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December 14, 2009

Paramedics talks to continue

VANCOUVER —The CUPE 873 bargaining team is set to meet with representatives of the BC Ambulance Service Wednesday and Thursday. Talks for a new collective agreement started last week.

Ambulance Paramedics of BC bargaining team spokesman John Horsfield said he is “cautiously optimistic” after last week’s session. “We are engaged in broad discussions of the issues facing the ambulance service – that’s a positive development.”

Horsfield added that in the face of vague Liberal government threats to dismantle the province-wide service, “both sides agree that the provincial model is the best option for a viable and sustainable ambulance service in B.C.”

CUPE 873 served notice on Dec. 1 to launch the talks for a new agreement to take effect after the current “contract” legislated by the Liberals expires on April 1, 2010.

The “broad conceptual issues” under discussion include scheduling, staffing, seniority and training and recruitment.

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Contact: Murray Bush, CUPE National Communications Representative: 778.554.2234