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September 26, 2018

Dear Members;

Re: EMALB Representation – Member Update

Earlier in the year I reported to you that the number of members finding themselves the subject of an EMALB complaint or investigation has been increasing. The processes of such investigations also seem to have changed, with some situations moving directly from complaint to discipline, without any investigation at all. This is very troubling, to say the least.

Historically, the Union has provided lay-person assistance to members who are dealing with a complaint at the EMALB. For the last number of years, that support has been provided by Brother Troy Clifford, as one of his many roles for our Union. Earlier this year, Troy advised the executive that he needed to transition out of this role, as the workloads were becoming unrealistic. That set-in motion a review of this business practice and service offered by the Union.

At the May 2018 Provincial Executive Board (PEB) meeting, our board discussed this service and what possibilities exist for continuing that service. The Provincial Executive Committee (PEC) then took the feedback from that discussion back for further review in the months that followed. We reviewed our statutory obligations under the labour code, our legal liability in providing the service, our 2015 legal opinion on providing the service and finally the new liability insurance options available to BC paramedics and dispatchers.

In August of 2018, we convened a special PEB meeting to again discuss this issue. A motion was made for the Union to continue to provide this lay-person advice on EMALB complaints. After significant debate, that motion was defeated. This means representation on these matters will no longer be provided to members by the Union. Where an EMALB complaint also has an Employer investigation, the Union will continue to represent members with the proceedings with the Employer.

While this is a significant change in practice, the PEB felt this was necessary due to the cost and liability to the Union for the growing number of complaints. We've produced new member resources documents to help members understand the process and know where and how to seek help. Those resources can be found here: www.apbc.ca/members-area/information/emalb-info.

I would remind all members how important it is to purchase your own liability coverage, via the plan available to all Canadian paramedics. As you know, complaints may be submitted to the EMALB by other practitioners, the employer, patients or members of the public (<https://goo.gl/88bR8b>). Whether the complaint is legitimate, or not, the investigation process can have a significant impact on the Paramedic. As you may know, in Ontario, we have recently seen Paramedics criminally charged for their actions in treating a patient.

More than ever- **it is CRITICAL that all Paramedics purchase and carry liability insurance to protect you and your Paramedic practice.** Unfortunately, none of the Paramedics recently subject to complaints had purchased this important liability coverage. More details and instructions on how to obtain the insurance for Paramedics and Dispatchers can be found here: <http://www.apbc.ca/contact-us/pac/>. Note, APBC does not profit or gain in any fashion from members purchasing this insurance.

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I also want to take a moment to acknowledge and thank Brother Troy Clifford for his many years of service to members in this role. His dedication and work have helped so many through what is a stressful and difficult time. On behalf of all 873 members, thank-you Troy!

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact your RVPs.

Sincerely,



Cameron Eby
Provincial President
Ambulance Paramedics & Emergency Dispatchers of BC
CUPE Local 873

CE/km/MoveUp

