

July 13, 2010

TO: Locals - DFO
National Executive
National and Regional E.O. Representatives

RE: **DFO Oceans and Science Sector UMCC**

Brother William Pynn, UEW National President, and Sister Paula Dignan, Service Officer, attended the DFO Oceans and Science Sector UMCC meeting on June 25, 2010. This was the first official Sector meeting since the re-organization and merging of both Oceans and Science. The following represents a synopsis of the discussions that took place.

Employee Orientation Guide

The Department tabled the Science Employee Orientation Guide. UEW advised that it had reviewed the Guide and noted that there was no mention of familiarizing new employees with respect to identifying Local Union Representatives or noting the UMCC structure. The Department replied that the Guide is an evergreen document and that comments and suggestions can be added as needed. The Department indicated that it would endeavor to integrate UEW's suggestions.

Organizational Changes

The Assistant Deputy Minister of Oceans and Science advised that changes have taken place at headquarters and the task of regional integration will now begin. DFO assured bargaining agents that union representatives at the worksites and within the Regions would be fully engaged during regional meetings dealing with the organizational changes.

Classification

Representatives from the Organization and Classification Center of Expertise (OCCOE) advised that the national priority list for Science has moved from over 2000 requests to 80. DFO advised that the implementation of EG National Model Work Descriptions (NMWDs) has been completed across the country but that NMWDs for employees within Oceans remain outstanding.

With respect to administrative staff within the Oceans and Science Sector, the Department indicated that it would provide a detailed report on how these positions are to be dealt with by mid-August.

Sunset Employees

The Department advised that there were 36 sunset employees and noted that at the end of their terms, the skills of these sunset terms would be recognized and considered as other positions became available.

Science HR Initiatives

The Department tabled the Oceans and Science Sector Leadership Development Needs Assessment. Recommendations addressed the need for better career progression opportunities and the need for provisions to ensure better work-life balance. The bargaining agents noted that identical results were identified in the PSES and asked what clear plans were being made to address the issues.

UEW noted that the key findings regarding the *increased workload and under-funding* that result in burnout and low morale were noted after interviewing senior science staff. However, under-funding also affects the support and technical staff as well – if not more so – and bargaining agents urged DFO to address this issue sooner rather than later.

In reviewing the Sector's *HR Succession Plan* provided as background for the meeting, UEW noted recruitment plans related to EGs as they represent 35.5% of the Sector's workforce. The Report shows an overall 10.5% decrease in the number of EGs from 636 to 569 during the last year. Management acknowledged UEW observations but did not provide any further details on how this decrease was going to be specifically addressed.

Employment Equity

DFO reviewed the Sector's *Employment Equity* statistics and advised that although there were generally some improvements in lowering the gaps across-the-board, there have been changes in the market availability numbers that translate into a widening of the gaps. The under-representation of Women in Science is the most prevalent gap issue.

Distribution of Guidelines on Acting Opportunities Within CHS

UEW advised management that they had received a copy of draft acting guidelines developed within CHS. UEW advised DFO of its concerns regarding the lack of consultation prior to the Guidelines being communicated to staff and of the concerns related to the accuracy of information contained in the draft Guidelines.

The ADM of Science stated that she would enquire as to the originator of the Guidelines and gave assurances that these Guidelines would be reviewed and that there would be consultation prior to their finalization and full distribution to staff.

Should you have any questions or concerns relating to the issues noted above, please do not hesitate to communicate with the national office.

Yours fraternally,

William Pynn,
National President,
Union of Environment Workers.