  - Has sufficient time passed, e.g., one year, to enable training of leaders and activists and provide stable leadership going forward
  - If size is growing, is there a significant number of Apprentice Members
    - Determine when they become Active Members
    - Consider for purposes of elections
- Has Potential Leadership been Identified
  - Need to identify and mentor potential Temp Local Officers before opening a council
  - Reps who are trained in grievances are a significant priority
- Has consideration been given to the best way to represent the members at the location
  - Will the Base be attached to an existing Council, even if only for a transition
  - If attached, how will existing Officers/Reps provide representation in the location
  - Are trained Grievance and other Committee Reps based in the location
  - Are trained Union Reps available who can answer questions
- Considerations for Representation at Small Bases
  - A “President” per se, is not necessary to provide representation
  - Base Reps satisfy volunteers’ desire for part-time union duties
  - Currently many MEC’s have multi-base councils with Base Reps
    - ISR’s currently train to this practice
  - Base Reps become good candidates for future Local Officers
- Consideration of elected C.Reps or appointed Base Reps in small locations
  - Use of either C.Reps or Base Reps is at the discretion of the Local Council
  - Many Councils currently have either C.Reps or Base Reps
    - Per provision in Section I.I.2
    - Elected by those at the specific base
    - Provides those members an “elected” voice
    - Similar to the more frequently used Base Reps, but elected
    - Same authority as any other C.Reps, i.e., no vote on MEC
    - Need to familiarize LEC’s with potential to use C.Reps & Base Reps
    - International training Budget only covers elected positions
  - Multi-Base elected C.Rep history: ATR in MCO and AMW in LAS
- Expansion from Single to Multi-Council can cause problems: Is the Airline prepared
- It is critically important to avoid political considerations
  - Is the action contemplated for political reasons such as shifting votes
  - Is the action related to Leader preferences or other non-representational matters