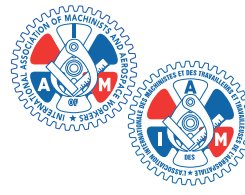


**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF MACHINISTS AND AEROSPACE WORKERS
ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DES MACHINISTES
ET DES TRAVAILLEURS ET TRAVAILLEUSES
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MACHINISTS UNION CALLS OUT AIR CANADA OVER “ABANDONMENT OF WORKERS”

May 19, 2020 — For Immediate Release.

“Air Canada needs to come to the table and maintain its employees on the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) program.” This is the message from General Vice President Stan Pickthall, of Air Canada’s largest Union.

As the Union representing over 10,000 Union members at Air Canada, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW), is calling out the corporation for its abandonment of workers during the ongoing Covid-19 crisis and pandemic.

Pickthall added: “It is beyond an embarrassment for Air Canada to layoff more than half of its employees at a time when those employees need the Company the most. This is shameful behaviour from a corporation that owes its very existence to the hard work and dedication of employees from the ramp to the maintenance bays to the cabins and cockpit. We are asking them to continue the CEWS program - which is being subsidized by Federal funding, so the airline doesn’t even have to pay for it.”

The Union condemned this weekend’s announcement by Air Canada that they would be laying off 20,000 workers, many of whom are members of the IAMAW and other Unions.

In April, Air Canada agreed to participate in the Federal Wage Subsidy program, which provides for 75% of wages to a maximum of \$847 per week. However, when the Federal government recently extended the program for another 12 weeks, Air Canada backed out.

Fred Hospes, President and Directing Chairperson of the IAMAW’s Air Transportation District, was equally disappointed. “We join other Unions who are demanding more from Air Canada,” Said Hospes. “We say that it is not too late for Air Canada to stand alongside its employees and work together on rebuilding this industry.”

Employees of Air Canada who are to be laid off in June will be eligible for the Canada Emergency Relief Benefit (CERB) of \$500, but that is a far cry from the \$847 they can receive under the Wage Subsidy program (CEWS). Hospes urged Air Canada to reconsider: “Air Canada needs to step up to the plate and support their employees during difficult times such as these. Any measures that can be taken to mitigate the effects of the pandemic, should be. Air Canada needs to treat our Members in a dignified manner with the understanding that this is the most difficult time for their employees who are the heart of Air Canada’s success.”

Pickthall wrote a letter to Air Canada’s President Calin Rovinescu on May 13:

The CEWS benefit pays \$347 per week more than the Canada Emergency Relief Benefit of \$500 per week, over a 12 week period. This equates to \$4164 in added financial support for each Air Canada employee and their family during the time of their greatest need. I am encouraged by the Company’s ongoing support of its employees during this pandemic, which has hit both the Company and its employees very hard.

“There was no reply from Mr. Rovinescu.” Stated Pickthall, although he acknowledged a meeting with Corporate Human Resources representatives advised the Union there would be no extension of CEWS for all employees. “I cannot express how disappointed we are in Air Canada. Their employees – our members – need this assistance, and they have been abandoned. This is not the behaviour we expect from a world-class airline.”

Pickthall concluded by saying that the Union remains available to work with the company on a solution to the problem that will treat workers fairly as stated in the May 13 letter:

I am formally requesting that Air Canada participate in the extension of the CEWS program, details of which are soon to be announced. The Union will work with you to ensure this valuable benefit continues to be available for IAM members during this challenging time.

The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace is Canada’s largest Union representing Aviation, airlines and airports, and aerospace workers. The Union represents over 10,000 members at Air Canada, and almost 20,000 in air transportation across Canada.

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