



ECA

Piloting Safety

PRESS RELEASE

SAS pushing the limits of union rights

Brussels, 16 Nov 2012

The negotiations of the restructuring plan proposed at very short notice by SAS Group are turning into an arm-twisting exercise to dilute trade union rights rather than safeguard the company's economic survival. SAS management's confrontational style threatens to suffocate any attempts to save the company in partnership with its employees.

On Monday, 12 November, the SAS Group announced cutting 800 jobs, significantly lowering wages and selling off assets. The plan includes renegotiating Collective Labor Agreements (CLAs) for pilots and cabin crew, and lower pension terms, as a part of a wider restructuring plan.

SAS Group threatened its employees with bankruptcy if they do not agree with the new radically diluted terms imposed by the company. More than 30 unions that represent SAS' employees have been given a week (until Sunday, 18 Nov) to accept a new CLA on management-established terms.

After a first round of meetings, indications have surfaced that the intentions of SAS management actually go well beyond winning approval for the restructuring plan. Important issues have sneaked on the agenda, such as lifting protections of Cockpit Voice and Flight Data Recordings and putting into question employee representation by unions within the company.

"Staff representatives have made extraordinary efforts to remain engaged in negotiations, but management clearly uses the talks as a backdoor for renegotiating and diluting union rights. This is unacceptable", said Nico Voorbach, ECA President. "In view of our common objective, to reach a sustainable restructuring plan that would allow SAS to remain competitive, solutions have to be found collectively and in cooperation with SAS pilots".

"On the one hand, employee wages are put forward as being allegedly the primary reason for the financial woes of SAS. On the other, the airline is imposing a take-it-or-leave-it restructuring plan, with a 1-week ultimatum attached to it. If this is the new management style of SAS, this is a bad omen for the company's ability to manage its future", said Philip von Schöppenthau. "ECA is determined to help SAS pilots in their talks for a fair and balanced agreement".

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Note to editors:

ECA is the representative body of over 38,000 pilots from across Europe, striving for the highest levels of aviation safety and fostering social rights and quality employment for pilots in Europe.