



Press release on the announcement of strike readiness in Smartwings, a.s.

Prague 2. 6. 2025

Smart Unity, odborová organizace pilotů Smartwings, a.s., ID No.: 217 79 724, with its registered office at Malé sídliště 1100/43, Beroun-Město, 266 01 Beroun (hereinafter referred to as "**Smart Unity**") and the Odborová organizace posádek letadel, ID No.: 638 36 319, with its registered office at Prague 6, Ruzyně Airport (hereinafter referred to as the "**OOPL**") and the ČESKÉ SDRUŽENÍ DOPRAVNÍCH PILOTŮ CZALPA ČSA, ID NO.: 631 12 591, with its registered office at Prague 6, Prague Ruzyně Airport (hereinafter referred to as "**CZALPA**") and the Odborový svaz zaměstnanců letectví, ID No.: 438 72 450, with its registered office at Prague 6 – Ruzyně (hereinafter referred to as "**OSZL**") are trade unions operating within Smartwings, a.s., ID No.: 256 63 135, with its registered office at K Letišti 1068/30, 160 08 Prague (hereinafter referred to as "**Smartwings**").

Smartwings is the largest domestic air transport company, which is unfortunately – **contrary to the wishes of its employees** – known for frequent delays or cancelled flights. This fact is due, among other things, to the lack of flight personnel caused by a high turnover of pilots in the company – for example, about 60% of all co-pilots on a Boeing 737 aircraft have been with the company for less than 3 years. The large number of employees leaving Smartwings is a direct result of Smartwings' approach to its employees, who are increasingly required to be extraordinarily committed, including the acceptance of changes in the shift schedule below 48 hours, as well as the acceptance of long-term stays abroad, which in principle exclude family life.

Fatigue is a potential safety risk, as crew rest is an essential part of ensuring air safety. In this regard, reference can be made to a recent survey by the Civil Aviation Authority¹: *"The results of the survey confirm to the CAA that fatigue is a significant factor affecting air*

¹ Results of the questionnaire survey on the impact of fatigue on flight crews (2024) of 10. 3. 2025 available here <https://www.caa.cz/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Przkum-unava-ysledky.pdf?cb=17dfdafb42fa11de00db200d2286daeb>



SMART UNITY, pilots' union of SMARTWINGS, a.s.

Company ID: 21779724 | Malé sídliště 1100/43, 266 01, Beroun | Data box: 5nfwfji | www.smart-unity.cz | info@smart-unity.cz

operations, both in terms of safety and working conditions of flight crews. Although many companies have procedures in place to manage fatigue, their effectiveness is often limited in practice."

In the past, the above-mentioned trade unions called on Smartwings, a.s. to finally present clear steps to improve the situation at the meeting held on 14. 5. 2025, otherwise they would have to declare strike readiness. Since this meeting, the Smartwings trade unions have given additional time to resolve, among other things, in connection with the clearly declared start of collective bargaining.

This situation, in combination with other working conditions at Smartwings, is no longer sustainable, as evidenced by the results of a survey in which we asked whether pilots are willing to support strike readiness. Out of a total of 228 respondents, 90.4% answered that they were ready to support the strike readiness. The results of this survey were presented to the management of Smartwings on 14. 5. 2025, with the declaration that appropriate measures must be taken immediately. Since nothing was done by Smartwings, between 30. 5. 2025 and 1. 6. 2025, Smart Unity's membership voted to declare strike readiness, with a total of 145, which represents 99 % of voting members voted for the declaration of strike readiness.

This is a result of the approach of Smartwings, which has long ignored its legal obligations in relation to trade unions since the establishment of Smart Unity as the first trade union in Smartwings. This was further intensified after the merger with the operations of CSA and the trade unions operating there.

Smart Unity expected that after a six-month delay in signing the memorandum on mutual communication², there would finally be a regular and constructive meeting of the sub-working groups, as the memorandum had anticipated. However, Smartwings' approach at the moment is as follows:

- 1) continues to put pressure on flight staff to accept changes below 48 hours and to work disproportionately beyond the original shift range;
- 2) unjustifiably delays the meetings of the sub-working groups;
- 3) does not provide the trade unions with the required information;
- 4) the meeting on 14. 5. 2025, including the additional deadline, did not bring any turnaround in this regard, on the contrary, Smartwings also seems to boycott efforts at collective bargaining, proposing a meeting to discuss the draft collective agreement only more than a month after the submission of the first draft of the

² <https://smart-unity.cz/memorandum-o-principech-komunikace-smartwings-a-s-a-smart-unity-odborova-organizace-pilotu-smartwings-a-s-jakoz-i-jinych-odborovych-organizaci/>

collective agreement, and requiring additional declarations from the trade unions, including the commitment of the trade unions not to declare a collective strike or strike during the collective bargaining period,

for the above, **Smart Unity proceeds to declare strike readiness according to par. 9. 4. Memorandum on the Principles of Communication between Smartwings, a.s. and Smart Unity, the pilots' union of Smartwings, a.s., as well as other trade unions.**

The reasons for declaring strike readiness are as follows:

- 1) Long-term unsustainable operation of Smartwings, a.s., whereby random changes to scheduled flights and long-term stays abroad excluding family life of employees are repeatedly made due to the understaffing of pilots caused by employee turnover, which is a result of Smartwings, a.s.'s approach to its employees;
- 2) Failure to comply with operational standards on the part of Smartwings, a.s., including compliance with flight service time limits;
- 3) Failure to comply with effective legal regulations on the part of Smartwings, a.s., in particular informing and consulting trade unions;
- 4) Failure to respect the Memorandum on the Principles of Communication between Smartwings, a.s. and Smart Unity, the pilots' union of Smartwings, a.s., as well as other trade unions;
- 5) Downplaying the security risks associated with some of the destinations to which Smartwings, a.s. flies;
- 6) Insufficient financial remuneration for Smartwings, a.s. employees.

The goals of strike readiness are as follows:

- 1) Immediate implementation of clear steps by Smartwings, a.s. to stabilize the personnel situation in the company;
- 2) Reassessment of Smartwings, a.s.'s position on compliance with effective legal regulations, in particular not complicating information and consultation with trade unions;
- 3) Reassessment of Smartwings, a.s.'s position on compliance with the Memorandum on Principles of Communication between Smartwings, a.s. and Smart Unity, the pilots' union of Smartwings, a.s., as well as other trade unions;
- 4) Presentation of tangible steps taken by Smartwings, a.s. to change the planning system, including stabilization of scheduled shifts;
- 5) Active communication regarding the measures taken by Smartwings, a.s. to minimize security risks on flights to destinations such as Israel or India;
- 6) Increase in the financial remuneration of Smartwings, a.s. employees, both in terms of basic remuneration and bonuses, etc.



Strike readiness is announced until further notice. After 10 days from the announcement of strike readiness, an assessment will be made whether the reasons for declaring strike readiness persist with the possibility of joining the strike.

With the strike readiness, we appeal to **all employees to support the strike readiness from today by not accepting random changes, but strictly adhering only to the work obligations arising from employment contracts and properly planned shifts.**

Strike readiness does not result in a refusal to perform a properly planned shift, but is directed against the no longer sustainable Smartwings system, which compensates for understaffing by pressuring employees to accept shift changes under 48 hours or unscheduled flights. **We would like to draw the attention of the general and professional public to the fact that if some Smartwings flights are postponed or cancelled, it is not due to the employee's refusal to perform work, but because Smartwings does not have a stabilized personnel background and requires the employee to perform work beyond the scope of his/her normal work duties, often even at the limit of safety standards.**

To illustrate, it is quite common for Smartwings pilots to accept changes in planned shifts of less than 48 hours during the month and to be available on the phone at all times.

We hope that the strike readiness will help to reassess Smartwings' relationship with its employees and lead to an improvement in their working conditions. The improvement in working conditions will support Smartwings' personnel stabilization and ability to ensure its stable growth in the coming years. Employees working under good working conditions in a stable company inherently provide better quality services to Smartwings passengers. After all, the assessment of sufficient rest and fatigue is one of the key factors in the safe operation of air commercial transport in the form of fatigue-risk management.

Thank you all for your support

Smart Unity, pilots' union of Smartwings, a.s.

