

Strike by ground handling staff at Heathrow suspended

Strike action by ground handlers at Heathrow Airport will not go ahead this weekend after an improved pay offer was made.

The U-turn comes as 400 Unite union members working for Menzies voted to reject a previous offer from the international aviation company and announced new strikes dates from 29 December to 1 January.

They were due to walk out for 72 hours from 4am on Friday.

A larger pay offer has now been made by Menzies and Unite called off the strikes as a gesture of goodwill, the union said.

The ground handlers will be balloted on the improved offer.

“Unite has been adamant that Menzies was able to offer an improved pay offer and that has proved to be the case,” said Unite regional officer Kevin Hall.

The late December dates announced on Thursday morning are due to go ahead, pending the outcome of a vote on the latest pay offer.

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Talks took place between the union and Menzies on Thursday afternoon after the original offer – a 4% pay deal backdated to May and a further 6.5% pay increase from 1 January 2023 – was rejected.

Workers are stationed at Heathrow terminals 2, 3 and 4.

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Commenting on the announcement, Menzies's executive vice president Europe Miguel Gomez Sjunnesson said: "We are pleased

to announce that following a positive meeting today, Unite have postponed the strikes that were planned for this weekend to allow them to take a revised pay offer to their members.”

“We are hopeful that this revised offer will be accepted allowing us to give our employees their well-deserved pay increase and we can focus on delivering the best service during this busy holiday period.”