



Headoffice of AEI

Voltairetuin 4  
2908 XJ Capelle a/d IJssel  
The Netherlands  
Tel: +31 345 851384  
Tel: +31 10 2799801  
Fax: +31 172 436959  
Email: [Secr.general@airengineers.org](mailto:Secr.general@airengineers.org)  
or [fredbruggeman@cs.com](mailto:fredbruggeman@cs.com)

**Fred Bruggeman · Secretary General**

From the Secretary General

**Date: 17 November 2008**

Dear Colleagues,

during the past week it became clear to the AEI Executive Board and myself that as unions we are often not prepared to cope with the extreme difficulties and pressures brought upon us as a result of serious accident or incident investigations.

Currently our Spanish affiliate, ASETMA, is supporting two of its members involved in the Barajas tragedy which left 154 dead and 20 people seriously injured. Although they have their own union lawyers who continue to work extremely hard on this case, we cannot escape the fact that their professional knowledge and experience of aviation or criminal law would not be sufficient should criminal charges be brought. ASETMA has also informed us they are not sure they will have the financial means to hire the necessary expertise required to defend such a case and are therefore considering setting up a website where financial support/donations could be made.

Mr. Sidney Dekker an expert on “a no blame/just culture” who spoke at congress this year has offered his vast expertise which is greatly appreciated. We feel sure that his contribution will benefit our colleagues enormously. Asetma and AEI have now received the preliminary accident report which for the time being at least seems to support the innocence of our colleagues. Of course a judge may interpret it differently as there is an enormous amount of pressure from both the press and the public demanding the apportioning of blame. In the mean time ASETMA lawyers are in the process of requesting various evidence such as Flight Data Recorder, Voice Recorder, Photos, Checklists etc that they require in order to properly defend the Engineers. The AEI board are also looking both internally and externally for appropriate expertise in support of the ASETMA lawyers.

I would therefore like to ask our AEI membership to do likewise and ask each of you to examine your own local situation if such a situation would arise for your members. Please also consider helping out our colleagues in Spain who will be in need of help, if this becomes a full scale legal process. Further knowing a lawyer with the appropriate experience of such situations for example would be of great help with a view of a more permanent agreement with AEI for future cases. Another option is to consider whether each of us or together we could look for an insurance policy that could be implemented to ensure that legal fees are covered in such difficult circumstances which ultimately relieves a lot of the worry.

We would also like to keep you fully up to date with developments. Perhaps our affiliates would consider a financial donation in order to support ASETMA should the case go to court.

Contact [asetma@asetma.com](mailto:asetma@asetma.com) for details.

**The need for Engineers to be a member of a union has never been more clear.**

Fred Bruggeman  
AEI Secretary General  
[Secr.general@airengineers.org](mailto:Secr.general@airengineers.org) for further information.