

October 4th, 2010

An Open Letter to CBSA Workers from the PSAC FB Bargaining Team

Recently our union was invited by Treasury Board/CBSA to participate in exploratory talks to see if agreements could be reached well in advance of the expiration of our current collective agreements. Our team accepted the invitation, and met with management for the first time on September 22nd. The parties agreed to set aside 2 weeks for these exploratory talks. We indicated to management that we were prepared to enter into these talks as an opportunity to address problems in our workplaces and long-standing issues. Our proposals covered such areas as arming, scheduling (including seniority rights for all union members, a comprehensive framework for VSSA negotiations, elimination of involuntary 6 and 2 schedules), telework, paid meal period and other items. While pension is mandated by the Superannuation Act and therefore is not part of our contract, we also raised the issue of early retirement for FB workers.


From the outset, Treasury Board indicated that the loss of all future severance accrual for purposes of retirement and resignation must be part of any final settlement. In addition, at the FB table CBSA management proposed to reduce notice of shift change from 7 days to 48 hours, to reduce call-back pay when called to work from home from 3 hours overtime to 1 hour straight time, to put language in the contract that would state that employees would only get 7.5 hours when "H"d on a Designated Paid Holiday. Management also insisted on language that would give managers the power to ask employees to provide "satisfactory verification", "as determined by the Employer", when employees ask for any kind of leave. Management also sought concessions for Appendix B (VSSA negotiations).


Unfortunately, over the 2 weeks that we met, management did not drop any of their concessions, nor did they signal a willingness to seriously address our issues. As a result, we did not reach an agreement. To say that we are disappointed with management's position in these talks would be an understatement. **PSAC/CIU members working at CBSA deserve better. Much better.**

Our contract expires next June. Under the law the earliest that we can serve notice to bargain is end of February 2011. We will be doing so at that time. **We are determined to get the concerns of FB members at CBSA addressed in the upcoming formal round of bargaining.** If you have any questions, please contact your shop steward or Branch President. We will be sure to update as things progress.

Sincerely,

The PSAC/FB Bargaining Team


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