

**REPORT OF THE
NATIONAL PRESIDENT
Todd Panas**

This report will cover the period from October 1, 2016 to March 8, 2017.

INTRODUCTION:

I am very honoured and proud to submit my first National President's report under our new Union of Health and Environment Workers. Congratulations UHEW for making this Historic event possible! I'm equally proud to have the opportunity to Co-Lead this new Union together with Brother Tilley and YOU our new united Council.

I would like to focus this first report under our new organization on the Historic merger of this new Component under the Public Service Alliance of Canada - Our Union of Health & Environment Workers (UHEW) as well as our future, and other successful initiatives.

On December 15th, 2016, History was made when the former National Health Union and Union of Environment Workers locals voted and ratified the "Motion" which was unanimously endorsed by the NHU Council and UEW National Executive. These ratification votes were over 90 percent successful amongst both organizations and 53 locals which voted across the Country.

This "merger" personally was the biggest undertaking of my 37-year union career. There was no book or past practices to follow and we basically had to do our best and implement a democratic process in a very short time frame to meet our By-Laws and convention obligations.

In hind sight, we could have done better, communications more consistent and equally, and waited another 3 more years but I strongly feel that collectively the members and representatives have made the best decision for our Union and the members which we represent.

We are not just a new Component Union; we are much more than that! We are a family of members and activists that want to raise the bar, and improve the quality of life of every member within our family - nothing less is acceptable.

Although our merger happened on December 15th, the official date on our new PSAC Charter is December 31, 2016 where we became an official new Component.

This merger was a huge undertaking, and a very challenging transformation for the staff at both Components. I want to thank them for their patience, understanding, support, and assistance during this merger process. I want to give a special thanks to Daryl Hoelke, Executive Assistant to the President, and Julie Lavictoire, Administrative support. These two employees performed a lot of the leg work and logistics to make this historic event possible, right up to our first Council meeting in Montebello, QC.

I want to thank Sister Robyn Benson and the Alliance Executive Committee for supporting and endorsing this merger which was the first Component Merger before a founding convention in PSAC History.

I want to acknowledge the hard work of the members, Locals, Regional Vice Presidents, Human Rights Representatives, Vice-Presidents, and last but not least, Brother Tony Tilley for their efforts in making this wonderful merger possible.

BROTHER TONY TILLEY NATIONAL CO-PRESIDENT

I want to thank Tony Tilley for his leadership, friendship, partnership, and for that wonderful lunch meeting in early 2013 when he called me and asked my thoughts about a future merger with NHU. Tony was instrumental and a key leader with this merger and deserves recognition. Although we weren't successful at the 2014 Conventions, our perseverance continued and we are together today.

Tony and I have known each other for many years as local, regional and national union leaders and activists. We have been NBOD members together since 2011 where we have sat together at these meetings and shared the same ideologies, passion, and that "members first" philosophy. We are known as so called "mavericks" that sit at the far back at the NBOD with those long passionate and sometimes highlighted speeches.

Brother Tilley recently retired on February 28, 2017 from UHEW due to health reasons. With this surprising decision, it comes with mixed feelings as we will miss his large leadership presence, wealth of experience, many skills and that far eastern voice that carries throughout the PSAC movement.

We all know that Brother Tony will never completely leave his Component, or the labour movement. He will be at our founding Convention with his wife Mary, we will have him play a part in future UHEW information sessions, regional conferences, and other initiatives that will further complement our new Union.

On behalf of the UHEW, I want to wish Tony, his wife Mary, his children, and wonderful twin grandchildren the very best as Papa is finally coming home to stay. We will all miss you Brother, and we will cross paths many times again and again. Thank you!

RVP - ONTARIO REGION

I also want to acknowledge the leadership and great work of Sister Sarah Caribou as Regional Vice-President for the Ontario Region of the former National Health Union.

Sister Sarah was a long time RVP, Local, and Regional Activist that wore her heart on her sleeve and her deep care for the members. From the short time that I've known her she has a heart of gold, a smile that makes everyone smile, and that love for life. The Council has asked her to be on our Convention Host Committee so we will all get to see her again, acknowledge and celebrate her retirement together at Convention. Thank you Sarah for your service to our members.

With the retirement of Sister Sarah, please join me in welcoming the new RVP for Ontario Region - Brother Kevin Lundstrom to our UHEW family. Kevin brings a wealth of experience as a local and regional activist with both NHU and the PSAC Ontario Regional Council. I have had a few telephone conversations with Kevin and we have exchanged many emails on various issues and challenges facing our UHEW membership

COUNCIL

We held our first Council meeting during the second week of January 2017 in Montebello, Quebec, where we had to make some very difficult and timely decisions surrounding convention dates, location, committees, future meetings, etc. We also held a "team building" session which was a successful ice-breaker activity. It was a great week and we had the pleasure to meet some wonderful new Regional Activists from across the Country and share our stories, experiences, and many challenges.

A new Council position - Director of Enforcement was created unanimously for our one thousand enforcement officers. This position will be dedicated to represent our members on National Issues at both Fisheries and Oceans and Environment & Climate Change Canada. Brother Jeff Irwin was appointed to this position which he will share with his Co-Vice President role. Jeff is more than qualified as a 33-year Fishery Officer, 25 year union activist, and has served on many joint union-management committees. Congratulations Jeff.

Our Council was comprised of 19 members which is now reduced to 18 with Tony's retirement.

Also, we held our first curling bonspiel filled with thrills, spills, hurry-hards, laughs and fun where all participants and spectators were winners. The food was great, activities were endless, atmosphere was amazing, and we are off to a wonderful evolution.

Please welcome our Council Team Representing the following Regions & Positions:

Elizabeth Oliphant - RVP, B.C./Yukon
Elaine Alt - RVP, Alberta/B.C/ Yukon
Larry Schlosser - RVP, Saskatchewan
Faye Kingyens - RVP, Manitoba
Daniel Grunert - RVP, Prairie & Northern
Cheryl Sullivan - RVP, Ontario
Kevin Lundstrom - RVP, Ontario
Jayne Powers - RVP, NCR
Michel Lépine - RVP, NCR
Sylvain Guimont - RVP, Quebec
Daniel H. Gauthier - RVP, Quebec
Karla Levangie-Connor - RVP, Atlantic
Bob Ellis - RVP, Scotia-Fundy
Steven Maund - RVP, N.B./PEI
Jennifer Higdon - RVP, Newfoundland/Labrador

Shimen Fayad - National Vice-President
Jeff Irwin - National Vice-President and Director of Enforcement
Tony Tilley – National Co-President (Retired)
Todd Panas - National President

Thank You all for your support, activism, volunteerism and service to our members. Your partnership within our organization and sacrificing your time, along with balancing your work and family with the affairs of our Union are paramount. This is the highest honour within our Union and we value your activism and support to our members.

Our staff team is comprised of ten employees with one vacant administration position. I would like to thank all our staff during this challenging merger transition and we look forward to a united, committed organization with quality and efficient "service" to our members as our common goal.

Please welcome our Staff Team:

Gary Trivett - Executive Assistant
Daryl Hoelke - Executive Assistant
Celine Bourgon - Administration
Julie Lavictoire - Administration
Sylvain Meilleur - Financial Officer
Carmine Pacifico - Financial Officer
Kim Coles - Service Officer
Mark Hockley - Service Officer
Luc Paquette - Service Officer
Stephen Vanneste - Service Officer

We are a true science based Union of almost 10,000 members from Ocean to Ocean to Ocean representing Health Canada, Public Health Agency Canada, Federal Hospitals, Fisheries & Oceans Canada, Environment Climate Change Canada, Canadian Forest Service, Canadian Environment Assessment Agency, and Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation.

Our new organization will bring many new talents, ideas, skills, better practices, diversity, leadership styles, and synergy to our Component. With these many positives we must always focus on that positive energy and lesser on the negativities that challenge us.

Leadership is the key, where openness, transparency, giving that benefit of doubt to all, and putting all decisions, communications, and services through that RESPECT lens will maintain our focus on a sustainable organization.

We must respect the diversity and various leadership styles and keep in mind that we all have that common goal which is “members first” and providing the best services to all our members in a timely fashion. We all want nothing more than the best quality of life for our members. So together, let’s demonstrate that leadership 24-7.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

On behalf of UHEW, I want to thank the PSAC Bargaining Teams, the Common Issues table, the sub-bargaining Committees for reaching these fair tentative agreements at four of the five PSAC bargaining units.

I believe the MOU reached to establish a joint task force on sick leave next round with representatives from all the Bargaining Agents to come up with a new wellness plan was one of the key factors in reaching these tentative agreements. Great work to preserve and protect the four principles of our sick leave:

- Grandfathering sick leave banks and remain in future plan.
- Enshrined in all Collective Agreements.
- No third-party provider hired to manage it.
- provide wage replacement.

Enforcement Officer Allowance of 3,000.00 for Fishery Officers and Wildlife/Enforcement Officers for the GT-02 to GT-05 levels. This was a bargaining demand for the field level Fishery and Enforcement Officer positions.

The PSAC and our Component have been receiving many calls and emails from our Enforcement members within the GT-07's and PM 05's from both ECCC and DFO.

These would include the managers, detachment and intelligence officers. As you are aware the PM's are not part of this allowance.

As the Component President for the Union of Health and Environment Workers - I have no role in the bargaining process nor do I sit at the tables. I was not privy to the bargaining discussions nor was I consulted on the tentative agreements. The bargaining process is governed by PSAC Regulation 15 and the bargaining teams are autonomous on how they reach a tentative agreement. The bargaining process is a lengthy democratic and consultation process where bargaining demands are sent through the system and bargaining team members are elected.

As you can imagine, each round is a lengthy process where both parties (TB and Negotiation Team) submit and debate their positions. At the end of the day, the bargaining teams do their utmost to achieve gains where they can and where they can't - there is the next round where they try to address any gaps.

I urge you to attend the ratification meetings and address your questions to the bargaining team members.

Please visit the PSAC Website or the PSAC Regional Websites for information and voting sessions within your region or location.

NEW GOVERNMENT:

I am very disappointed on this governments broken promise on electoral reform. This was a campaign promise to change the first past the post system which is not true representation. I encourage all members to speak to their MP's and the opposition parties to hold this government accountable for their election promises.

But, on a positive note, we did reach tentative agreements for 4 out of 5 Treasury Board Bargaining units.

I have yet to meet with the Honourable Catherine McKenna even though in March of 2016 she agreed to a meeting with me. I've since sent her follow up letters with my disappointment and have reached out to her on Facebook for our meeting.

The Honourable Dominique LeBlanc - Minister of DFO has agreed to meet with me in October. The Honourable Jim Carr, Minister of Natural Resources Canada has refused to meet with me even though he knows me from Winnipeg. I have reached out to all Ministers since they were elected and its approaching one year - hopeful for these important meetings to take place.

I will be writing the Minister of Health in the next few months for a bi-lateral meeting. This is almost comical how this new government has pledged an open and transparent government and better respectful relations with the Unions.

Bill C-27 which threatens all Public and Private Pensions and our sacred Pension Plans by these right-wing governments where they want to change the laws from defined benefit plans to targeted and or defined contribution plans and place all risk, contributions and liabilities on the employee.

BULLYING - VIOLENCE WITHIN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

I want to emphasize that we have an epidemic within the departments we represent and across the Public Service with respect to continuous bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Yes, this is a powerful word, but I'm shocked with the number of current complaints and others that have come to my attention during my travels, by email, and or in general passing.

I have written the Prime Minister, Mr. Justin Trudeau to establish a Parliamentary Committee to study and investigate the high levels of bullying, violence, discrimination, intimidation, and abuse of authority within the Public Service. The APEX report, survey, and recent news stories on violence by Senior Managers are supporting evidence for this much needed political committee

My recent visits and discussions with Health Canada and PHAC employees, activists, service officers and Council members indicated that we have a HUGE problem across the country.

How does this happen in a first world society and within a democratic institution like Canada? We have strong labour laws, unions, acts and legislation, policies and tribunals and yet these cases are on the rise or more so employees coming forward because of our Respect Campaign with increased awareness and support! We all need to step up and do more and all levels of government need to ACT and establish strong legislation and make these types of abuses illegal and punishable by law!

On a positive note, UHEW's new Workplace intervention process where we work with Senior Management and hold a face to face town hall in collaboration with the other unions and members and develop an action plan with full accountability has been very successful with both ECCC and DFO. We have had very successful interventions in Moncton, Fredericton, and Pacific regions. We will continue to promote this joint collaborative process as it has proven results with the highest accountability. If you have a problem with your manager, work unit, section or other, there are other options outside the formal complaint process. We can help and make a difference in your quality of life by meeting with your ADM to jointly improve your workplace.

I'm very determined and committed to resolving as many problematic and paternalistic work places within HC and PHAC workplaces as well as, each and every department and agency we represent.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS:

I attended twenty Annual General Meetings where some of these were late in 2016 which were combined merger vote meetings. It was a pleasure attending the large Health Canada Local 70008 NCR local with Brother Tony Tilley.

Our Council and Convention will have to find a solution to the two different AGM seasons. The former NHU held their AGM's in the month of November and or the month proceeding or month after. The former UEW, held their AGM's from January to March. The Council Resolutions Committee will be submitting a proposal at their first official council meeting in April.

I want to thank all Locals and Regional Vice-Presidents for the organization of their annual general meetings and the great engagement of issues. These AGMs are very rewarding and a great investment to meeting our members and activists in person. The common themes were Collective Bargaining, Respect Campaign, Merger, Performance Management, Phoenix, and classification issues.

It was an honour to give a presentation to Brother George McElwee as a long time Local, Regional and UHEW activist. George was the long-time Local 20147 President and good friend from the BC/Yukon Region. His leadership and involvement will be deeply missed and we welcome new Local President, Megan Adam.

Also retiring from this local are Brother Tom Hopkins and Brother Frank Snelgrove. Tom was a long time Local Vice-President and TC Bargaining Team Member. He was very active within the PSAC and Labour movement and we thank Tom for his dedicated service. Frank retired as Local Treasurer and long time Fishery Officer steward who represented many fishery officers over his union career. We want to wish them the very best with their retirements.

NATIONAL JOINT OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY COMMITTEES:

UHEW as well as the other bargaining agents are experiencing issues within all six departments and agencies where we have Employee Representatives. This is not a recent problem or issue as the last decade our membership struggles to find their identity, responsibility and role on these very important legal committees. There is clearly little or no active participation as per the Canada Labour Code, Part II.

The 2nd Mental Health Joint Task Force Steering Committee Report needs to be read by all OHS representatives and added as a standing item for all OHS committees at the local, Regional and National Levels.

We have invited Agriculture National President and PSAC OHS Champion, Bob Kingston, and his Treasury Board equivalent to an upcoming National ECCC Labour-Management Symposium to speak on the “mental health” task force report and our obligations under the CLC, Part II.

The recent PSAC OHS forum for National Policy Representatives held in Ottawa was very beneficial to our representatives. This was the second forum where many component representatives came together for a weekend of education. This was a NBOD motion from the PSAC National Standing Committee on OHS.

We are asking all Employee Representatives to place a few standing items on their respective committees:

- Annual Review on the Success of the Committee.
- Active Participation by all Committee Representatives.
- Face to Face meetings.

- Budget.
- Mental Health Joint Task Force Steering Committee 2nd Report.
- Developing an Annual Work Plan for the Committee which should include training.
- Seeing and providing Input to the Departmental Program OHS plan.

LABOUR/UNION MANAGEMENT CONSULTATION COMMITTEES:

UHEW is front and centre on all National, Branch and Sector Labour/Union Management Consultation committees. This is our venue to raise significant workplace issues that affect each and every member across our union.

I was delighted to attend my first Regional HC UMCC in Alberta with Elaine Alt, RVP for Alberta/B.C./Yukon Region which was Co-Chaired by Elaine and Jocelyn Andrews. It was a very successful meeting where I spoke about the new UHEW Union and our National RESPECT Campaign and challenged the Alberta Region to establish the first Regional Joint Union Management Respect Committee.

We encourage all Local, Regional as well as the National Labour/Union Management Consultation Committees to place the following issues as standing agenda items:

- Respectful Workplace
- Violence Prevention in the Workplace Complaints
- Administrative Investigations
- Performance Management
- Pay Issues
- Staffing/Departmental Budgets

It is very important to first raise the issue with a Manager or Union steward, then to the local or local President, involve the Regional Vice-Presidents and if unresolved bring it to the attention of our National Office.

WORKPLACE TOURS - VISITS - ADHOC MEETINGS

National Microbiology Laboratory - Winnipeg

Faye Kingyens (RVP Manitoba) gave me a wonderful tour of the Public Health Agency of Canada - National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg while in Winnipeg for my home Annual General Meeting. I have visited this lab prior during my Library and Archives days working in Winnipeg as they were one of my clients. Faye arranged a meet and greet with members where I answered many questions and concerns on bargaining and other workplace issues.

Pacific Biological Station - Nanaimo B.C.

Elizabeth “Liz” Oliphant (RVP B.C./Yukon) was my tour guide along with the Local 20090 President, Richard May where I attended their Annual General Meeting and visited the station and met some of the members. It was my first time to the PBS site and to this local. We endured this visit during a rare snow storm and we survived the Malahat in Liz’s Mazda 2. Thanks Liz for keeping me safe and sound.

Pacific Forestry Centre - Natural Resources Canada - Saanich B.C.

Previous work place of former RVP, Nic Humphreys where we had a nice meeting with the Local 20169 Executive and Dan Lauvaas and Jessie Simpson gave us a full tour of the facility. Thanks Jesse for the cookies and muffins. This was my first visit to the PFC and meeting the local members within this work site.

Institute of Ocean Sciences - Sidney B.C.

This is Liz’s DFO work place where she works as a hydrographer for Canadian Hydrographic Services as well as the home for the Pacific Geoscience Centre - the main centre in in western Canada for monitoring earthquakes. Also stationed at IOS is the Canadian Coast Guard Pacific fleet. We were able to board and tour the DFO mid shore patrol boat where our fishery officers use to go out to sea and we also met the ships crew.

It was nice seeing Liz’s place of work and we were even able to board her small ship the Otter Bay. It is very tight quarters where she sleeps on the table and her other co-worker on the floor - wonderful accommodations.

INFORMAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION:

First off, UHEW is very supportive of the DFO informal conflict resolution program - Values Integrity Conflict Resolution. This program is well funded, supported and based regionally and is positively received by our DFO members across the land.

On the contrary, UHEW doesn’t support ECCC’s Office of Conflict Management program. Even the name doesn’t offer a positive welcome to solving issues informally. As I indicated in my last report the ECCC program is not well funded nor does it have regional practitioners. It is centrally based in Ottawa where contractors are hired to overcome shortages which poses many problems to our members. Without giving you multiple examples the bottom line is our members do not trust the program, its neutrality nor the program overall. Saying that, there have been limited successes, and we ask all members to consult their UNION before agreeing or engaging in this program.

It is too early to comment on Health Canada or the Public Health Agency of Canada - Informal Conflict Management Resolution process until I meet with key stakeholders, our members, discuss with the Council and National Office Representatives but rest assured I will make a quick evaluation and report in the near future.

UHEW RESPECT CAMPAIGN & RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE COMMITTEES:

At our January 2017 special Council meeting in Montebello QC, our RESPECT Campaign was unanimously endorsed due to its importance and the results that we have achieved thus far. With that, the National Office has ordered 6,000 more wrist bands with the name Respect - Action and our new website www.uhew.stse.ca

These bands will be in their popular pink and baby blue colours. This very popular campaign and National Committees will be promoted, advocated and hopefully adopted by both Health Canada and the Public Health Agency Canada. I will offer to be the Co-Chair and UHEW Respect Champion to compliment my positions with DFO and ECCC. From there we will establish Regional Committees and where needed workplace or local committees.

In December 2016, I was the first National President to make a presentation to the Executive Management Committee (EMC) of Environment Climate Change Canada on our National RESPECT Committee. The Deputy Minister, Michael Martin asked me during a bi-lateral meeting as the National Union Co-Chair and Champion of our Joint Respect Committee to recommend some new initiatives to further institutionalize Respect within the workplace. To take our RESPECT committee beyond the balloons and annual celebrations. This presentation was well received by the Deputy Minister not so much by all the Assistant Deputy Ministers but that is not surprising as this would be increased accountability for their actions or their lack of. I was invited back to give a second presentation in March 2017.

I shared this ECCC RESPECT presentation with Catherine Blewett, the Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and she invited me to give the same presentation to their Departmental Management Committee (DMC) which is also their most Senior Management Committee in early spring or summer 2017.

Within the presentation were three new & key initiatives:

- establish a Respect Liaison Officer (Ombudsman)

- establish an Exit Interview Program conducted by a third party.
- to add to the Performance Management Agreement a new comment box on a Respectful Workplace.

This will further add to some of the other respect initiatives like the Respectful workplace goals and objectives within all Senior Managers Performance Management Appraisals.

Three departments held Annual Respect Days in partnership with the Bargaining Agents. ECCC's Respect Day was November 17th, NRCAN was held in October and DFO's was on November 28th. Ideally our united goal is to have all RESPECT DAYS on the same day, but we realize logistically this will take a collective effort and our objective for now is to have a day for each department. Our challenge will be to advocate and promote three more National Respect Days with Health Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada, and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency.

NATURAL RESOURCES UNION JURISDICTIONAL DISPUTE:

Finally, thanks to the leadership of Sister Robyn Benson, the PSAC Roles and Responsibilities Committee and continued efforts by National leadership the Dispute is finally over and all members within the dispute who work within the Canadian Forest Service are now assigned to the UHEW. This 12-year jurisdictional dispute is now over and a success story for our members and union.

UHEW FUTURE:

Our National Council will continue to operate our Union as a viable sustainable business with a "Members First" mandate with new ways to become a more fiscally sound, efficient and effective operation with exceptional services to our membership and strong representation as our hallmark.

We have leased a new facility on 2781 Lancaster Road in Ottawa right off the 417 at Walkley Road. We signed a ten-year lease with an option of an extension. This includes office cleaning and four months free rent at the end of our lease period at a net value of 68k which we negotiated.

This is a beautiful Class A Office Building where UHEW will occupy 75% of the 4th floor or penthouse. Our rent will be basically cost neutral compared to the aggregate of both combined and former costs for NHU at the PSAC building and our operational costs and or rent at the former UEW owned building. The Landlord will pay for \$40.00 a sq. ft. for fit up costs and UHEW will be responsible for \$20.00 per sq. ft. We will be required for IT, audio and logistics for boardroom and some new furniture and equipment around 50K. The sale of our building and comfortable profit margins will more than over these expenses with the remaining placed into more investments.

Our possession date is June 1st where we hope to be in one facility for all staff. We will be planning an open house for the Fall of 2017.

UHEW has a letter of offer to sell the former UEW office at 2181 Thurston Drive. This offer is from our tenant to whom we lease a portion of our building to them. They have a first refusal within the lease and they have agreed to our terms of sale. This sale will save us any commercial real-estate fees as we never listed our facility on the market.

CONCLUSION:

Thank you for the privilege to lead our new Union of Health and Environment Workers into our founding Convention in Toronto from August 22 to 24th, 2017. I will be seeking your confidence in my leadership style where I bring 37 years as a Union activist from my first days as an 18-year old term employee where I was local Treasurer and strike captain during the first PSAC CR strike in 1980. As a young activist from Winnipeg where my former Component Union was the National Component now Union of National Employees. I have learned a great deal and continue to learn with you.

The members or activists who know me, there is nothing I won't do to help a member, a local, or a workplace with their challenges, my record clearly demonstrates our successes and how far or how high I will go!

I am far from perfect but I believe I have the experience, knowledge, strength and endless passion to lead our Union into one of if not the most sustainable and progressive component unions within the PSAC. No challenge is too big and no challenge is too small as strong leaders always find that fair solution for all.

I'm excited and I look forward to our partnerships, friendships, and meeting your family and loved one's during our journey where members first will be our final destination.