

Satawu says SAA can afford 12% increase

By [Colleen Goko](#)

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The South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (Satawu) has disputed reports by South African Airways (SAA) that the airline's current financial status means it is unable to give workers the increase they are demanding.



Technical services workers belonging to Satawu are on strike outside OR Tambo International Airport. Originally, the union had been willing to settle for a 6.5% wage increase with a one-off 0.4% "good performance" payment.

The union called the strike among SAA technical staff after wage talks deadlocked last week. Earlier on Monday (26 August), SAA management offered a 6.4% increase. The offer was rejected.

Satawu spokesman Vincent Masoga said the union was now adamant about getting a 12% increase for the technical workers.

"Management has received a lot of money this year and this money must be shared with the workers who have been key in the turnaround strategy for SAA," Masoga said.

"The shop stewards have seen SAA's financial reports and it's pure nonsense what SAA is saying about the current climate. They made a 10% profit but they want to operate from a loss-making position.

"We are therefore demanding a 12% increase and we go back to the negotiation table at 12pm. The United Association of South Africa (Uasa, another union) has also indicated they will be join our strike from today," he said.

Satawu says 1,300 members have joined the strike and more than 300 are picketing outside OR Tambo.

Many other airlines could be affected, including Mango, British Airways, Qantas and Qatar.

Masoga said some flights had already been delayed by up to an hour and there were reports that the Springboks' arrival

back in the country had been affected by the strike, with the players waiting for their luggage for more than an hour.

A spokesman for SAA told Eyewitness News that the airline had made contingency plans for the strike.

"In light of the prevailing global economic conditions that are affecting all the airlines, we are of the view that the offer we are placing on the table is a reasonable one. We're of the view that employees will make the right decision, appreciate our situation and report for duty," the spokesman said.

SAA said it was confident the strike would have a minimum impact on SAA flights

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