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December 20, 2016

Attention: All Members
CUPE, Local 873

Dear Members;

Re: President's Update

Your Executive has been very busy on a number of different fronts, we thought we would take advantage of a small break between an arbitration and the MOU discussions the Executive has been involved in to update you on some of the current issues.

Out of Touch

As your aware, there has been a drastic changeover in management in the last two years with approximately 80 long-term BC Ambulance managers being terminated or "retiring". With the loss of those managers we seem to have also lost the majority of any BC Ambulance management that possessed the corporate knowledge and history, on how to run an ambulance service.

While were very unique under Health we also are public safety, and until our Employer accepts that we are a combination of both Public Safety and Health, I believe they will continue in chipping away at our Ambulance Service and the front line medical professional care which we provide.

We have a number of strictly healthcare based managers at the helm of the ship, trying to figure out how to run an Ambulance Service as if it was a hospital or a facility. Our Employer appears to be totally blind to how to operate and manage a provincial ambulance service.

Even more frustrating, is our Executive Vice-President, Linda Lupini, was in the media on December 1, 2016 in an interview with CKNW, taking serious liberties with the truth and realities of what's happening within our Ambulance Service. If you listened to the interview, she paints a picture that all is good with regards to resources and response times.

Executive Vice-President Lupini also paints a picture that not only is everything cakes and pies with the Ambulance Service, but our response times have improved since last year in Surrey, while only slightly worsening in Vancouver. This is a little bit of a play on words, when our response times were horrific last year, and now their just horrible. Even the reporter found her statements hard to believe. Of course, she also does not mention the failing response times or unstaffed cars in rural BC.

Bottom line, our Employer is disconnected with what's happening on the front line and how to operate an Ambulance Service.

Attached is Linda Lupini's interview with CKNW on December 1, 2016, listen here:

http://www.apbc.ca/files/9414/8218/7593/linda_lupini1.mp3

2017 Wage Increases

We now know the numbers for the 2017 Economic Stability Dividend (ESD). The 2017 ESD will result in a 0.35% wage increase. Added to the other general wage increases, the 2017 wage increases will be:

- First pay period after February 1, 2017: 1.35%
- First pay period after April 1, 2017: 0.5%
- **Total 2017 general wage increases: 1.85%**

Universal hourly rate (UHR) will also be implemented on April 1, 2017. This will result in a further increase for Part Time employees, ranging between 16% and 40%. Detailed and updated UHR wage grids will be released in January 2016.

MOU Discussions

We have had four separate meetings/discussions with the Employer to date with regards to the narrow issues Unit Chiefs, Shift Patterns and Regular Part time.

We have had some very productive discussions with the employer and intend on advancing some changes which will revitalize the Ambulance Service. We will keep you posted on any progress with our discussions.

Resources, Up-staffing & Kilo / Fox Conversion

While in the MOU discussions, we became aware of number arbitrary changes the Employer has made with regards to staffing, which are in violation of the Collective Agreement. It would appear that it has been a management free for all in the various regions across the province.

We relayed to the Employer that while we understand their need to staff their current resources, they need to stay in line with the Collective Agreement and they need to schedule and pay our members accordingly.

It appears that the Employer is attempting to capitalize on the fentanyl crisis as a reason to violate terms of Collective Agreement, while we all know that their staffing and resource issues existed long before April 2016 when the Provincial Crisis was declared.

Even the Employer's own commissioned report, the ORH report, which reviewed the resources, staffing and deployment of metropolitan BC reports on our deficient resources. This report doesn't even touch on the staffing and resources in the rest of the province including, urban, rural and remote BC.

We raised the Employer's creative scheduling, which includes but is not limited to converting their staffing of various units and we have the following to report back.

Northern region - All 'first car' kilos were being converted to a half fox type model. This has been stopped. Direction from managers to Unit Chiefs, and then to staff should have occurred Thursday December 15, 2016.



All cars are to follow the Collective Agreement. Since the Employer had 'offered pay' to these employees, we have agreed that all affected kilo units will receive an automatic four-hour callout at the start of each shift. They will be asked to report to the station, perform a car check and sign into CAD, and then go home. For this they will be paid four hours for each shift.

Lower mainland - Most kilo / fox units in Sea to Sky, and Fraser Valley were being 'converted to juliet cars', and being paid as a spareboard. This is also being stopped as of December 15, 2016.

While it looks attractive to staff to do this, it is simply an escape for the Employer to lock people into 12 or 13 hour shifts, without paying overtime, and is a violation of the Collective Agreement. There was a conference call December 16, 2016 for all the managers in the regions, and it was made clear to them there is to be no **conversion** of kilo / fox to juliet. Nothing is to stop the Employer from adding additional resources as juliet's.

All of the kilo/ fox cars are to remain the same. The Employer can activate (page) them and assign work, and if they are worked for longer than 8 hours, overtime will be paid (or double time after 11 hours). In short, our position is if they want full time staffed cars, they should post and fill those positions... Otherwise, they have to deal with their inefficient and archaic call out system.

Juliet cars - Across the province the Employer is attempting to 'up-staff' with juliet cars. Juliet cars are ONLY to be units that are in addition to normal units (not converted units). While the Collective Agreement doesn't touch on this, we've never objected to the Employer staffing extra cars. If they put on a 12 hour juliet, and someone accepts it as a shift, it is 12 hours of straight time, like a spare board (unless it's a FT on recall).

If you hear about anything contrary to the above, please let your Regional Vice President know.

Mass Texts from Scheduling

Apparently scheduling is sending out thousands of texts, asking people to find a partner and come to work for at least 6 hours. This is "cold calling", and the fair & equitable work allocation isn't required. It's simply first come, first served. If there are employees who have made themselves available for a shift, they should be offered work BEFORE they go to cold calling.

Media Coverage

We have been receiving a number of questions about media coverage by the Ambulance Paramedics of BC. We have been doing media almost daily, we have also recruited some Regional Vice Presidents and other members to assist with the media requests. We have a lot of exposure in the media, we have been working with our new public relations firm to stick to our messaging surrounding resources and issues surrounding mental health and we believe were making some progress. Our public relations firm has been tracking our media, and has been giving us some tangible feedback including that we have reached 4.5 million impressions with our media alone since December 1, 2016. [Please click here for a list of media links, since December 1, 2016.](#)



Grievances/ Arbitrations

We have a numbers of grievances / policy grievances on the go and queued up for arbitration, we have all hands-on deck processing and preparing the grievance matters to go forward. These grievances range from terminations, to the implementation of Universal Hourly Rate (UHR). Please stay tuned for more updates on specific matters as they are resolved.

Executive Changes and New positions

In the month since Tom Manz retired, we have had a number of interim elections at the Provincial Executive Committee level. Cameron Eby was successful in election to the Provincial Secretary Treasurer position, which prompted another notice of election for the Provincial Recording Secretary position. Jason Jackson has since been successful in election to the Provincial Recording Secretary position.

We have also had elections or appointments take place for some new positions. For the Interim Communications Director position, Carolyn Nikodym, from Fernie, was the successful candidate. Carolyn has already been involved with our strategy sessions with the Executive and our public relations firm, and we look forward to working with Carolyn more.

A new Website Administrator has also been appointed. Brianna Van Donselaar, from Smithers, was selected to join the administration team. Brianna will be phased into the role over the coming month.

The EOI for the new Social Media Director position has now closed, and we look forward to selecting a candidate after the holiday break. We recognize that our social media mediums are an area that can assist us with communicating more timely and efficiently, so we look forward to getting that position into place, in line with our public relations strategies going forward.

Congratulations to Cameron, Jason, Carolyn and Brianna on their elections / appointments. We look forward to working with everyone as we start the new year.

We will keep you posted and updated as matters arise. On behalf of the Executive, I wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday season.

Sincerely,



Bronwyn Barter
Provincial President
Ambulance Paramedics and Emergency Dispatchers of BC
CUPE Local 873

BB/sw/MoveUp



Link

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