



October 18, 2023

**To: REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS  
BRANCHES & FACILITIES**

## **UPDATE**

### **THANK YOU !**

Once again, thank you all for the hard work over the busy summer season. Staffing levels continue to present serious challenges in our workplace and although the company may finally be taking the situation more seriously than it has in the past, it will be a while before the positive impacts of those efforts may be felt. Despite this, we are pleased that we have managed to bring this issue to the forefront of Nav's attention and influence some positive steps forward. Unfortunately, the pressure on controllers will remain for some time, as this will be an ongoing challenge for us and the company. We are grateful for your efforts and very proud of the work you are able to accomplish under the circumstances.

### **BENEFITS BARGAINING**

We recently marked the official start of the Benefits review process with Nav Canada and the NCBAA, exchanging positions and holding our initial meeting. The benefits package represents a very important component of our compensation package, and, for the company, it represents a powerful enticement for attracting new talent to the organization. Most importantly, the benefits package provides a fundamental means to supporting current employees.

For the NCBAA, our main focus in this review will be on improving ways to support the mental health of employees in the workplace and to address the erosion of value from current benefits due to inflation. Nav indicated that they shared our view on the importance of mental health and also advised of their desire to explore and pursue a flex benefit, or hybrid flex benefit, model for benefits. Several other meeting dates have been set for October and November. The parties will now begin to review and analyze relevant data in preparation for those. In addition, the allowances review process which had previously commenced, is also continuing.

### **CLASSIFICATION**

The newly created Classification Committee recently met for the first time, in order to begin the process of reviewing multiple facets of the Classification review process, as well as the

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ATCP. The four-person Committee is made up of two CATCA members and two NAV CANADA representatives. We appreciate the commitment of our CATCA members that stepped up to work on a very complex and contentious topic. The Committee will continue to meet on a regular basis as they work towards finding ways to improve the Classification system and address some longstanding concerns.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Another key update concerns our communications department. At our first board meeting in July last year, we identified communications as a key area where we need to improve. We followed up with a complete communications audit and developed a road map for improving the member experience. Since then, there has been a lot of work done in the background, and although it has taken longer than we wanted, we are getting close to unveiling our new member website as well as a CATCA mobile app for members. A lot of work has gone into this project and we really hope members will like it. We are striving to provide faster and easier access to what's going on within our union and the industry. Launch for both of these platforms is scheduled for later this month. Additionally, more detailed information on tech developments and progress will be coming in the form of a separate newsletter.

## **BRANCH EXECUTIVES**

Another major initiative we have been working on has been to find ways to better support our local branch executives and stewards. These volunteers are the first point of contact for members and represent our most valuable resource. They are the bedrock of our union. We absolutely must do a better job of helping them with their work, particularly in the larger units where the time commitment and workloads are relentless. We intend to do this in two principal ways: *time and training*.

The introduction of CATCA shifts for branch executives is currently being explored by a working group and implementation is targeted for the very near future – hopefully sometime this fall. It would be impossible to provide enough time to allow for all the work these members do, but providing some dedicated time to allow members access to their branch reps should go a long way to improving their effectiveness while easing the strain placed on them.

For training, last year's national training seminar proved to be a huge success and received positive reviews from attendees. Our intention is to follow that up in 2024 with regional training seminars across the country and with another national seminar in 2025, either in conjunction with our convention, or separately. We are currently in the process of identifying dates for each region and building the curriculum. We encourage all members to communicate ideas regarding subject matter to your branch representatives.

## **FATIGUE**

Members should also be aware of upcoming changes to the Nav fatigue program. The company is slowly continuing to advance their agenda on fatigue. Staffing challenges have hampered progress to date and resulted in a delayed rollout. Nevertheless, pending changes will soon

impact members. The next step by Nav will be to adhere to Nav fatigue rules *after* schedule publication. This is expected to be seen sometime in the late fall. Given the ongoing staffing shortage, complete adherence will remain impossible and how things will look is unclear at this point. This, combined with company efforts to change the way the scheduling department is structured, means members can expect some potential scheduling challenges this fall. CATCA continues to participate in the Fatigue Safety Action Group (FSAG) and advocate for members in that forum, as well as lobby for common sense changes which will serve to mitigate fatigue while at the same time upholding our collective agreement rights. Discussions regarding the feasibility of allowing a 32-hour exception to the 'calendar day' rule, as agreed in collective bargaining, have been initiated and are currently being pursued.

### **COMMUNICATING FOR SAFETY CONFERENCE (CFS)**

On September 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, NATCA held their annual *Communicating for Safety* conference (CFS) in Las Vegas. This conference has grown over the years and has become a significant event on the aviation calendar, with broad attendance from a variety of industry experts. The keynote speakers were excellent and informative, and covered topics such as, exploring the pillars of safety culture, the process of change, safety culture at the local level, and the importance of trust. These were supplemented by a number of panel discussions and breakout rooms covering various topics related to aviation safety, such as pilot/controller communications, challenges in medical licensing, among others. The full agenda can be accessed on our website. Overall, the subject matter was highly relevant to CATCA members and all Nav employees.

The CATCA contingent in attendance once again grew, with this year numbering close to 40. Many made use of their fam flight entitlement, while others invested their own time to take the opportunity for professional development and networking with industry experts and our NATCA brothers and sisters.

We would like to thank all of our CATCA members who attended for their interest and professional comportment throughout the conference. Your commitment to growth and learning about your profession and the industry is exemplary, and we encourage all members to consider attending this event next year. It is an outstanding opportunity to learn and connect.

On Behalf of the Executive Board;

Nick von Schoenberg  
President

Scott Loder  
Executive Vice President