

Municipal opposition mounting against airport selloffs



Municipalities are starting to add their voices to the growing opposition to the idea of selling Canada's airports. Opposition to the move has already been voiced by the cities of Vancouver, Victoria, and Richmond, BC, while Calgary's mayor has publicly spoken out against the plan. Toronto City Council is considering a motion to oppose the plan as well.

"Despite rising opposition from municipalities, airports, and the public, the Liberal government continues to pay private consultants to look into the possibility of selling Canada's airports," said Robyn Benson, PSAC National President. "Profitizing airports would only raise prices and municipalities could lose their voice in how their airports operate."

The Ottawa International Airport Authority and the Vancouver International Airport have already voiced their opposition. Airlines have also reacted negatively to the idea, raising concerns that it could increase the cost of air travel.

Airport authorities currently incorporate municipal, provincial, and federal representation as they are considered critical infrastructure to communities across Canada. Cities are speaking out against for-profit ownership, as airport operation will become less transparent and accountable to the communities they service.

Travelers will also likely pay more if Canada's not-for-profit airport entities are sold to private corporations. As an example, when Australia sold off its airports, passenger fees doubled.

"If airports are sold to investors who need more and more profits, Canadians will pay the price," said Dave Clark, National President of the Union of Canadian Transportation Employees, a component of PSAC.



PSAC taking pay equity dispute with SSO to an independent third party

This summer PSAC became aware that Statistical Survey Operations's (SSO) pay equity settlement calculations failed to include paid leaves, overtimes rates, full compensation for designated paid holidays and other forms of compensation.

After numerous members filed appeals stating that they believed there was an error in the calculations of their payments, PSAC and SSO began discussions to resolve this dispute. Unfortunately, these discussions have not been able to resolve the pay equity dispute affecting between 20,000 and 25,000 current and former members who worked for SSO between 1985 and 2013.

While the purpose of the pay equity settlement was to remedy a long-standing discriminatory wage rate, SSO is unwilling to pay their female dominated workforce what PSAC feels they are entitled to in the settlement. Rest assured, PSAC will continue to fight for pay equity and is committed to standing up for members and former members. As a result, PSAC will be taking this dispute to an independent third party for a final and binding decision. Our members and former members have waited long enough for their discriminatory wage rate to be adjusted and deserve to be appropriately compensated.

In the meantime, Statistics Canada will continue to gather information and process payments. Once a decision has been reached, we will communicate the outcome to all those affected.




CBSA continues to push for concessions: Union says no

Next week, our PSAC/CIU bargaining team for the FB group will participate in the final hearing date of the Public Interest Commission (PIC) process at the Federal Public Sector Labour Relations Employment Board (FPSLRB).

In negotiations and in our PIC hearing last week, the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) continued to push for concessions.

Some of these include:

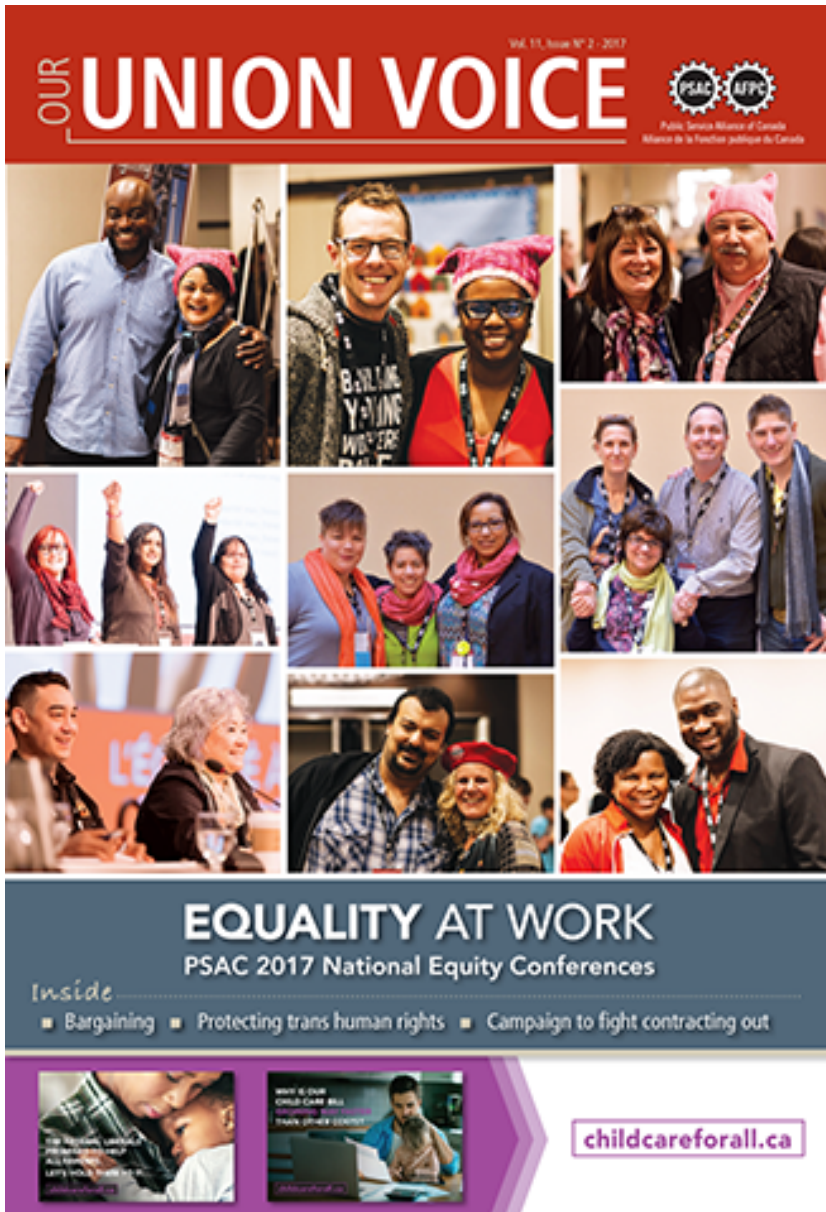
- CBSA wants to make Leave Without Pay for Care of the Family "subject to operational requirements". Also CBSA is proposing to increase the minimum leave period from 3 to 12 weeks.
- Our contract states that management must provide 7 days' notice of shift change, otherwise the employee receives time and a half for the first shift worked. CBSA is looking to reduce the notice from 7 days to 48 hours.
- CBSA wants the prerogative to take VSSA bargaining away from local decision-making and give CBSA National (in Ottawa) the ability to take control of VSSA negotiations.



CBSA has made proposals to bypass the National Joint Council Travel Directive so that some employees would not receive additional compensation when “temporarily” assigned to a port other than their home port.

Our union and our bargaining team have made it clear that we are not interested in concessions. Our position with CBSA and Treasury Board is that we are looking for improvements, not steps backwards. PSAC has successfully defended our sick leave. Our team has every intention of defending our other hard-fought contract rights.

We'll be sure to provide updates as things progress. If you have questions be sure to follow up with your CIU Branch President.



Get your union news – online and screen-friendly

Published three times per year, 180,000 of our members received the winter edition of PSAC's newsletter Our Union Voice.

This format also allows for local printing and a PDF download, in order to share with colleagues, friends and family.

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