



CARGOLUX PILOTS: STRIKE ACTION CAN NO LONGER BE AVOIDED

News / Airlines



Luxembourg-based **Cargolux pilots**, represented by the ALPL and the LCGB unions, are ready to take industrial action if a new collective agreement cannot be reached by Nov. 30, when the current contract expires. **Strike** action could start as early as December.

Discussions on a new labor contract between the pilot unions and the Luxembourg-based cargo carrier have been ongoing since September 2014.

“If we don’t find a solution by the end of November, industrial action can no longer be avoided,” ALPL executive secretary Dirk Becker told ATW. “I’m not optimistic we will find a solution.”

A vote earlier this month revealed that 94% of pilots approved industrial action.

Cargolux said discussions with pilots, represented by LCGB, are continuing and another meeting

is set to take place Nov. 30.

Meanwhile, a meeting of the Cargolux board of directors is scheduled for Wednesday.

“We know our responsibility for the company,” Becker said, adding that pilots have “offered numerous concessions to enable Cargolux to increase productivity of its pilots and reduce costs considerably. But the negotiations remain in a deadlock. There is a big gap between both sides,” he said.

He added that strike action in the 2015 fourth quarter will financially impact the company, as “90% of its annual profit will be earned during the fourth quarter. Also, Cargolux is known to react to market demands. This is part of the success of the company. The union wants to secure jobs in Luxembourg,” Becker said.

He said the fear of social dumping is still present. “There are already four Boeing 747Fs based in Milan at subsidiary Cargolux Italia, which also operates from Luxembourg to Africa, deployed on routes previously flown by Cargolux.”

LCGB proposed a comprehensive savings package to reduce a total annual volume of approximately \$10 million in personnel costs while providing a revised and future-oriented collective work agreement.

In addition, ALPL has requested mutual assistance from the International Federation of Air Line Pilots’ Association (IFALPA), which requested its member associations worldwide to assist Cargolux pilots during a possible industrial action. This also includes a request that pilots at other airlines be supportive when asked to provide additional flights to meet capacity demands during a Cargolux strike to minimize the impact on its customers.

Earlier this month, OGBL and LCGB trade unions—which represent 750 ground staff—reached a principle agreement in the latest round of negotiations.

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