



First-Ever Joint IAM-USW Screeners Conference **SUCCESS!**

There was terrific energy and engagement from all delegates at the first-ever joint IAM-USW Screeners Conference held at the Ottawa Congress Centre in early February.

It was an historic gathering, where our two great unions were able to work together, plan together and get to know each other. IAM and USW represent close to 90% of all airport security screeners in Canada at two-thirds of our country's airports.

“What this government is doing is wrong.”

**Dave Ritchie
IAM Canadian General Vice-President**

We heard from our screeners from coast to coast to coast that all airports are busy, no matter the size, and screeners are experiencing similar issues across workplaces due to increased passenger traffic without additional screener personnel. Screeners for both of our unions told us that this is at the heart of deteriorating working conditions, added stress and pressure, no

breaks, increased absenteeism and... you get the picture.

From the discussion it's clear that the bigger culprit is the federal government. Air Traveller Security Charges (ATSCs) – fees to cover the costs of security screening – will generate \$681 million more than costs over the next six years. The government is using this surplus to cut the deficit instead of hiring more front-line security screeners.

“What this government is doing is wrong,” said Dave Ritchie, IAM Canadian General Vice-President. “They're skimming funds paid by the travelling public meant to secure air travel and diverting them to balance their books.”

“Cuts to screeners, combined with growing demands, are creating security concerns for passengers and health and safety issues for front-line workers,” said USW National Director Ken Neumann.

Over the exciting three-day conference, delegates took part in presentations and practical workshops with lots of interactive opportunities for questions and feedback. In addition to remarks from our unions'

“Cuts to screeners are creating health and safety issues for front-line workers.”

**Ken Neumann
USW National Director**

leadership Dave Ritchie and Ken Neumann, delegates got to meet Olivia Chow, Transport Critic for the Official Opposition and hear from Transport Canada's Mario Saucier, Director of Operations.



Olivia Chow, NDP Transport Critic

Together, screeners from our two unions have the strength and the power to tackle our shared issues at our workplaces, through bargaining and by lobbying politicians to make changes.



Outcomes from the Interactive Workshops *Essential Services*

IAM and USW will develop a joint strategy around upcoming bargaining. Federal government interference in other jurisdictions means we need to be prepared and unified at the bargaining table.



Building Power

Together we have the power within ourselves to be stronger and more effective in dealing with employers.

CATSA/Federal Government

As the federal government starves the airport screening sector of funding and CATSA prioritizes management, it is more essential than ever that all screeners work together.



Members of Parliament Rosane Doré Lefebvre and Mike Sullivan.

Lobbying and Political Action

Delegates learned from Members of Parliament Rosane Doré Lefebvre and Mike Sullivan on how to lobby politicians on issues important to screeners. As well, delegates were given an assignment to lobby their own MPs when they returned home by Mar. 31.

Health and Safety

Screeners described the difficulties they are facing in the workplace when dealing with employers.

This is an area that we can address to make the safety committees more effective.



Radiation

Knowledge is power but we still have concerns about radiation and concerns that employers and the government may be withholding information.

Workplace Issues

In lively discussions around workplace problems, delegates found common issues across our unions and discussed approaches for fixing them.

Anti-Harassment

This workshop raised awareness of harassment to delegates and we all realized that screeners and managers need more support in this area to make our workplaces free of harassment and intimidation.

Moving Forward Together

On the last day of the conference, Dave Ritchie and Ken Neumann joined NDP Transport Critic Olivia Chow in a press conference on Parliament Hill highlighting the growing demands on screeners, health and safety issues for front-line workers and the skimming of security fees by the government instead of boosting passenger security. It aired on CTV, Global TV and CP24.

Building on this successful first-ever conference, the leadership and staff from both unions will map out priorities and build an action plan.



USW National Director Ken Neumann and IAM Canadian General Vice-President Dave Ritchie.

Locals and members are asked to get involved in our next steps, share information and take part in future activities. Working together across our two great unions makes us even stronger and able to take on the challenges ahead in bargaining, lobbying and building public support.

A great big thanks to all delegates for your interest, enthusiasm and participation. We look forward to your continued involvement so we can make a difference in the working lives of all airport security screeners in Canada.

Learn more

Photos and documents related to the conference are available at www.usw.ca/screeners or www.iamaw.ca/screeners

