

MEDIA STATEMENT

8 July 2010

SACAA Statement on impending industrial action by SATAWU members

The South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) wishes to clarify that it has been locked in wage negotiations with labour for five months. Of the two recognised unions in the organisation, management has reached a deadlock with SATAWU.

In terms of the negotiations, management had initially offered a seven percent (7%) salary increase with no conditions attached to the increase, whilst labour demanded a fourteen percent (14%) increase across the board.

At the time of the deadlock, management was offering a nine percent (9%) salary increase across the board for bargaining unit employees, coupled with the following conditions:

- that salary increments for employees within the category C4 and above on the Patterson grading system be based on performance as from the fiscal year 2011/2012; and
- employees within the categories A1 to C3 retain their status quo in the SACAA collective bargaining forum.

SATAWU rejected the proposal, which resulted in both parties reverting to their previous position, i.e. seven percent (7%) by management and fourteen percent (14%) by SATAWU. As a result, the two parties reached a stalemate and on Friday, 2 July 2010, met at the CCMA to seek conciliation in order to reach a settlement on the impasse.

Following the conciliation process, a certificate of non-resolution was issued by the CCMA. The certificate affords labour the right to embark on a protected strike and management also has recourse to a protected lock-out. In terms of legal strike action or lock-out, the parties are required to give each other 48-hours notice before commencing such action.

In this case, management has been served (yesterday at 17h30) with the requisite 48-hours notice of intention to go on a strike. As such, the strike action may only commence at 17h30 on Friday, 09 July 2010. Practically the strike will take effect only from Monday, 12 July 2010.

Management has contingency plans in place that will ensure business continuity, although the issuing of certain documents may take a little longer in certain instances. Only 186 of the SACAA's 433 employees will be on strike, the majority of which are support staff.

Whilst mandated to ensure civil aviation safety and security, it should be noted that the nature and role of the SACAA is regulatory. This means that a large part of the SACAA's role entails the development of regulations and ensuring compliance by users to the regulations. Further, compliance to regulations by users is ensured through the implementation of a programme of scheduled and ad-hoc inspections. Therefore, services such as air traffic movements, security at airports as well as passenger movements will not be affected by this strike action as such services are handled by various other government entities/agencies and not the SACAA.

In terms of service delivery management expects that the services that would be impacted by the strike would be in the delayed or slower than normal printing out of licences, certificates and related documents. However, the SACAA will notify industry if such delays are anticipated. Moreover, management has put in place plans to ensure that there are no disruption to the ongoing provision of services even if the strike is prolonged.

The SACAA wishes to reiterate that throughout the negotiation process management has been applying the principle of fairness and will always be available for discussions that can lead to an amicable and speedy resolution of the impasse. However, the principle of 'no work, no pay' will be applied in the case of any industrial action.

For more information contact:

Kabelo Ledwaba
Manager: Communications
South African Civil Aviation Authority
Tel. + 27 11 545 1511
Cell: + 27 83 451 2654
Email: ledwabak@caa.co.za
Website: www.caa.co.za