

FÓRSA

**Cabin crew
branch**



Aviation briefing document

Introduction

Fórsa has thousands of members in airlines, airports, aviation regulation and services. The aviation sector was amongst the hardest hit by the pandemic. Demand plummeted by over 95% at the onset of the crisis, and it remains extremely low. Most industry observers believe aviation will be among the last sectors to recover.

As a result, most Fórsa members in the sector continue to experience or face wage reductions, lay-offs and redundancies. The union has worked with its branches in the sector to manage and minimise the damage through negotiations with employers, and to lobby for more and continued State supports.

The purpose of this document is to share some of the key concerns of our members and outline solutions to those concerns. We look forward to working with you in the coming weeks and months.

Oireachtas aviation report

Fórsa has welcomed the publication of the Oireachtas aviation report and reiterates our call for a "joined-up" approach by Government to ensure the survival of Ireland's aviation industry. It is important that Government, and Minister Naughton TD pursue a path of social dialogue to achieve this.



Survey

Fórsa conducted a survey of members in the cabin crew branch of the union at the end of November. The survey focused on the concerns of members in respect of mortgages, rents and covid-19 related payments. We have included some of the details of this survey in our political briefing document.

Key concerns for cabin crew members

The cabin crew are seeking support on the following four items

1. Long term support in respect of mortgage payments and mortgage holidays
2. Dedicated support resource in dealing with claims arising from the covid-19 pandemic
3. That any support package for the aviation sector be contingent on protection of terms and conditions for staff
4. That an appropriate test tracing system be introduced at airports that safely facilitates increased travel





Mortgage payments and mortgage holidays

44% of cabin crew staff in Fórsa with mortgages have availed of a mortgage break or holiday as a result of the covid-19 pandemic. 78% have indicated that those holidays have already ceased and 65% are "concerned or very concerned" about their ability to repay their mortgages in future.

The European central bank indicated earlier this week that banks should continue to issue mortgages holidays to those who are seeking them.

What do we want on mortgages?

Long term support in respect of mortgage payments and mortgage holidays.

We are asking politicians to support aviation sector staff in calling for an extension of mortgage holidays for those who expect to face difficulty in the coming months.



Pandemic related support payments/payment arrangements

95% of staff have availed of some form of support in the last number of months. During this time cabin crew staff have reported major difficulty and confusion in applying for covid-19 related support payments. It is important for members to have access to resources that can help them in resolving issues that arise in relation to pandemic related payments.

The TWSS and the EWSS have been crucially important to ensure that workers are maintained in employment. The EWSS is due to end in early 2021, however it is certain that the aviation sector will not have recovered by that time.



What do we want on pandemic payments?

A designated support officer in social welfare offices with a high density of aviation staff in the catchment area.

To have the EWSS extended for airlines, due to the seasonal nature of the business, current Government restrictions on travel and the impact that has on passenger's ability to travel. The current date EWSS is due to run out is 31st March 2021, have this extended, if needed, beyond that date and to provide support in relation to TWWS issues.

The Government should move now to convert the EWSS to a longer-term short time work scheme for the aviation sector.

Protecting terms and conditions of staff



The aviation sector will require a significant long-term strategy in order to survive. Fórsa has called for the Tax and PRSI breaks for Dublin Airport Authority, maintenance of airport charges at 2019 rates, a Shannon specific taskforce among other actions. Central to the concern of the aviation branches in the union will be the protection and review of the terms and conditions of employment of the staff in the sector with Covid and Post Covid in mind.



What do we want on terms and conditions of staff?

That any support package for the aviation sector be contingent on protection and review of terms and conditions for staff and that government engage collectively with all interests in the aviation sector especially from a regional point of view.

Test tracing at the airport

A number of stakeholders in the sector have identified testing as an area of priority in respect of travelling to and from the country. Key to members concerns is that we provide a testing system that is safe to both staff and customers as well as increasing the capacity of members of the public to engage in travel.

70% of cabin crew in the union indicated that they would be willing to work in test tracing at the airport if such an opportunity were to arise.



What do we want on test tracing?

That an appropriate test tracing system, which is affordable, to be introduced at airports that safely facilitates increased travel.

Contact

Annette Heffernan, Branch Chair

Ashley Connolly, Fórsa industrial official

Kevin Donoghue, Fórsa lead organiser

cabincrew@forsa.ie

aconnolly@forsa.ie

kdonoghue@forsa.ie

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