

Canada's WestJet reaches deal averting pilot strike

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A Westjet Boeing 737-800 taxis at Pearson Airport in Toronto, Ontario, in May 2022.

Canadian airline WestJet on Friday announced it had reached a tentative deal with its pilots union, a day after it canceled nearly 100 flights in

anticipation of a strike.

With the country beginning a long holiday weekend, Canada's second-largest airline said in a statement it was "ramping up its operations as quickly and efficiently as possible," but that "full resumption of operations will take time."

The Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l (ALPA) had notified WestJet on Monday that 1,800 pilots would stop work starting early Friday morning if a deal was not reached with [company executives](#) by Thursday evening.

The union said it was working to negotiate a "fair and equitable" agreement with WestJet to bring the pilots' contracts in line with salary increases recently seen at some American companies.

Though details have not yet been released, WestJet CEO Alexis von Hoensbroech said the tentative agreement was "industry-leading within Canada" and provided "meaningful improvements to job security and scope, working conditions and wages."

"We appreciate we were able to arrive at a deal, however, recognize the impact on our guests and we sincerely appreciate their patience during this time," he added.

Captain Bernie Lewall, chair of the ALPA's WestJet branch, said in an early morning podcast that the four-year [deal](#) had been reached at 12:30 am (0430GMT) and represented "significant" improvements in pay.

"For the past several years, we have unfortunately been nothing more than a training ground for pilots looking to leave for [better opportunities](#)," Lewall said in a statement.

"This contract will change that and make WestJet a career destination once again."

The agreement will next be put to a union vote for ratification.

With more than 16,700 flights scheduled for the month of June, WestJet represents nearly a third of Canada's domestic air travel market, while AirCanada controls about half.

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