

HIAL ATC industrial action

Prospect has been meeting with HIAL trying to resolve the industrial action dispute.

This follows the Scottish Government's refusal to back a jointly agreed business case submitted over Christmas. The case acknowledged that there was limited information available on salaries and the allowances, pension and sick pay arrangements were not transparent. It also acknowledges that as HIAL offer lifeline island services, finding comparators in the private sector is difficult if not impossible. Even taking this into account it showed a pay gap to other airports, not just in London, but all across the UK including Scotland.

The case was supported by both the HIAL management team and the board and was submitted to Transport Scotland with their agreement.

To claim that the union is seeking parity with Heathrow and Gatwick is clearly disingenuous, but for absolutely clarity that is not the claim the union has made, nor has it been the basis of any discussions.

Talks have been ongoing since the industrial action notice to see if there is any scope for agreement. However this has been hampered severely by the instructions of the minister, specifically:

"Ministers are content to authorise HIAL to develop a retention allowance as part of the ATMS Programme. This allowance is subject to approval by Scottish Government Pay Policy before implementation."

This is the same proposition which was rejected by members in October in the indicative industrial action ballot. Based on the formal industrial action ballot I have no reason think that view has changed.

Following the industrial action ballot we have met twice with the company to discuss both arrangements relating to the industrial action and a resolution to the dispute. No new offer has been made in those meetings.

On Friday a Q&A was released. This was not seen prior to publication despite a request to do so and did not reflect the text which was agreed at the meeting. Prospect has formally requested that this is withdrawn and a retraction statement issued. The FAQ has been subsequently been amended

Talks have been ongoing to discuss if there is any scope to agree a recruitment and retention allowance. It is not clear how HIAL would pay for this, particularly given the pressures on the HIAL budget this year. Prospect has been clear that this cannot be funded by cuts to staff terms elsewhere.

A recruitment and retention allowance does not address the fundamental pay gap between HIAL and the industry and is not our preferred solution, however if the company can come forward with a substantial proposal we would of course consider it.

A further meeting is scheduled prior to the ATMS board on Thursday.