



April 16, 2021

To: REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS
BRANCHES & FACILITIES

NAV Canada makes an important first step

As members may be aware, NAV Canada announced yesterday that *“it will maintain air traffic control service to Canadian communities, including Fort McMurray AB, Prince George BC, Regina SK, Saint-Jean QC, Sault Ste. Marie ON, Whitehorse YT and Windsor ON. ... there will be no site closures at air traffic control towers or flight service stations across the country. In addition, the Company will suspend aeronautical studies currently underway related to remote or northern locations until further notice.”*

CATCA believes that this is a step in the right direction and applauds that this will provide some relief to members of the affected units by removing the immediate uncertainty surrounding their future. We encourage the Company to continue to re-evaluate their plans and abandon the approach of adjusting their staffing based on short-term requirements presented by the pandemic.

But NAV Canada has only taken one step in the right direction. As their notice points out, *“The aeronautical studies, which are still in progress, will consider other alternatives to safely streamline operations, including changes to hours of operation.”* Reductions in service are still being contemplated, even if they don't involve Tower closures.

Despite this good news, the Company continues to apply a short-sighted approach to staffing and longer-term service requirements by continuing with the letters of surplus still issued to 42 of our members in Gander, Moncton, Montreal and Edmonton ACCs. All these members have built their careers providing the safe and efficient service of which they, and NAV Canada, are rightly proud. We know that every one of these members will be required as the traffic returns and should not be treated with such disregard. The Company should immediately reconsider the predictable consequences of this approach and withdraw these letters if they truly intend *“to provide the air navigation services required to support industry today and throughout recovery.”*

CATCA also calls on NAV Canada to lay out their plan for addressing the staffing shortfalls that are already becoming very apparent in many units across the country and will be seen in most units in the next few years. The Company entered the pandemic with a significant staff

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shortage. Further, it exacerbated the problem with the offering of Early Retirement Incentives, Departure Incentives, and the termination of nearly all trainees last year. The Company continues to lose controllers to stress, illness and retirement, but there is no one in the training system to replace the members we lose now, much less begin to make up the previous shortfall. A realistic and practical plan for the coordinated return of training must be developed now. CATCA is ready to participate in this process, but it needs to begin immediately.

We appreciate the sensible step that NAV Canada has taken yesterday and the relief that this will provide to some of our members, but there is much more work to do. We encourage the Company to continue on this path by withdrawing the existing letters of surplus and working with CATCA to develop a credible plan for adequately addressing the staffing and service issues that predictably are coming.

On Behalf of the Executive Board;

Doug Best
President

Scott Loder
Executive Vice President