

BC/YT Region Regional Union Management Consultation Committee (RUMCC) Record of Discussions for May 18, 2005 & June 14, 2005

Participants

Union

Pat Wakefield	NVP CEIU, Co-chair
Grant McGregor (May 18, 2005)	Representative, PIPSC
Jim Beguin (June 14, 2005)	Representative PIPSC
Dave Stemler	Representative, APSFA
Frank Tanaka	Representative, CAPE
Christine Dockman	RVP, NHWU

Management:

Bill Ross	Regional Executive Head, Co-chair
Steve Barnard	Assistant Regional Executive Head
Bob McMorine (June 14, 2005)	Director Human Resources
Con Leonidas	Regional Manager, Human Resources
Judith Walton	Team Leader, Staff Relations

Absent:

Bob McMorine (May 18, 2004)	Director, Human Resources
Claudine Philippe	RVP, National Component
Derek Brackley	Representative CAPE
Grant McGregor (Absent June 14, 2005)	

Support to the Committee

Jill Mullis	Regional Executive Office
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Management Items

Highlights of Federal Budget

Bill Ross, Regional Executive Head and management co-chair provided highlights of the Federal Budget having impact on Human Resources Development Canada and Social Development Canada which included, Seasonal Agriculture Workers, Quebec Parental Benefits, Workplace Strategy and the Daycare Initiative. If the Federal budget does not pass the lack of funding will have severe implications for New Horizons and Workplace Skills programming.

As the Service Canada Initiative was not in the Federal budget it will proceed as it was passed by Treasury Board on May 16th.

Expenditure Review

Bill Ross advised that Expenditure Review resulted with the gathering of 12 billion dollars of Government funds from various departments for reallocation to other Government priorities. This resulted in \$100 Million dollars of cuts to HRSDC through EI transformation and processing of EI claims plus an additional \$100 Million from HRSDC in the form of Program savings. Program savings will be achieved by 70% through increased technology and 30% from operational procedures. There will not be cuts in Youth, Disabilities or Seniors programming budgets.

Service Canada was initiated as a result of Expenditure Review to disperse service to Canadians in a better fashion.

Comments / Questions

- NHWU asked if funds required for reallocation would come from salaries.

Management responded that ultimately savings will be generated over time through EI transformation with 1% reduction in the size of the Federal Public Service through attrition. This does not take into account the reallocation through Expenditure Review. However, Service Canada would be in line to receive some of the budget reallocation within Government of Canada priorities.

Service Canada

Bill Ross provided an update on Service Canada. Treasury Board approved an entity called Service Canada. The Government of Canada is currently in the process of rolling out Service Canada and determining what that will involve. Minister Stronach will be the Minister responsible for Service Canada within HRSDC. Maryantonett Flumian (MF), Associate Deputy Minister Human Resources and Skills Development is the Executive Head for Service Canada. The Deputy Ministers and MF will send out an all staff bulletin advising of the legal entity and subsequent changes as they evolve. This will impact on relationships with other federal departments looking at shared services in the future. All regional delivery will become a part of Service Canada. Labour programs will now fall under HRSDC. All other regional activities remain the same with Call Centres, Human Resources (HR), Financial and Administrative Services (FAS) and Systems being nationally controlled. For example HR will continue to serve SDC/HRSDC but will be managed out of National Headquarters.

Comments / Questions:

- NHWU asked which 12 departments will offer service to Canadians through Service Canada.

Management advised the 12 departments include: Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Social Development Canada, Foreign Affairs Canada, Public Works and Government Services Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Heritage Canada, Veterans' Affairs Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Health Canada, Canada Revenue Agency, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

- CEIU emphasized the need for clarity in messaging and asked if the communiqué would be sent to all staff of both HRSDC and SDC.

Management confirmed that all employees of both departments will receive the communiqués.

- PIPSC asked if Service Canada would become another agency.

Bill Ross advised that originally the submission to Treasury Board was to set up a new department however, TB on May 16, 2005 provided authority to redirect funds to Service Canada. Consequently the urgency to set up Service Canada as a new department is no longer there.

A new structure will evolve meanwhile for now regions will remain in tact.

- CEIU raised concern that future Service Canada front end staff would become "Wal-Mart greeters" losing the intricate skills currently held by SDRs.

Bill Ross responded that O Canada representatives are IS-2's which is a significant increase to the current SDR classification. SDRs should not be compared to the "Wal-mart greeter," but rather pathfinders for quality customer service.

- APSFA asked if there would be a difference in Service Canada offerings between devolved and non-devolved regions.

Bill Ross responded that BC, Ontario, PEI, Nova Scotia and Ontario as non devolved regions will continue to deliver EI Part II the same as we do now.

Bill Ross further advised Deputy Ministers of the 12 departments have started to meet to discuss how things are going to evolve. The concept of Service Canada is to expand Services of the 12 departments. This involves 53 business lines. An example of how Service Canada could be utilized in areas of commonality was Veterans Affairs being a department with the fastest growing client base that doesn't have the resources to

provide services all across the country.

Management further emphasized there is a good understanding why people are concerned. Due to the unknowns at this time, there will be limited expansion for the time being. We can also learn a lot from Service BC's best practices. Service BC is a model example of rolling out and implementing this type of service. Where feasible utilizing Itinerant service and sharing points of service with Service BC will be explored.

Action

- Management to forward the original Communiqué listing the 12 departments to NHWU representative, Christine Dockman.
- Management to forward copies of Communiqués sent to all staff to the NHWU representative, Christine Dockman.

Interim Operational Delivery Model

Bill Ross provided a copy of the BC/YT Interim Operational Delivery Model. Highlights included; All of ISP and EI processing (backend transactional Insurance operations) report to Steve Barnard, Assistant Regional Executive Head. Steve is responsible for Processing Operations. Consolidated points of Service include Vancouver/Burnaby, Langley satellite has been added to Surrey, Coquitlam/North Shore, Prince George/Terrace, Okanagan/Kamloops/Nelson, Greater Victoria (includes Saanich/Victoria with Cowichan now reporting to Greater Victoria), and Nanaimo remains the same. The consolidations are intended to create further savings.

Areas highlighted in blue (Labour Program, Call Centres, Integrity, Human Resources, Finance & Administration, Systems and ISP Outreach) on the Interim Model chart do not report to Bill Ross but provide services on a shared basis and report to NHQ. They will continue to be a resident function and still proceed under SC without the direct reporting relationship to the REH.

Questions and Comments

- CEIU voiced concerns raised by Corporate Services staff working in locations outside the lower mainland. The concern is they will be forced to relocate to Harbour Centre or Regional Headquarters if they want to continue performing corporate services duties.

Bill Ross acknowledged the concern voiced by CEIU and advised he will try to clarify previous messages out in the field. [\[G1\]](#) However, examples of compression and consolidation will continue to take place such as: Brian Smitheram Service Delivery Manager Corporate Services now being responsible for Burnaby/Vancouver and

Coquitlam/North Shore HRCC areas.

Bill Ross emphasized the need to build towards the desired future state. That is why it is termed “interim model” and will be used until a national model is imposed. The key difference is the reporting relationships. Management further emphasized the only people doing different work as a result of the Interim Operational Delivery Model are the SDR’s (performing front-end jobs) and HRCC Directors who are no longer responsible for managing Insurance processing.

Steve Barnard confirmed nobody within EI & ISP processing have new positions or been reclassified as a result of the implementation of the Interim Delivery Operational Model. The changes involve the move toward symmetry. The region is exploring ways to manage one workload both holistically and geographically particularly with the drop in claim loads.

- CEIU highlighted there is a concern amongst some of the membership that resourcing strategies to compensate for attrition may focus on situating new hires or replacements in lower mainland locations vs. outlying areas. Pat Wakefield stressed with a region wide management concept the work can be virtually done anywhere in the region, consequently she suggested the travel policy not be used as a reason to deny an employee choosing to work at a specific location. One workload management can be beneficial to both the membership and the citizens of Canada.

Bill Ross confirmed that indeterminate staff work for the region regardless of where they are located. Work does not follow an individual with the one workload concept.

- CEIU requested clarification of Integrity.

Integrity includes SIN registry and relationships with other information gathering systems. It does not include Investigation and Control which fall within Steve Barnard’s area of responsibilities.

- CEIU asked if Director Corporate Services is in the process of researching the jobs that CS staff are performing.

Management confirmed that research is currently underway to better understand and rationalize the corporate services work being performed in each office, with the desire to synchronize as much as possible.

- CEIU voiced concern raised by some of the membership regarding the change in

process for receiving cash payments. Concern being: potential interest charged to clients as a result of delays caused by payments now being forwarded to Regional Headquarters for processing.

Management agreed to research if the new process has any negative impact on citizens and will respond.

- NHWU asked if there is awareness within the region that some EI roles are being divided into front-end and processing.

Management confirmed there was awareness within the region and individuals affected would be informed. Con Leonidas Manager Labour Relations provided an overview of impacts on HR processes as a result of the new Interim Operational Delivery Model. Most authorities and processes don't change. Some changes at the first level include Service Delivery Representatives now report to the service area director who is their first level of grievance. The other unique situations involve Insurance Processing Operations Centre (IPOC), Investigations, and Labour Exchange/Foreign Worker staff at Harbour Centre and field Labour Market Information Analysts (LMIA's). For all employees there is no change in 2nd level (REH or functional ADM if nationally managed) or 3rd level (ADM-HR). Grievance Process charts outlining the process will be distributed to directorates for posting on the bulletin boards.

Local Union Management Consultation will maintain their orientation to existing offices. Service Area Directors will take the management lead but at the request of the unions it was agreed that all SDMs should participate at the UMCC meetings including the union representatives from satellite offices.

Action:

Management agreed to research if the new process for receiving cash payment has any negative affect for clients.

Implementation of new PA Collective Agreement

Bob McMorine, Director Human Resources advised all regular retroactive cheques have been released. Cheques for individuals who have been on some type of extended leave such as Leave with Income Averaging or maternity leave may experience another 2-3 weeks delay.

- CEIU expressed appreciation on behalf of the unions with regard to the quick release of the retroactive cheques so far. A big thank you goes out to all Compensation and Benefits staff.

Copies of the agreement are expected around the end of June.

Union items:

Printers in the offices agenda item was removed from the agenda by the union

Response to issues surrounding Grants and contributions

The G&C Working Group Committee requested CEIU to express concerns to the REH with regard to both the delay in the response as well as with the response itself. The main concern voiced by the committee is that due to community members' perception of conflict of interest, union members feel that their integrity is lessened. As they perceive that their concerns have not been addressed they have lost faith in the system and wanted the REH to know that. The Working Group members also alleged that Values and Ethics and Conflict of Interest are not totally understood by all managers. Members had hoped to see the Post Employment Conflict of Interest Guidelines revised to apply to those at the PM 1 level and upward.

Comments:

- NHWU asked if the REH would request a revision of the Post Employment portion of the Values & Ethics Code for the Public Service.

Bill Ross stated the post employment requirements are clear. Further, he emphasized *Segregation of Duties* was implemented to protect the integrity of program funds. It is up to all staff throughout their employment to stand up to what they believe in throughout the review processes that are in place.

Consequently Bill Ross, Regional Executive Head stated he would not endorse changes to the Values & Ethics Code for the Public Service.

- CEIU alleged concern that many Project Officers learn on-the-job and become responsible for contracts prior to receiving formal classroom training.
- CEIU asked for a listing of a) how many program staff particularly Program Officers and Programs Operations Consultants have received formal classroom training to date and b) "what specific training" they received.

Management asked what positions/classification levels were represented on the working group.

- CEIU advised the Working Group Committee included Program Operations Consultants, Program Officers, and Service Delivery Assistants from various areas of the region.

Action Item:

Management agreed to provide a listing of the numbers and training provided to date.

Scent Free Policy

Due to the sensitivities to scents in the workplace experienced by some employees, CEIU requested that BC/YT Region support a scent free policy.

Bill Ross advised that there is no point in developing a policy that cannot be enforced. Treasury Board has determined that any such policy is unenforceable. While we can ask for staff cooperation where an individual has a known sensitivity, we cannot direct employees or the public as to their use of personal care products. The National Policy Health and Safety Committee have determined likewise. Sensitivity to scents is not a workplace Health and Safety Issue, it is an individual employee's medical issue. In such cases we would accommodate employees as appropriate.

Action:

The Unions and management agreed to jointly develop a message to generate awareness of the sensitivities and impacts of scents in the workplace to be placed on the Regional News website.

June 14, 2004 - Union Items Continued

Internal Competitions After Working Hours

NHWU received complaints from some of its' members that payment of overtime for time spent during the testing and interview process (that occurred after normal hours of work) has been refused.

- NHWU suggested that internal competitions be conducted during regular hours of work and failing that, employees be paid overtime.

Management advised there is no provision in the collective agreement to pay overtime to employees who attend interviews/testing for internal competitions after normal hours of work or during AWAs. Management further commented that it is very rare for competitions to be conducted outside the normal hours of work.

- NHWU stated that failure to pay overtime was unacceptable from an employee's point of view. The union should have been consulted and further emphasized that the only alternative is to grieve that the process used is inequitable.

Management stated this particular situation was a national competition of which BC/YT region had no input to how it was conducted. The process was the same for all candidates across the country. Consultation with the union would have been done at the NUMCC.

Required Postings in Worksite

NHWU requested management ensure all required postings are posted.

Management thanked the union for bringing this item to their attention.

Action

Management agreed to send out an e-mail reminder to all directorates listing the specific documents to be posted on the Management Bulletin Boards in all offices.

Full Access to Formal Recourse

NHWU stated that due to management's interpretation of the collective agreement, full access to formal recourse at the regional level is inequitable for those working outside the Lower Mainland. The union suggested if management does not choose to interpret the collective agreement as intended, then video conferencing be used for second level grievances to provide opportunity for those outside the lower mainland to be heard.

Management stated that employees are provided an opportunity to attend and be heard at the first level. The hearing at the 2nd level is between the grievor's representative and the Regional Executive Head. It would be impractical to have all non lower mainland grievances via video conference. In the past, at management's request, due to the complexity of the grievance, there has been one hearing heard via video conference.

- The union advised that many times due to harassment, the grievor chooses to skip the first level and proceed to the second level. In these cases the grievor is advised they must take leave without pay if they wish to be heard. In accordance with the Collective Agreement, the grievor has a right to be there and a right to be heard. Travel expenses are not being requested.

Bob McMorine advised if the union can show where management is applying the right to be heard inconsistently, the union can bring it back to the RUMCC table.

- CEIU stated their members are on leave without pay to attend 2nd level grievances. The Regional CEIU reimburses the grievor for the Leave Without Pay.

Management suggested if a grievance bypasses the 1st level, based on the nature of the grievance and the complexity, the representative can put forward a business case to staff relations to have the grievance considered for video conferencing.

Meeting Dates:

Due to the limited availability of the RUMCC members throughout the summer months and December holiday season, the unions requested RUMCC meeting dates be pre-scheduled

Decision:

RUMCC meetings will be pre-scheduled to take place the third Thursday of each quarter. Future RUMCC meetings will be held October 20, 2005, January 19, 2006, April 21, 2006, June 15, 2006.

June 18th:

Due to lack of time, the remaining May 18th agenda items put forward to June 14, are incorporated into the May 18th Summary of Discussions. Those items included; a) Internal completions after work; b) Required postings in worksites by management; c) Full access to formal recourse.

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[\[G2\]](#)