



USW LOCAL 1976-UNIT 613

OTTAWA AIRPORT SCREENERS

May 5, 2021

INFORMATION BULLETIN - COVID at YOW

As all of you know, the implementation of the FBS as the primary method of screening in March has resulted in many more pat downs and enhanced searches and puts SO's at unnecessary risk of acquiring COVID from passengers. Additionally, the FBS results in a much larger number of intrusive searches being performed on SO's. As you know, we are required to deal with Garda but they constantly deflect and say that CATSA is the party that controls the machines and procedures at the workplace. CATSA is an organization that does not seem to be accountable to anyone.

We are writing this to update you with actions that have been taken, as well as actions that are being planned, to deal with the FBS issue.

What if you get COVID and you believe it came from the workplace?

If you become ill with COVID and the disease was acquired in the workplace, you should receive compensation from WSIB. Make sure you tell your physician that you believe the disease was contracted in the workplace, and they will fill out the required WSIB form. Additionally, make sure you advise your employer. They will have to fill out the WSIB Form 7 and provide you with a copy. If you need assistance in filing or appealing a WSIB claim, the Union has an Injured Workers Assistance Program. Please contact Susan Cao, our WSIB rep.

If you believe you've been exposed to COVID but are not ill, you can file an exposure report to WSIB. Here is the link: <https://www.wsib.ca/en/form/reporting-2>

Actions that have been taken

February 23, 2021- Union made a request to Transport Canada for vaccine priority for SO's. TC advised us that it is a good idea but up to the provincial government.

March 23- FBS Primary goes live

March 24- Emergency meeting of the Joint Health and Safety Committee to discuss FBS primary. Recommendation was to suspend FBS primary during the pandemic and to re-activate a bypass line for airport employees.

April 8- Union writes to senior Garda management regarding health and safety issues including FBS primary

April 9- Union writes to the Manager of Compliance Operations at ESDC regarding CATSA's unresponsiveness to health and safety needs

April 9- Union calls follow up meeting with Garda to discuss COVID cases

April 13- Union makes the vaccine priority request again. TC suggests we contact provincial governments.

April – Letter written to provincial governments requesting vaccine preference. No response to date.

April 27- FBS Primary issue brought up during a conference call with Transport Canada

April 28- Union complains about the lack of action at a labour-management meeting

April 28- Members start to send letters to Garda management about the FBS issue

April 29- Union writes to TC expressing its concerns about FBS Primary

May 8- Union receives an email from TC saying that CATSA is studying the issue.

Many letters were sent by members to Garda management explaining concerns with the FBS primary. These letters are all very well written and we think they are having an impact. Garda management asked us to do something to stop them. Keep those letters coming! We say to Garda and CATSA-FIX THE PROBLEM!

Garda needs to be much more assertive with CATSA to protect your health and safety. Government needs to make sure CATSA is accountable to you, the people who keep Canadian skies safe. Your letters and support for the Union's actions will lead to success.

Planned actions

If this issue is not dealt with quickly some of the options are:

- Going to the media with the story
- Having our political allies raise the issue in the House of Commons
- Writing again to the officials responsible
- Filing complaints under the Canada Labour Code

We may call on some of you to assist with the above planned actions. Thank you for your support. Stay safe everyone!

In solidarity,

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