

From: Halsall, Debbie [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 October 2025 11:49
To: INTERIM Airport Director
Cc: Mick Hower [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] ATCO Pay and Benefits Update - October 2025

Caution: This email is from an external sender. Please take care before opening any attachments or following any links.

Dear Geoff,

Thank you for your email. I want to be clear from the outset that I reject both the tone and the narrative it attempts to set. The suggestion that ATCOs are somehow responsible for the current position, or for any impact on training or operations, is neither fair nor accurate. The issues we are facing stem from long-standing management decisions, not from those who keep the operation safe every single day.

It is also wholly inappropriate to issue what reads like a list of instructions, ultimatums, and implied threats during an active industrial dispute and while you are simultaneously seeking conciliation. You cannot declare a “full and final” offer and then in the next breath propose further talks. If the Department has entered a formal dispute process, then it must respect that process, not attempt to bypass it or apply pressure through operational levers.

I will be equally clear on two further points:

1. No new duties, extensions or changes to existing arrangements will be agreed or assumed during a live dispute. Operational changes are not imposed — they are negotiated.
2. Attempts to go around collective representation by inviting individuals to confidential HR discussions are not acceptable. This undermines trust and confidence and goes directly against the principles of good industrial relations.

The email also attempts to reframe the training situation. Let’s be honest: the breakdown in training provision did not begin with this dispute. ATCOs have repeatedly raised concerns about workload, staffing resilience, and the lack of structured support for OJIs over a long period of time. To now imply that the workforce is the obstacle is simply wrong.

Despite all of this, my position remains consistent: I want an agreement, I want progress, and I want a resolution. ATCOs are committed professionals who want to focus on delivering a safe and resilient service — not to be caught in circular negotiations. But resolution will only come if the Airport steps back from ultimatums, respects the formal process, and engages constructively through us as the Recognised Representatives.

I am ready for meaningful dialogue. What I will not accept is pressure, blame-shifting, or unilateral demands dressed up as negotiation.

We look forward to the Department resetting its approach so we can move forward properly.

Best regards
Debbie