

Report to Council from the National Director of Regulatory Enforcement

Activities (Covering the Period Jan 1, 2020 through to April 13, 2021)

- **UMCC ECCC** – a meeting was held prior to the proposed March 2020 meeting with members from ECCC from across Canada. Concerns were brought forward relating to Fear of reprisal, Violence, Harassment and Bullying in the Workplace, Respect, Administrative Investigations / Internal Investigations, GT-05 work description- separate for WED and EED, Staffing reports over last 3 years across the Enforcement Branch in all regions, Report on Performance Management completion rates over last 2 years, Corrective measures from WED group grievance going back to 2011, Lack of communication/dispatch for Field Officers, PSES - poor results for the Branch, Branch accountability in addressing issues and others. However, the evening prior to our meeting it was cancelled and due to COVID we are still trying to get these heard and meet in person with the Executive Branch. **STATUS – to re-engage this and other topics at first opportunity with the ECCC National Executive.**
- **Reclassification File – (DFO) Fishery Officers** – this has been an ongoing fight for over 30 years now. There has been work done to try and address this over the years however each time it has been met with resistance. Over the last year there has been 3 changes in the Director General. Monthly meeting has been scheduled and been attended over the course of the last few month and there were several meetings prior. In November 2020, management had moved forward with 2 proposals to the Deputy Minister without Union input which were both struck down by the DM. They have been back at the drawing board ever since and there is some fear that they will look at collapsing one of the current levels. A proposal has been provided to them using an RCMP type of structure for consideration however information is coming in that one of the Regions has also submitted a proposal and likely utilizes the collapse of one level within the organization. **STATUS - Ongoing**
- **Appendix KK** – on a National Committee looking at this commitment to the Joint Review of Appendix C applicable to Fishery Officers in the General Technical (GT) Group working offshore surveillance at the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) in the TC Collective agreement. To date there have been several meetings between the members and PSAC however management has only shown up at one. Two main goals here is for DFO and the PSAC will work together to review Appendix C as a whole, and more specifically will discuss: the average number of hours of work for Fishery Officers working offshore surveillance to ensure proper reflection of the actual work done in surveillance and in arrest mode; and the applicability of travel status leave to this group of employees and to make proposals to the parties to inform the

next round of bargaining. **Next meeting is tentatively set for the end of April or early May.**

- COVID 19 – was on a DFO National Working Group looking at PPE, application and training around PPE and the distribution of PPE to the Regions/Areas. Work was completed on this and wherever possible mitigation of any potential short comings were implemented (ie Regions/Detachments would purchase themselves rather than wait for NHQ to provide). **STATUS – completed however maintain a watch on any work being done/provided.**
- COVID 19 – weekly conference calls between Director of C & P Maritime Region, RVP Marc Blanchard and myself to discuss the overall Mental Health and Well-Being of Fishery Officers and staff, what was needed to ensure everyone safety, office closures (where applicable) and use of 699 Leave. Concerns from staff were brought forward and wherever possible the Director would address them. This included working from home, the application of 699, the provision of PPE and safe working procedures at the office and in the field. National provided some of this input however in the early stages it was left upon each Region to develop what a Critical Service was and how we would operate in the new world (Fishery Officers continued to work in the field, interacting with clients and dealing with situations as always however keeping in mind limitations and safe working procedures). These meetings have recently been picked up by the new acting Director with a meeting April 12th and a regular monthly meeting being scheduled for the foreseeable future. Current meeting topics included reclassification, payment of the Fishery Officer Bonus (and the potential grievances Nationally that will be coming at most all levels), Mental Health and Wellness and others. **STATUS - ongoing**
- Officer Safety/Mental Health and Well Being – not only through the communications locally but in my conversations with the DG in C & P National I conveyed my concerns, around the ongoing confrontations that were taking place in the Maritime and Gulf Regions and literally on the news daily. As Officers working in the communities we serve, public opinion was at an all time low and Officers were literally getting it from all sides. I made senior management aware of these stresses and offered for each one of them to feel free to walk a mile in our shoes. We carry out the work of the Government but clearly have not been supported by them and at times were thrown under the bus (as witnessed in the media and social media outlets). This has taken a toll on the people who do their jobs with pride as directed by management and under the existing laws. These issues and circumstances were presented to the senior managers to make them aware of what their actions (or inactions) have on the people who act as their front line. Media and government official communication was demanded to be utilized to deal with any misinformation that may be presented. As I understand it, this is supposed to be improved this year but will wait and see if that is the case. **STATUS - ongoing**

- UHEW Campaigns – arm band and face masks were Fishery Officer campaigns aimed at getting the message to management in relation to the reclassification of all Fishery Officers. Although this seems to have had some effect other campaigns are being worked on to continue to apply pressure to this serious issue. These resulted from work of the DFO portion of the National Enforcement Committee with the support of the National President.
- Fishery Officer Letter Writing Campaign – input was provided to PSAC in their campaign to help clarify some of the information that was being used and to ensure that Fishery Officers were not misrepresented or underrepresented in this.
- Resolution NEGO-29 - Legal Fund – PSAC has a fund set aside to assist all within the enforcement branches (currently DFO and ECCC) while applying the use of force. Information was provided from both ECCC and DFO as it relates to the policies overseeing its use and training to help assist the legal team that has been retained in the event of a use of force event. More information is to follow as PSAC continues to roll this out. Legal advice and services would be provided to Officers who apply use of force in the execution of their duties. **STATUS – awaiting finalization from PSAC**

Working On

- Development of a more formal job description/outline for the position of National Director of Regulatory Enforcement. It seems to still be unclear to many what this position entails or its usefulness to the National President of the UHEW and to the PSAC.
- National Enforcement Committee – this was originally viewed as a mechanism to allow all three enforcement branches, ECC, DFO and HC, to come together and share information. A place to bring common issues forward and help each other potential solve them. This has not been working in its current format. Planning is being done to look at having individual meetings with representatives from each group independently and possibly collectively a couple times per year. This will allow each group to be heard while also still being able to bring those similar issues forward. The exact timing is still being worked out and membership for each will also need to be worked on to allow for a complete cross section of each department. COVID threw a lot of things out of control this year and this was one of them.
- Communication – suggesting that those who may want me to provide information at their AGM's that it could be done using a platform such as MSTeams to provide their members with an update but leaving it up to the Executives/RVP's of the locals to discuss. For their consideration.
- Potential National Grievance for the Fishery Officer Allowance – there has been a lot of interest in how this allowance is being rolled out and that it may only be paid out for around 6th months' worth of back-time. This will have a national application as it

will affect PM05 and PM06 Fishery Officers across Canada in various roles and functions.

Other

- I have been contacted by multiple members of each Department in relation to issues that are important to them. I have redirected them to their Local when it was a matter related to something local and have also brought forward other more National issues (Cannabis, Health and Wellness, Harassment/Bullying).
- Aware of the refusal to work in relation to the ECCC Officers. This was because of a lack of communication system for those working in the field. It has been handled by the local and RVP and I am aware that Shimen and Benoit were also brought into the fight as well. I reached out to the National DFO radio program officer looking to see what options may be available and what we DFO has been using outside of the East Coast. To my surprise, DFO is experiencing the same problem as ECCC in this respect. Although in Eastern Canada we are tied into the OCC, the same is not true as we move westward. Ruben has been working diligently on this file and has been sending me updates.
- Met with Fishery Officers from Pacific Region via MSTeams at the request of Megan Adams (RVP). There was a large turnout for this virtual event. Provided them with an update to the reclassification file and provided them with an opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns. There will also be 3 new attendees from the Pacific Region added to the National Enforcement Committee.