

8 April 2024

NATS report

Major system failure makes a difference to NATS staffing, writes Simon Campbell-Gurry, ATM section president

The last few months have seen a welcome increase in headcount across many areas of our operation. Sadly, this was a result of a major system failure at the back end of August 2023. This resulted in widespread media interest and left many members acutely aware of the real impact their roles have on the air traffic system.

By the time this article is published the CAA and NATS will have produced their investigations which will have offered more insight into what exactly occurred on the day. Right now, however we are seeing a step change from the business on resilience which is resulting in a long awaited and much needed bolstering of roles across the operation. There is of course more work needed to ensure all areas of the business are staffed correctly and members are not subjected to excessive workloads.

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With a three year pay deal in place members received an award of 7.5% in their January pay packs. This leaves one year left on our CPI matching deal. Whilst the headline figure of 7.5% sounds high this is only just above the level of inflation (7.3%) and the additional 0.2% is made up from a below inflation award for the year before.

PCS expects this summer will see the return of record-breaking traffic figures, which is welcome but means members will be faced with increasing workloads across the operation at a time when resourcing is still being increased.