



ST. JOHN'S
International Airport Authority

For Immediate Release

News Release

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Negotiations between Airport Authority and its Employees Break Off

ST. JOHN'S, NL - 9am, Tuesday, September 11, 2012 – The St. John's International Airport Authority is very concerned about the strike first and negotiate later approach being taken by the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), which the Authority believes has contributed to a strike at St. John's International Airport that started at 5am this morning.

PSAC's last wage proposal to the Airport Authority prior to striking was tabled in June 2012 and consists of a 58% increase in salaries over four years, with a 34% increase in the first year and 5.75% increase for the following three years.

The Airport Authority has also tabled important issues that the union refused to discuss prior to striking. This was despite the Airport Authority's best efforts to engage the union during the 38 days of bargaining. The issues tabled are reasonable and have already been addressed in other PSAC collective agreements with other airport authorities.

“We respect PSAC's interest to have competitive terms and conditions of employment and we expect PSAC to have the same respect for the Airport Authority's interest to also be competitive on terms that affect the operations of the Airport,” said Keith Collins, President and CEO of St. John's International Airport Authority. “Through discussion and negotiation, these issues can be settled in a manner that ensures the rights of our employees are secured. The Authority has repeatedly advised the union that we continue to have flexibility on the outstanding issues and we are ready to re-open negotiations at any time,” added Collins.

The employees impacted by this strike include firefighters, snow plow operators, heavy equipment mechanics, electricians, field maintenance staff, building maintenance staff and administrative personnel.

Given that Airports are considered essential services, the Airport Authority has established a Maintenance of Activities Agreement with the union to ensure that there is always a sufficient number of essential employees working to meet all Transport Canada regulations for safety and security. The Airport Authority's management team will be focused on maintaining Airport operations as close to normal as possible, with the assistance of the unionized employees who are required to provide essential services.

Throughout the strike, airline operations will not be impacted and it is anticipated that there will be minimal disruption to passenger travel.

Picket lines are anticipated on the access road to the Airport Terminal Building. Passengers are advised to allow additional time to arrive at the Airport to board their flight. Passengers travelling within Canada should plan to arrive 2 hours in advance, and those travelling outside the country should allow 2 ½ hours.

“This is an unfortunate development and we want to thank the public for their patience and understanding as we work through this current challenge,” added Collins.

The Airport Authority will keep passengers and the general public informed as developments warrant through its website and social media.

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.