

# THE SNAG SHEET

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF CANADIAN  
AIRWAYS LODGE 764

Sept 2007



International Association  
of Machinists and  
Aerospace Workers  
Representing Air Transport  
Workers in  
British Columbia and the  
Yukon



## News Release

**Vancouver, BC** – “Air Canada has no intention of rebuilding its aircraft maintenance facility in Vancouver,” said IAMAW District 140 Western Region General Chairperson Fred Hospes.

Hospes was referring to the promise Air Canada made to members of IAMAW Local Lodge 764 when it announced the termination of 867 aircraft heavy maintenance mechanics in April 2007. “At the time of the layoff notification, management said it would bring in smaller check and modification work in an effort to re-grow the base. But since the layoffs went into effect in June, Air Canada has been auctioning off the necessary equipment to do this work. They lied to our faces.”

As a further slap in the face to the terminated workers, Air Canada was seeking additional hangar space at Mirabel Airport in Montreal to perform XM Modifications to 30 of its Airbus narrow-body aircraft. Following objections from IAMAW, Air Canada decided to perform this work at its Montreal Dorval facility. This will require an additional 140 employees to complete the work by the end of the year. Under terms of the Collective Agreement, the majority of employees that would be offered these positions are laid off in Vancouver.

“We have the qualified people in Vancouver who could use the work but they can’t do it when the company is selling off the tools needed for the job,” said an incensed Hospes.

“In my opinion, Air Canada intends to close the Vancouver Heavy Maintenance Facility in a two step process in an attempt to save \$28 million by avoiding the language in our Collective Agreement regarding paid moves and severance pay,” added Hospes. “We have served notice that we will be seeking damages on behalf of the affected members.

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## World's Largest Helicopter

Front page of the Snag Sheet is a photograph of the worlds largest helicopter which happened to be on the tarmac in Dease Lake, B.C. It is owned by a Russian company. It is called the Utsky. Apparently this chopper's wash will pick up and fling rocks, up to 12 inches in diameter.

Stats:

- Crew of 6, 2 Pilots, 1 Navigator, 2 Engineers (mechanics), 1 cargo person
- you can put 1 dump truck, 1 SUV in it
- a semi-trailer will fit in it.
- carries 75 troops
- uses 2000 litres of fuel per hour
- 580 km range
- costs \$30,000/hr to rent
- 40 metres long
- 8 blades about 2 feet wide

## Building a Safer Workplace

Building a Safer Workplace at ACM Vancouver

This process under Part 2 of the Canada Labour Code is found in Part 127 "Employment Safety" which is available over the Aeronet portal within the Safety neighborhood.

When employees discover a safety hazard in the workplace, they can fix it themselves, or arrange that it be fixed by someone else suitably qualified. In circumstances where this is not possible, the hazard should be reported to a Supervisor or Team Leader for rectification. Hopefully this management person will have the power to mobilize the resources needed to address the issue and have it fixed immediately. If the hazard cannot be corrected immediately, it should be marked in a manner that alerts other employees to the danger and isolated so that others are protected from any associated risk of harm. The employee who discovered the hazard should fill out a "Health and Safety Concern Form". This Concern Form, often referred to as an ACF32-4, is available over the Aeronet under "Forms" and can be printed if you are fortunate enough to find a computer that is printer-friendly.

Completing the ACF32-4 Concern is critical whenever fixing a Hazard will require time beyond the end of your shift. Often repairs will require special arrangements and could take several days or even weeks. Complete the Form after discussing the issue with the Supervisor or Team Leader so

that you know that both of you are aware of the nature of the hazard and how the solution is to be accomplished. Once you have filled out the description of the concern, and the proposed solution, enter the name of the supervisory person and relevant comments either of your care to make- hopefully something like "Peter agreed to arrange for the fix as proposed". Next, photocopy two duplicates, one for your own records and one for the Safety Committee member you know. This will ensure that adequate back-ups exist in the event the original somehow gets lost. Give the original to the supervisory person, he should immediately contact an employee member of the Health and Safety Committee to start the follow up process. The last segment of the form is for the Committee member to follow up on, to track progress and investigate to ensure action is taken as reasonably and hopefully, swiftly as possible. As well the Committee member must communicate with the employee who initiated the "Concern" to ensure he or she is kept informed of any progress through to conclusion.

The Line Maintenance Health and Safety Committee meets every third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 AM. They review issues affecting health and safety and if they can't improve matters, certainly aim to prevent them from getting any worse. Disagreements do happen, as one would expect when at times the perceived interests of the employer clash with those of the employees. Additionally, at each monthly Health and Safety Meeting the members review all outstanding Safety Concerns together, to evaluate the process and discuss any associated issues that may arise. In the event of a dispute whereby the employer members and employee members are unable to resolve a disagreement internally, the matter may be referred to an Officer of HRSDC for a ruling. Human Resources and Social Development Canada is the government agency tasked with upholding the Canada Labour Code and from time to time may be contacted for assistance. Typically a contact will result in a referral where an Officer will enter the workplace in order to facilitate a resolution to a dispute, and failing that may issue a ruling or directive.

If everyone uses the ACF32-4 whenever they have a hazard that can't be fixed before going home for the day, fewer preventable injuries will occur. That's everyone's job.

Respectfully submitted,

Bro. Glenn Girard, Health & safety Committee, Line Maintenance, YVR

## Tech Ops Shop Committee Report

General Meeting  
September 12, 2007

### Information Issues:

**Arbitration Hearings:** The Union met with Chief Arbitrator Martin Teplitsky on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 in YWG to present eleven (11) Grievance Briefs which represented approximately thirty (30) grievances. Any Member wishing further clarification on the outcome of these grievances is requested to contact the Shop Committee Office.

The Union is scheduled to meet with Chief Arbitrator Martin Teplitsky on September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in YVR to arbitrate four (4) Discipline Grievances.

**Grievance Forms:** The Shop Committee has commenced a review of all active grievances held at the Shop Committee Level. All Shop Stewards are reminded to ensure that all pertinent documentation is attached to the grievance prior to submission to the Shop Committee for processing to the Second Level of the Grievance Procedures. Any Shop Steward requiring assistance should contact the Shop Committee Office.

**YVR Heavy Maintenance Layoffs:** All YVR Members that were affected by the June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007 layoff have all transitioned to their respective Bases or have transitioned to other opportunities. The Shop Committee would like to wish all the Members that have been affected by this layoff all the best as they transition into their new homes and for those Members that did not elect to bump, all the best in their transition to other employers or into other careers.

**Line Maintenance Cabin Refresh Program:** The Union and the Company reached an Agreement to provide an opportunity to participate in a B767 Cabin Refresh Program. Laid off Members from Categories 13, 14, 19, 33, 38, Stockkeeper and MLC participated in this short term program which concluded on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

**Line Maintenance License Retention Program:** The Union and the Company reached an Agreement to provide Members from Categories 1 & 38 the opportunity to remain at the YVR Base in order for the Company to conclude endorsement training on Embraer and Airbus aircraft which

concluded on August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

**Inter-Formation Transfers:** The Shop Committee has been advised that the fax contact numbers for Line Maintenance and Heavy Maintenance Formations have been revised. The new fax numbers are as follow: Line Mtce. Administration: (604) 231-6871 and Heavy Mtce. Administration: (604) 276-4627. The Membership is advised to ensure that they retain a copy of their fax receipt in the event that any issues arise.

**Stockkeeper Shifts:** The Shop Committee in consultation with Local Representatives has reached an agreement with Local Logistics and Supply Management regarding Stockkeeper shifts. This was a result of the reduction of Members as the YVR Base.

**UMCM Meeting:** The next UMCM Meeting is scheduled for September 24<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in YUL between the Union and the Company. The Shop Committee will be attending the role down portion scheduled for the end of the week.

**Membership Retirements:** The Shop Committee requests that any Member that intends to retire to ensure that they have notified the Shop Committee Office in writing. This is to ensure all retirees have the appropriate retirement documentation from the Union.

**Sub-Contracting Out of Bargaining Unit Work:** The Shop Committee requests that the Membership be vigilant in documenting and notifying the Shop Committee of any attempts by the Company to sub-contract out Bargaining Unit work. This is to ensure that the Company obtains an Order in writing from Chief Arbitrator Martin Teplitsky and adheres to Article 20.07 of the Collective Agreement.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joe Toth, Christopher Hiscock, Glenn Cooper,  
L/L 764, Tech Ops Chair 764/ Tech Ops Members

## Retirement Reminder

A reminder to the membership that the Shop Committees do not receive notice from the employer about members electing to take retirement. They often are informed "at the last minute" to make a presentation on behalf of the union but we need more notice than that to have the member's retirement gift in hand. Please tell us, Thank-you

## Airports/Cargo Shop Committee

SEPTEMBER 11, 2007

**Arbitration Hearings:** The union met with Arbitrator Martin Teplitsky on August 1, 2007 in Winnipeg. The union was successful in arguing a termination case. The member is back to work. We have another date schedule for this Friday of which we have one case going forward.

**UMCM Meetings:** The next UMCM meetings are scheduled to take place the week of Sept. 24, 2007 in Montreal.

**Contract Awards:** The Company has been successful in solidifying two new contracts (Air Zealand and Cathay Pacific). This should create some more permanent positions however recall letters and Promos due to these contracts have not happened yet. We start handling Cathay Pacific on September 15, 2007 and Air Zealand in early November.

**Promos:** At present time there is an active promotional bulletin for a Lead Station Attendant in Vancouver. Any member wishing to apply must do so before September 24, 2007. Please visit the office if you require any assistance in applying.

**LOU 5 Transfers:** The Union and Company agreed last spring to move the LOU 5 transfers from spring to winter going into 2008. As a result of this agreement we will be completing a second LOU 5 transfer for 2007. We are in the middle of confirming the names and all applicants will be transferred during the Winter schedule change.

**Winter Shifts:** The Company has advised us that they have set tentative dates for implementation and they are as follows:

Cargo: October 15, 2007

Ramp: October 29, 2007

We expect to start discussions with all departments very shortly in order to meet these aggressive time lines. If you will be away over the next 5 or 6 weeks we recommend that you leave a written bid with the Shop Committee or Manpower Planners.

**Medical Information:** We would like to take this time to

remind all members that if the Company requests medical information of any kind that this information should be submitted to the Air Canada Occupational Health office. If you work for ACGHS the office is located on Level One in the Domestic Terminal Building. If you work at Cargo the office is located at the Hanger of Miller road.

Regards,  
Todd Haverstock, Shop Committee Chair

## Clerical Shop Stewards Report

A member was laid off from the ACTS group and bumped another member in the Medical Office. That member then bumped one other member in the Flight Attendants Com Desk who in turn bumped another person who was also in the Flight Attendants Com Desk area, who took layoff.

Heard that there was some laid off people back working in the building but they had not been called back. I found out that they were working behind a locked down area and after someone had left the door open, Bro. Toth and I had a look and found 3 ex-Tech and 2 laid off Clerical members working on some lease return work for a company called AERIUS. It took two weeks of asking questions and getting no answers. I contacted a retired clerical member and asked about who/what did what kind of work and the details involved. I then gave this information to the DL 140 office.

A discussion with Labour Relations about a Grievance filed in YUL regarding sub-contracting out records work on lease return work. A grievance was filed with Labour Relations on this matter.

The Union and the Company met in August to deal with the on-going Negotiations and are meeting the week of September 17-21, 2007.

Questions about the on-going Negotiations members would like to know if jobs are going to be back filled.

In Solidarity Ron McKelvie  
Chief Shop Steward

## Pension Report – exCAIL

### SEPTEMBER 2007 – LL764 PENSION COMMITTEE REPORT

In June of each year, Air Canada sends a personal Pension Statement to every employee to comply with Federal Pension Legislation. The latest statement is for the calendar year 2006 and shows the total benefit contained within your pension as at 31 December 2006.

You should have received your statement by now and it should be checked for accuracy of your personal information and kept with your tax returns or other work related papers. If you have not received your statement, please contact Air Canada at 1-877-645-5000 or contact a member of the Pension Committee.

The annual Actuarial Valuation of the Plan was also published in June. It contains substantial good news concerning the deficit or unfunded liability for all 8 of Air Canada's pension plans. The assets of all the Plans are pooled together for investment purposes into the "Master Trust" fund and they have total assets of \$11.306B as of 01 January 2007, an 11.8% increase from 01 January 2006.

The real story is in the reduction of the deficit of the Plan. The deficit as at 01 January 2007 is \$534M, down from \$1,642B at of 01 January 2006 an improvement of **\$1.108B!** The single biggest reason for this significant improvement is the stabilization of the long-term interest rates. A ¼ % increase in this long-term interest rate means a \$300M decrease in the deficit of the Plan.

The net result of this improvement in the unfunded liability is that the solvency ratio of the CAIL IAMAW plan has improved from 83% to 93% funded. The AC IAMAW is part of what is called the AC Main Plan and it contains all AC employees except the Pilots and senior executives. The AC Main Plan solvency ration has improved from 85% to 95%. This means that if the Plan was terminated or "wound up", every member would receive 95 cents of every dollar owed.

The Company has put together a very informative 4 page document that is available on the Aeronet. Simply login to the Aeronet and select the "My Life" tab. On the menu choices on the left side of the page select "My Pension

News" and then select "Air Canada Pension Update – August 2007".

This document contains a very good layman's explanation of the Plan details and funding, so please log on to the Aeronet and download a copy.

Christopher Hiscock LL764 Pension Committee Chairman

## United Airlines Report

September 11, 2007

- One outstanding Pay Grievance, now proceeding to Step Three. One additional grievance, Violation of Reduced Work Status Language, also at Step Three. Both will be heard on October 5, 2007. Discussion regarding lack of EAP coverage of UAL Canadian Employees will also take place Oct 5.
- Summer temporary staff have been given lay-off letters to be effective October. After a very busy summer with record load factors and inclement weather at all UAL hubs, the Flight schedule is to be reduced October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007.
- Retirement party was finally held on July 21, 2007. Good attendance and a great dinner and evening. Many thanks to Sister Julie Gordon for her perseverance and hard work. Best of luck to retirees, Ron Moor, Stu Smith, Charles Elmaalem, Bob McKinnon and Graciella Sutter.
- In July, I attended the North American Transportation Conference in Las Vegas. It was informative and well attended. The attendees were broken into workshops to discuss the latest concerns in transportation and the union movement. There was a large focus on political activism (US election upcoming). The Canadian Delegates were in our own group and discussed matters more specific to Canadian aviation.

Thank you to the membership for allowing me to attend.

In Solidarity,  
Laura Sharpe, UAL Senior Steward

## The History of Part Time

I was hired by Air Canada as a Station Attendant when I was 19 years old. In 1966, part-time employment did not exist. You were taken on as temporary help and became permanent with recall rights after a six month probationary period.

Air Canada was not honest about its hiring practices. You found out the reality from the old-timers. The senior men revealed that after 5 months and 29 days of work, the company would lay you off before the winter schedule started to avoid permanency and recall. It normally took several schedules before a new hire finally attained a steady job.

I received some good advice when I was hired. I was told to take all the qualifying exams for higher classifications on my own time and expense while on probation. This I did. As my layoff time drew closer, I was offered a short term acting assignment in a higher classification because I was qualified, even though I was scheduled for termination. I took the assignment. Upon assignment completion, I was offered another one. I accepted that one also. Soon I had worked past the six month threshold for permanency, and kept myself employed on a steady diet of short term acting assignments and midnight shifts that lasted for years. By 1970, I had reached the top of the Customer Service pay scale as an Acting Load Agent earning a staggering \$4.10 per hour.

During the huge economic growth period for airlines in the 1970's, the company hired continually (39 new employees in one year alone) and almost every new employee became permanent. By the 1980's, petroleum prices had suffocated employment opportunities in the air transport world. After 1985, terrorism sucked the last breath out of airline growth, and companies with large work forces were looking for concessions from their unions to stay in business. Air Canada was no exception.

Air Canada negotiated a clause in the 1985 Collective Agreement for the use of part-time employment in Customer and Cargo Service in the Station Attendant classifications. The Union received a guarantee that there would be no layoffs within the IAM workforce for that contractual period. The paragraph became known as Letter of Under-

standing (LOU) No. 2 and that concession is still with us today.

The Union knew that once a part-time clause was inserted into the Collective Agreement that it would be there forever. The IAM successfully negotiated several restrictions to LOU 2. Part time numbers would be determined by a fixed percentage of the total number of permanent and probationary Station Attendants in the system as of December 31 of each year. Every station in Canada with sub-contracts would have to draw from this percentage limit. In addition, contract language restricted part time employment to certain hourly periods (called "windows"), a total hourly maximum per part-timer per day, and a total hourly maximum per part-timer per week.

The "Understanding" also stated that part-time employees could also be assigned to "other tasks" once the sub-contract work was complete. The definition and limit of "other tasks" was not included in the "Understanding."

Neither the Union nor the company realized that they had created a low wage ghetto for part time employees with no opportunity for progression to full time work when they agreed to LOU2. Part time employees became a major force at union meetings in the early 1990's to redress this inequity and were successful with democratic activism in reshaping the Union Negotiations Agenda from 1992 onwards.

Notwithstanding the democratic efforts of our members in part-time employment to improve their circumstance, the negotiations battle over part-time contract language continues as a bare-knuckled brawl between the company and the Union.

The Union constantly confronts company demands for greater part-time numbers and flexibility. These campaigns include arguments to further expand part-time classifications, rationales for enlargement of the "windows" for scheduled hours of work for part-time, bargaining offers tied to increasing the "other work" permitted outside the scope of part-time sub-contract tasks, pleas to boost the total hours limit of part-time usage, including overtime, and restrictions to seniority rules for progression from part-time to full time. Air Canada would love to run an airline in a part-time world with limited benefits. The Union thinks otherwise.

Air Canada Vancouver part-time wages today start

at \$9.67 per hour. The competition for skilled labour locally has forced the company to offer the second wage progression of \$10.61 per hour to attract new hires. Even with the higher starting rate, along with some benefits, a reasonable working environment, effective union representation, and above-average contract language, the appalling resignation rate for part-time employees at Vancouver is sending a clear message to Air Canada, but the company is not listening or reacting.

The message is not hard to understand. The cost of living in the Lower Mainland mandates that those with part-time jobs either co-habit in shared housing, live with parents, or work two part-time jobs. Part-time wages barely cover shelter and transport costs in this city. The part-time employee on a minimum wage has very little left over at the end of the month to contribute to savings and a better life.

Also overlooked is the factor that most part-time jobs consume a lot of an individual's personal time commuting to and from work, making part-time labour a quality of work issue for many employees. For a lot of members, work and commuting consumes most of their day. It does not take long for part-timers to realize that "all work and no play makes Jack (or Jill)" a dull person, and a very tired one also.

Part-time labor stifles dedication. The progression from part-time to full-time work opportunity at Vancouver has been painfully slow. Most vacancies to date have been filled from a recall list established in 2003 after the Air Canada/CAIL merger, and this list was only recently exhausted. Vacancies in higher classifications are often filled by system transfers and not locally, so there are no job openings created. The glamour of air transport work quickly loses its luster for the part-timer, when their daily schedule is filled with inconvenient shifts, repetitive mind-numbing tasks, and limited opportunity. For a new part-timer, fresh with enthusiasm, the tunnel seems endless and the light to full time employment very far away. It is little wonder that these members get disheartened and disgusted and leave the industry.

The union has worked long and hard over many years of negotiations to improve the part-time environment by increasing opportunity through seniority. The company has worked just as hard to expand the part-time environment with its reduced costs, and limit progression, to boost corporate profit.

Part-time employment in air transport is now a fact of life. The Union wants to make this circumstance a better experience for the part-time employee. The company wants readily available skilled labour at low cost with wide flexibility and limited benefit and progression obligations.

Every member of this Union should expect and brace themselves for a major confrontation with Air Canada at negotiations in June 2009. A key issue will be employment conditions and security. Prepare yourself now.



David Varnes, ST LL764

Snag Sheet is Also Online

# Next General Meeting

Oct 10, 2007

5 PM

7980 River Road  
Richmond, B.C.



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WE'RE ON THE WEB!  
[WWW.IAM764.CA](http://www.iam764.ca)

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## Local 764 Executive Board

Tania Canniff – President

Mike Sanghera – Vice-President

Noreen Schmitt -Recording Secretary

Steve Daechsel -Trustee

Wes Sim – Educator

David Varnes – Secretary Treasurer

Milos Drahovzal -Trustee

Neil Carter – Trustee

Dan Cooke – Conductor/Sentinel

Laura Sharpe – Senior Steward UAL

Gordon Taylor – Communicator

## IN MEMORIAM

WE WOULD LIKE TO OFFER OUR SINCERE  
CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY AND  
FRIENDS OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS  
WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY.

BROTHERS

**COLLON STOLZ**

**GERRY MACDONNELL**

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7980 RIVER ROAD,  
RICHMOND, B.C. V6X 1X7  
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**EDITOR: Gord Taylor**  
**WEBMASTER: Gord Taylor**

**Office: (604) 273-9668**

**Fax: (604) 273-9670**

**E-mail:**  
**webmaster@iam764.ca**

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