

LUCELEC Says No to CSA's 30% Demands

LUCELEC Says No to CSA's 30% Demands

Submitted by carib on Thu, 2012-10-25 14:44

St Lucia Electricity Services Limited (LUCELEC) is refuting suggestions that the company has been intransigent in the negotiations with the Civil Service Association (CSA), the bargaining agent for its Grade 1 employees.

Negotiations between the two parties for a three-year agreement for the period 2011 - 2013 have ceased and the outstanding matter of wage increases has been referred to the Minister for Labour for a mediation meeting in the next two weeks. The power company says considerable progress has been made since negotiations began, with the exception of the wage increase issue.

The company refused the union's initial request for a 30% increase over the three years which has since been adjusted to 16.85%.

LUCELEC has offered a 6.5% increase which it says is both fair and prudent. That offer, the company says, is based on a number of factors including a 2011 compensation and benefits study which confirmed the employees are paid on average above local market rates. Comparisons against regional companies were also favourable.

In addition, the company says, its employees enjoy a broad package of benefits which compare very favourably against other companies, and which must be taken into consideration. Further, the company offers an excellent performance based incentive plan which allows all employees to benefit from the company's annual performance.

The power company has also taken issue with the CSA comparing the 9% wage increase agreed to with WASCO with the 6.5% offered by LUCELEC. According to LUCELEC, such a comparison is disingenuous given the difference in salary scales and the fact that LUCELEC's salary scales are already above market.

LUCELEC's salary increases over the last 11 years have ranged from 2% to 4% on average per year, as the Company has always sought to maintain its leading position in the market.

LUCELEC says it is committed to continuing to offer its employees very competitive compensation and benefits packages, but it is imperative to exercise prudence in the management of the company's affairs with a view to its long term sustainability, especially in the context of the significant investments in the electricity infrastructure that are being made to continue to provide the country with a safe and reliable supply of power.