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TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2026



Daniel Schenkeveld (left) tries to rebook his flight on his phone as he lines up with other WestJet passengers at Winnipeg airport on Monday.

WestJet, union reach tentative deal to end strike by flight attendants

CALGARY — WestJet and the union representing some 4,400 flight attendants reached a tentative deal Monday to resume work after a brief work stoppage, but neither side is sharing specifics yet.

The airline had said Sunday it had proposed a 13 per cent pay increase starting in October and then a 2.5 per cent increase in each of the next three years until 2029.

The airline also said it offered a new duty pay premium, equivalent to another 12 per cent salary increase, which WestJet said is designed to solve the cabin crew's claim of unpaid work.

In a news conference in Calgary on Monday, CUPE Local 8125 president Alia Hussain said the flight attendants have 30 days to ratify the agreement and the union will spend the coming days preparing a slide show to present to the members.

She said the deal includes pay increases, but wouldn't provide any further details in order to let members learn of it first.

The federal government says that airlines in Canada and internationally typically compensate flight attendants for their flight time or for a block of hours based on what the industry calls a credit-based system. It generally provides supplements to cover non-flight duties, although unions have been calling for more.

Hussain did however suggest the new deal addresses concerns around unpaid work.

"It improves on the long-standing flight credit system by recognizing more of the work that cabin crew are required to perform and increasing the compensation for that work," Hussain told reporters outside the airport in Calgary.

"We wouldn't bring a deal to our membership if we didn't believe the puzzle pieces, in the way that they would come together, would be something they would ratify based on the circumstances we were facing."

Passengers left waiting as airline slowly resumes operations

WestJet travellers scramble for flights

MELISSA MARTIN

WESTJET flights were back in the skies Monday after a brief flight-attendant strike grounded planes across the country. But even as their cancelled flights were rebooked, many travellers spent the holiday scrambling to adapt to new, altered plans.

By 11:30 a.m. about 200 people were queued up in front of WestJet's check-in booths at Winnipeg Richardson International Airport. Many were there to check in for an afternoon flight to Toronto, which, along with most other WestJet flights for the day, was now listed on the departure board as proceeding as planned.

Others, unable to reach someone on WestJet's apparently overburdened customer service hotline, were hoping to find a solution to altered travel

plans that had delayed their travel by days or, in some cases, rerouted them through other cities.

Dan Schenkeveld was among them. The Kamloops resident spent most of the past month on a deep wilderness canoe trip in Nunavut. When he got back in cellular service range, he learned that a WestJet flight attendant strike was looming. "We're aware of the issues around unpaid work and we're compassionate to that," he said.

He soon learned his flight out of Winnipeg had been cancelled and rebooked for three days later. He had not yet been given information about being compensated for accommodation.



Christopher Bautista (right) and his family wait in a long line of WestJet passengers

● TRAVELLERS, CONTINUED ON A2

● DEAL, CONTINUED ON A2

'The fire was just raging': residents flee as B.C. wildfire evacuations expand

DARRYL GREER
AND ASHLEY JOANNOU

VERNON, B.C. — Atlyn Becker remembers the hills glowing orange around her on Saturday as her truck edged north to safety from fires burning around British Columbia's Okanagan Lake.

She and her family were among thousands who fled their homes over the weekend with whatever they could pack, as high winds pushed flames over drought-parched land.

She estimates there were about 200 vehicles moving slowly down the road with her.

"You could feel the heat of the fire. You could hear the crackling of the trees. The fire was just raging," she said Monday, after safely arriving in Kelowna.

Becker said she watched through the window of her truck as firefighters cut apart fallen trees with chainsaws so that people could drive through.

"(Fire) was right down to the road, all the way up the side of the mountain and it was actually terrifying because you don't know if a tree is going to fall on you," she said.

Multiple evacuation orders and alerts have been issued over the last several days because of fires burning

in areas around Okanagan Lake.

Central Okanagan Emergency Management said more than 2,200 properties under its jurisdiction have been evacuated due to the Quilpituk Creek wildfire.

Further up the lake, the Regional District of North Okanagan expanded evacuation orders and alerts on Sunday because of the Bradley Creek wildfire.

Many residents rushed to escape over the weekend as winds gusting up to 115 kilometres per hour fanned the fire, destroying homes as it burned to the water line.

Becker and her family chose to leave their Westshore Estates neighbourhood

before they were officially ordered out as the fires burning on either side of them led to the evacuation of other communities, including the Okanagan Indian Band reserve land.

She said she watched planes and crews on the ground do the best they could to fight the flames, but the heavy winds on Saturday were too much.

"We haven't had any precipitation all the month of July. It sprinkles, but that's it. No downpours, nothing to really get things, you know, a little bit saturated," she said.

Cliff Chapman, director of wildfire operations for the provincial wildfire service, said in an update on Sunday

that they had never seen such wildfire conditions before.

B.C. Wildfire Service information officer Nicole Bonnett said Monday that the Bradley Creek wildfire saw no significant growth overnight, while the Quilpituk Creek fire measured over five square kilometres.

Sitting outside the emergency services centre in Vernon, where evacuees could get food, water and register for government support, Gord Ross described watching flames spread on Friday from his home near the lake.

● WILDFIRES, CONTINUED ON A3



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SPORTS WESTERN WARRIOR WINS MANITOBA DERBY / D1