

June 5, 2026

Via Email: [deborah.flint@gtaa.com](mailto:deborah.flint@gtaa.com)

Deborah Flint  
CEO – Greater Toronto Airports Authority  
Toronto, ON

Dear Ms. Flint,

I am writing to raise a matter of growing urgency for workers across Canada’s aviation sector and for the stability of airport operations at Toronto Pearson: the continued practice of contract flipping and the escalating impacts it is having on workforce continuity, safety culture, and the long-term resilience of airport services.

As you know, contract flipping—where service contracts are re-tendered and awarded to new employers without protections for incumbent workers—has become a structural issue across major Canadian airports. Each flip results in the loss of wages, benefits, seniority, and job security for skilled workers who perform safety-critical and passenger-facing functions. These are not peripheral roles; they include ground handling, catering, baggage operations, and other essential functions that directly influence safety, efficiency, and the passenger experience.

A troubling new development has recently emerged at Toronto Pearson. The GTAA’s decision to revoke AGI’s licence—due to a late application rather than a security concern—resulted in 500 members losing their jobs overnight. It is worth noting that Unifor’s collective agreement with AGI was industry leading, establishing the highest starting wage in ground handling services, along with strong protections and entitlements; years of bargaining rounds and gains the union made is now gone. Members who manage to secure new employment will do so at lower wages, with fewer protections, reduced pension security, and in some cases in non-unionized environments.

Regardless of the mechanism, the consequences are severe and far-reaching:

- Experienced employees are forced to reapply for their own jobs, often at lower wages and with diminished benefits.
- Turnover increases, undermining operational continuity and contributing to chronic staffing shortages.
- Institutional knowledge is lost, weakening safety culture and increasing operational risk in environments where precision and experience are essential.
- Labour standards are pushed downward, disproportionately affecting racialized, immigrant, and women workers who make up a significant portion of the airport services workforce.
- Union density is reduced, further entrenching precarious employment models across the airport ecosystem.

For workers, these jobs are not interchangeable. They are careers, primary sources of income, and essential supports for families. The erosion of working conditions has led to members having to work multiple jobs, while others cannot afford basic necessities, like rent. For the aviation system, workforce stability is foundational to safety, reliability, and competitiveness. When experienced workers are displaced, the impacts are felt across the entire operating environment.

Given the GTAA's central role in stewarding the operational integrity of Canada's largest airport, I am urging your leadership in addressing this growing instability. Specifically, I ask that the GTAA:

1. As a matter of priority, ensure that all Unifor members affected by the contract flip at AGI be hired by Unifi with the collective agreement in effect to preserve workers' wages, pensions, benefits and all other entitlements bargained by Unifor.
2. Implement workforce retention expectations in all service contracts to ensure continuity of employment when contracts change hands.
3. Strengthen licence and compliance processes to prevent administrative issues from triggering mass job loss.
4. Work with labour partners to develop a stability framework that prioritizes experience, safety culture, and continuity of service.
5. Support federal efforts to strengthen successorship protections within the *Canada Labour Code* for airport service contracts.

These measures would help stabilize the workforce, protect institutional knowledge, and reinforce the safety and service standards that Pearson is known for. Pearson's reputation as a leader and a globally competitive airport is underpinned by its workforce, one whose working conditions have continued to be eroded due to issues the GTAA has the power and influence to address. It is decisions like these and their outcomes that have contributed to the current dialogue around the privatization of airports based on a sense that airports are not working for Canadians—those employed there and those who travel through them.

I urge the GTAA to take immediate steps to prevent further erosion of labour standards and to ensure that operational decisions do not inadvertently undermine the stability of the airport's workforce. Our members bring decades of experience to Pearson's operations, and their insights can help build a more resilient and sustainable model for the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lana Payne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and "P".

**Lana Payne**  
**National President**

Cc: The Honourable Stephen MacKinnon, Minister of Transport  
Tammy Moore, President Unifor Local 2002  
Antonios Kourteridis, President Unifor Local 2300

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