

**REPORT
OF THE
REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT
PRAIRIE AND NORTHERN REGION
Mark Gilchrist
Fall 2019**

LOCAL STATUS

Due to the summer field season and member's vacation time, locals have generally been quiet. The fall federal election looms and its effects on lingering bargaining talks are starting to have effects in the workplace. We seem to be in a holding pattern till we know who will form the next government.

Local 30071 - Edmonton NRCan - CFS

- The Local President included me in on work with a series of complex Phoenix issue that date to 2016 on that included both PIPSC and PSAC members. Some progress has been made with the assistance of the National Vice-President.
- The local has a working LMCC and OHS meetings regularly. I attended a second videoconference with managers that was open and productive.

Local 30703 - Edmonton ECCC

- The Local President will be away for much of September and has asked me to assist during her absence on an issue until her return. A member within the Enforcement Branch had been told that they were going to reclassify her and they dragged their feet with this process. The member has moved to new departments to continue their career and on August were informed by the manager that has dropped any work on the reclassifications over the time they worked in the group and are denying any proof of the work outside their old work descriptions and thus are denying any back pay for the identified work period. Due to not filing a grievance at the start of this process and placing it into abeyance, they have lost the opportunity to challenge the job description and as a result also losing any back pay that would have resulted.
- A significant issue has developed with the ECCC members that work at the National Forestry Centre that involved a group meeting to discuss issues following the AGM in March. After additional discussions with Local Leaders and Managers, it was decided to invite Sylvie Richard (Respect Bureau) to plan a visit to that worksite for presentations and confidential interviews to investigate and discuss problems. It was a voluntary opportunity at arm's reach for union and management as a first step. Mid-August, a presentation was held to highlight themes of the discussions.

- Connection to other ECCC division and locations, including NRCan within the Centre
- Frequency and effectiveness of information communicated from management to staff
- Roles and responsibilities for all parties and options for training
- Career progression
- Management change and change in processes
- Management recognition for work performed

Management has committed to opening steps to rebuild this work environment. We will continue to monitor progress as we move along to ensure the tools and direction are in place to start to heal the team.

- Participates in Local and Regional LMCC, and Regional OHS meetings regularly.

Local 30704 - Calgary ECCC

- There has been a Water Survey Branch structural change in Southern Alberta that affects both Locals 30704 and 40721. A new operational area is being created this year that divides Alberta into 2 regions and building a new working group in Edmonton from members formally working out of Calgary. Once those members are settled in Edmonton Office the 2 Locals will need to transfer member responsibility. One of the members has been working out Northern Alberta, reporting to Calgary, has had a difficult time with the NJC move policies due to the unprecedented collapse of the housing market in the Alberta oil patch. In future NJC negotiations we need to seek to expand the scope of extraordinary circumstances that a move has real possibilities of bankrupting a federal worker requires moving to retain their position within the government. The senior regional manager for Water Survey has personally been involved in discussion on mitigating within the NJC directive.
- Participation in RLMCC is sporadic.
- Issues continue at the Calgary warehouse including OSH compliance. Managers involved continue to work on finding corrective action.

Local 30725 – Yellowknife - ECCC, Local 40001 - Saskatoon - ECCC

- These Locals have typically been quiet and been able to handle problems locally without needing me to engage other than a few inquiries.
- Occasional participation in Regional LMCC and no formal local LMCC. The local OHS committee meets regularly and is effective. Saskatoon has been including me on distribution of their OSH minutes and I've had good working relations with their SBO when discussion was needed to.

Local 40721 - Regina - ECCC

- Local President had been out of the office for much of the first half of the year for time off and field work and is planning a local meeting for members in the first half of September to update members on bargaining developments and the federal election, upcoming Presidents conference and seek questions from members.
- Alternate RVP is from the Regina Local and continues with her maternity leave.
- The Local OSH committee meets regularly and run smoothly. There is no Regina LMCC meetings and the present SBO is in transition to retire shortly and has committed the bringing the new manager up to speed before departure.
- The Pay System continues to have some impact on members. This is usually for those with fieldwork and compensation time calculations.

Local 50135 - Winnipeg - DFO

- I've been speaking with the Local President, he told me that Todd is also aware of his difficulties in the work place in focusing pressure on him in his interactions and pushback with management. There is a perceived atmosphere of reprisal for the work that the union performs for the members, mostly directed at the Local President. This is an issue that we need to continue to monitor to insure it doesn't continue to escalate.
- Participates regularly in Local UMCC and OHS meetings.

Local 50707 - Winnipeg - ECCC

- An issue has recently risen in Winnipeg that has placed the Local President in a delicate position with her members. With having members that are also supervisors, working relationships occasionally get difficult for the union to effectively represent its members. I was asked to sit in on a fact-finding meeting regarding a member as a neutral observer and union representative. Generally, the meeting went well with some difficult moments. I was surprised that a second meeting was proposed just before the Labour Day weekend for the morning - for 3 hours. I had written a strongly worded response cautioning them about their intent to discuss medical issues. I included a reminder that disclosed information at the first meeting had indicated possible harassment and bullying within the workplace and that management has failed to acknowledge during questioning and has failed to act upon that information. The meeting was emotional and an attempt to close it out before we were able to add any additional thoughts. Labour Relations was not happy but pressed on and we added background to the situation for better context.
- Regular participation at the RLMCC. The OHS committee is meeting compliance.

RVP ACTIVITIES

- A brief summary of activities following the AGM season
 - Regional Conference in Saskatoon, September 17-19th.
 - ECCC - Labour-Management Symposium, May 15-16th.
 - Background work for the Scholarship and Awards Committee leading up to the fall National Council Meetings.