

**REPORT
OF THE
NATIONAL PRESIDENT
Todd Panas**

This report covers the activities of the National President for the period of August 25 to November 4, 2017.

INTRODUCTION:

Congratulations to the incoming Council which includes the Regional Vice-Presidents, alternates and Vice-President. Thank you for putting your name forward as an elected officer and representative for the members, your region, and your Union. Your dedication and service to the members is well appreciated and respected by all. Saying that, it's essential that you balance your Union work with your job and family and ensure that all are given their deserved attention.

I want to personally thank all Delegates, Observers and Council for their support and the very healthy mandate. It is an absolute honour to be the first elected National President of the Union of Health and Environment Workers.

I want to thank Larry and Karla for the final work on the RVP Handbook and Steve, Karla and Michel for their work on the Local 70008 Structure Committee. Both these initiatives are key to our future and sustainability as a strong, educated and structured Component.

I also want to acknowledge the work of Michel as Co-Trustee for Local 70008 and all his assistance working at the National Office pre and post convention. Michel is handling many local files and providing key representation to various local members.

Special thanks to Steve Maund for his information technology expertise for the National Office.

Finally, I want to thank Shimen for her great work as Co-Trustee for Local 70008 and for the wonderful decorative touches of our National Office, working on staff roles, duties and responsibilities, dealing with the transformation challenges, and assisting me with the many needs and requirements of our busy and changing organization. She has been a blessing and her skills and many talents shaping the operations of our National office have been invaluable. Thank you Shimen!

CONVENTION:

After eight months of planning and hard work of the National Office staff, our Inaugural Convention was a success. There were no formal complaints received, the budget was approved, all By-Laws resolutions were dealt with, and we got through the majority of the other resolutions. Yes, the elections of the delegates at large for the PSAC Convention needs to be improved in order to make them more efficient and timely for 2020.

The increased costs due to the multiple travel challenges with the two airport strikes by respecting both the Teamsters and UCTE members in Toronto and Winnipeg compounded our efforts to make this convention a complete success.

The Aboriginal opening and closings, in concert with the dancer and drummer were both respectful and complimentary to holding our convention of First Nations land. It was an honour to enshrine Tony Tilley as the first Life Member under our new Component and the special butterfly dance performed by our Quebec RVP, Maryse Veilleux.

It was an honour welcoming and introducing Maude Barlow and her speech on water and the environment was well received and very complimentary to our Union.

I want to thank Cheryl for her leadership and both the Convention and Host Committees for a great Convention and there is no doubt that Toronto is the new standard for the rest to follow.

RESPECT:

Our National RESPECT campaign and many National and Regional Respectful workplace committees continue to forge ahead and are starting to make the needed cultural changes throughout the departments and agencies we represent.

On November 28th, we will have three departments and one agency celebrate National Respect Day on that day and/or week with many National and Regional awareness and celebration activities.

The most recent Public Service Employee Annual Surveys clearly indicate increases in both harassment and discrimination within the work place which is alarming.

The recent Hill Times news' article, for which I was interviewed, has shed some light on this epidemic of shameful violence and harassment within the public service. I'm hopeful that either the Prime Minister or the Minister of Treasury Board will strike a parliamentary committee to deal with this epidemic.

PHOENIX:

This pay system continues to plague our members and there is no quick fix or resolution to the biggest public service disaster in history. On October 12th, many UHEW members from three Ottawa locals along with many more PSAC, PIPSC, CAPE and others rallied at the Prime Minister's Office. Thanks Jayne, Michel, and Shimen for joining with our members at this very important rally.

We all need to support our members and expedite their pay issues through the escalation or pay liaison offices and or through the grievance process. There is also a political element where we need to lobby our elected officials and place continued pressure on this government.

NATIONAL OFFICE:

The National office continues to take shape due to the great work of our Vice-President Shimen Fayad. It's not just the esthetic features but in concert the operational work flows, staff roles and responsibilities and transformation.

We have invited all the departments and agencies to consider holding their National or Branch Union Management Consultation Committee meetings at our office to meet our staff and to promote our space as a viable alternative. We have had many visits and meetings from senior departmental officials since Convention.

We are planning our open house on December 1, 2017 which will be the same time as the PSAC Leadership training. We are also excited to have our Council meeting at this beautiful office next spring shortly after the PSAC Convention.

HUMAN RESOURCES & LABOUR RELATIONS:

These bodies need to be more than transactional and punitive bodies for our members. There needs to be strong and strategic collaboration with management, the union, and LR before a decision or discipline is rendered on a member.

The Union and Labour relations culture needs to take a radical shift to a more humane and balanced position versus the almost always rights based approach. This will take education, evolution and the key three parties (Labour – Management – Labour Relations) to make this effective and collaborative change.

UNION MANAGEMENT CONSULTATION COMMITTEES:

Union Management Consultation needs to be strengthened with better collaboration and tangible decisions which improve the work place and quality of life for all members. We need to ensure that we have annual review mechanisms within the consultation framework or Terms of Reference. We need to celebrate our successes where there are true successes and forward unresolved issues to the next level.

Holding meetings for the sake of participation and good dialogue does nothing for our members and doesn't meet the spirit of consultation. We need to raise the bar and hold all levels of management accountable for these consultation committees.

Union Management Consultation is a legislated and legal framework under the Public Service Labour Relations Act and we must hold management accountable for their actions or their lack of.

If you are having challenges with your Regional UMCC's or they are less effective and you require the National President, please do not hesitate to contact the National Office and coordinate his attendance. It is also a thought to possibly schedule an AGM during the week of a UMCC and in order to have him attend both meetings.

JOINT UNION MANAGEMENT - WORKPLACE INTERVENTIONS:

Senior management from both HC, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch and the Public Health Agency have approached me to provide them advice and alternatives on establishing healthy and respectful workplaces in various regions and offices throughout their organizations. We are presently negotiating to perform work place interventions at the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg and the Sioux Lookout office as pilots. There is no doubt that these pilots will lead to many more joint interventions across the country.

VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT IN THE WORK PLACE:

UHEW strongly encourages and promotes that all members file a REGULATON XX, Violence Prevention in the Work Place complaint against management for any form of harassment, violence or abuse of authority. We do not recommend any informal conflict management, Ombudsman or values integrity conflict resolution for these types of complaints. Nor do we recommend grievances or the Treasury Board Harassment Policy as these are not effective in solving the complaints.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS:

With the merger and recent By-Law changes at our National Convention, it's important that Locals update their local By-Laws to reflect the new Component Name, which also needs to be updated on your bank accounts and the Annual General Meeting period from October 1st to March 31. Locals can also opt to have one, two or three-year terms with proper notice of motion and vote.

With 57 Locals, it will be impossible for the National President or designate the Vice-President to attend every AGM as well the budget does not provide for full attendance at all AGM's. Please coordinate as soon as possible the date and time with your Regional Vice-President and or Alternate RVP in order to have them attend these important meetings and conduct your elections. Please coordinate with the Executive Assistant to the President for the National President to attend your AGM. The National Office would appreciate scheduling multiple meetings to save costs and reduce travel.

COMMUNICATION/EMAIL PROTOCOL:

The National Office has developed a communication protocol which will be included in the RVP handbook as well as communicated during the upcoming training at all levels.

I cannot emphasize enough that all members should use the Local executives as their first route to solve issues and there after, the Regional Vice-President. The Regional Vice-Presidents can effectively deal with the Director, Regional Director General or even the ADM within the management cadre on resolving local or regional issues.

The RVP or Local President can also deal directly with a UHEW Service Officer or the Executive Assistant to the National President. There is no need to copy the National President on any correspondence dealing with local or regional issues. Please feel free to email or call the National President directly when all avenues have been exhausted and you require direct intervention.

We all need to be cognizant on who we copy and replying to all. There is really no need to reply to all unless there is direction to do so and when to copy someone. We need to respect the number of emails that are unnecessarily flooding the systems and to ensure that the important and key emails reach all individuals in a timely fashion.

CONCLUSION:

We have a diverse Council and its important to note that with the many decisions before us that we maintain our unity, respect and “members first” philosophy, each and every day. The next three years will be both busy and challenging with the PSAC Convention, Regional Conferences & Training and shaping our future with the UHEW Structure Committee.

It is important to note and emphasize that the former Component organizations no longer exist and we need to focus on our strong and united Component Union and provide healthy and respectful workplaces from ocean to ocean to ocean.

Together over the next 34 months we will make our Component the model and envy of every Component under the PSAC where representation will be second to none and members first will be our only destination.