



ST. JOHN'S
International Airport Authority

For Immediate Release

News Release

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Mediator Proposes a Recess in Airport Negotiations

Union's bargaining team continues to demonstrate an inflexible approach to negotiations

ST. JOHN'S, NL, Saturday, March 2, 2013 – Following a recess in the negotiations that began back on February 16th, the federal mediator has decided not to bring the parties back to the bargaining table at this time. There was no progress achieved toward ending the 6 month old strike.

PSAC has maintained its unrealistic wage demand for a 56% increase over a four year term, with 34% of that in the first year, retroactive to 2009. The Authority has offered a substantial wage proposal that consists of a weighted average wage increase of 33.8% over seven years, or 4.8% per year, also retroactive to 2009.

There was also no progress on the Authority's business issues that include contracting, job security and defined benefit pension plan. "While this was the first time the union opened a discussion on our issues, it was clear they brought no flexibility to the table – in fact, its response to our proposals has further widened the divide on the Authority's critical business issues," said Keith Collins, President & CEO of the St. John's International Airport Authority. "These business issues are important to the Authority to allow us to manage our Airport in a cost-effective manner into the future, for the benefit of our community. We are simply looking for similar language to that agreed by PSAC at other airports across the country – no more and no less. These issues are important to the Authority to ensure we remain competitive in the airport industry," added Collins.

The union's bargaining team has taken an inflexible approach to negotiations and has created a win/lose situation rather than the compromise approach that is required in order to reach a settlement. Throughout bargaining, the union has not offered any constructive solutions, choosing instead to create obstacles to reaching a mutual agreement. This bargaining behavior, coupled with the fact that PSAC and the Local Union are paying strike pay that equals the regular net pay of striking workers, clearly indicates an objective of a long strike, and an apparent attempt to force the Authority to accept the union's unrealistic demands.

“Our management team remains focused on maintaining safe Airport operations, with the assistance of those employees who are required to provide essential services. In view of the union's determination to have a long strike, we will continue to review all our resourcing options in order to assure the public of continued safe operations.” said Collins.

St. John's International Airport Authority is a private, not-for-profit organization with the mandate to provide the region with a safe, cost-efficient transportation facility that is a catalyst for economic growth. Under the provisions of a long-term Ground Lease with the Federal Government of Canada, the Airport Authority is responsible for the airport's operations on behalf of the community it serves.