

February 11, 2009

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

RE: **DFO National Union Management Consultation Committee**

The DFO NUMCC was held on January 15, 2009 with Brother William Pynn, National President, Brother Daryl Hoelke, Executive Assistant, and Sister Paula Dignan, Service Officer, attending. The following represents a summary of the issues addressed.

Time Off for Union Business

It was noted that a meeting relating to the subject matter was held with both bargaining agents and Labour Relations attending and a draft list of recommendations was developed. The Deputy Minister committed to following up on the list of recommendations where possible and to ensure another meeting on this issue is held prior to the February 2009 Labour Relations Symposium in order to provide a full report.

Learning and Development

Management spoke about DFO's new Learning Guide and emphasized that much work had been done to make information available to employees via the intranet to facilitate their completing individual learning plans and being made aware of training opportunities.

Employment Equity and Diversity

The Department Diversity Champion presented a report on DFO's upcoming Diversity Conference and provided information about a mid-year review on employment equity at DFO.

The Diversity Conference is primarily focused on hiring managers to deal with occupational groups where the greatest equity challenges/gaps exist. Of significance are issues facing rural and remote DFO sites. Plans are to have 188 managers, union representatives, Chairs of Diversity Committees and HR representatives invited to the April Conference.

DFO National Labour Relations' Symposium

The Symposium is scheduled for February 24 and 25, 2009. There was a discussion about this year's Theme; i.e., *Keeping Mid-Career Employees Engaged In These Times*. Several bargaining agents questioned this Theme and requested clarification on what it meant. The discussion confirmed that the focus will be to create actionable goals to improve how employees are valued and recognized by management for their competencies and engaged in work when they are close to retirement.

Barriers such as language competencies, mobility issues and advanced learning opportunities will also be addressed.

Classification

UEW noted that often responses to Statement of Duty Grievances at the workplace and at regional levels are vague and do not resolve an employee's request for clarity. Managers often respond that the OCCOE decides the content of the NMWDs and yet the OCCOE advises Bargaining Agents that its unique role is to classify the jobs detailed by management. UEW emphasized that this confusion is demoralizing for staff who want to ensure that the job descriptions under which they work effectively reflect the work they do.

It appears that many Sectors are developing new organization charts with target classifications being listed for positions when the NMWDs linked to the positions have yet to be classified. UEW expressed concerns that this jeopardizes a fair review of job descriptions. Will duties be cut from jobs so that the organization national structures are kept standard or will employees be classified for the complete range of duties they perform?

Management assured bargaining agents that this does not impact the outcome of any classification review and management also conveyed that in some cases, it has been advised that employees prefer to have an idea of the "targeted" classification level of their positions as they go through the NMWD implementation process.

UEW again re-iterated that generic NMWDs and generic organizational structures tend to downgrade the classification levels of positions as the specifics of a job or position cannot be properly reflected on a large scale and properly encompass the full range of duties performed by an individual.

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.