

**Final Report of the
Union Management Consultation Committee
on EG Career Development within the CFS**

Canadian Forest Service (CFS)

and

Union of Environment Workers (UEW)

Committee Members

Chuck Davis (UEW), Great Lakes Forestry Centre

Nick Humphreys (UEW), Pacific Forestry Centre

David Nanang (CFS), Great Lakes Forestry Centre

Bruce Pendrel (CFS, retired January 2013), Atlantic Forestry Centre

Vincent Roy (CFS, new member January 2013), Laurentian Forestry Centre

1 March, 2013

Background

In November 2010, the former Assistant Deputy Minister of the Canadian Forest Service, Mr. Jim Farrell, set up a Union-Management Consultation Committee to address certain issues pertaining to career development for members of the Engineering and Scientific Support (EG) Group. The Committee is composed of: Bruce Pendrel (AFC) and David Nanang (GLFC) (representing management) and Chuck Davis (GLFC) and Nick Humphreys (PFC) (representing the Union). Mr. Pendrel retired from the CFS in January 2013, just before this report was finalized, and was replaced by Vincent Roy (LFC). The committee was established to carry out the following mandate in a timely fashion¹:

1. To provide a forum for consultation and the exchange of ideas and information to analyze EG career opportunities and progression and conditions of employment as they apply to EG technicians on a nation-wide scale within CFS;
2. To foster effective two-way communication and mutual understanding;
3. To identify areas and matters of national concern; and
4. To develop a clear definition of the problem and present possible solutions to achieve EG career progression for review at the CFS LMCC.

The intent is that the committee will operate in a cooperative atmosphere in which members can express themselves freely.

Approach

The committee met several times by Tandberg and developed a plan to execute the mandate. Data on the distribution of EG levels from the Great Lakes Forestry Centre and Pacific Forestry Centre were used as examples to analyze EG career progression issues (see Tables in Annex B). The committee provided an effective and cooperative forum to discuss EG progression issues. After these preliminary discussions and understanding of the expectations of each side, the Committee met face-to-face to review the progress and develop recommendations. The recommendations are supported by both sides.

The Issues from the Union's perspective

The main issue from the perspective of the Union is the lack of progression for EGs within the CFS and NRCan at large. Also, there are other related concerns:

- In some regions, there still appears to be purposeful under-classification of EGs, mostly driven by budgets
- Broad banded work descriptions have made it extremely difficult for EGs to progress past the EG 5 level and levels above EG 6 are rare;

¹ For details of terms of reference for the committee, see Annex A

- Guest workers i.e., volunteers, visiting scientists, students, casuals, research assistants, etc. are becoming more prominent in the workplace and are doing the work of EGs;
- EGs are being hired at reduced levels and higher level EG work is being transferred to other classifications;
- The classification levels for EGs are typically at EG 2 or EG3 and there seems to be difficulty progressing out of this range, even though previously the working level for EGs was an EG 5;
- In some cases, term and indeterminate employees that attempt to have their jobs reclassified have been told that there is no money in the program budget for reclassification so duties are taken out of the job description to lower the classification level; and
- There is no “career development” plan for the EGs within CFS.
- The data also clearly shows that the working level for EGs has been reduced to EG 3 and 4 levels, EG 6 levels drastically reduced and only one EG 7 in the CFS (data not in annex, position in NoFC). Classifications of EGs at higher levels are known to exist in other departments.

Analyses of the Causes

The Committee then proceeded to analyze the causes of the problem and provide recommendations.

1. Although many managers conduct regular reviews of EG work to ensure that the classifications are appropriate for the work done, this is not done consistently across the board.
2. UEW is of the view that there is a problem with the use of broad-banded work descriptions (BBWD) in the CFS, and that the descriptions are so generic and so encompassing that it is difficult to differentiate between the EG-03, EG-04, and EG-05. The wording of the BBWD leaves room for differences in implementation. Duties of EGs, even if only performed very occasionally need to be included in work descriptions to ensure that the positions are correctly classified.
3. Technician pools in one form or another exist within the CFS. These pools assist teams to meet their work objectives and provide assistance to scientists who do not have EG-technical help. This creates a challenge regarding how EGs progress,

as they share their time among many scientists, which results in multiple supervisors and complicates appraisals. Furthermore, the BBWD makes it difficult for EGs to benefit from the wide range of experience and work done within the pool. While the case could be easily made that multi-functional work and the ability of EGs to move seamlessly between vastly different programs should be recognized as a valuable asset not as a liability with classification.

4. The BBWD does not recognize directly EG benefits from publications, though it is understood that EGs who publish are working at a higher level. This lack of recognition de-motivates EGs and hence limits their chances at development
5. The process to approve re-classifications is done differently across CFS centres. In some centres, it is the director who approves the application, while in others it is the whole management team. Management support for re-classification within the regions also varies. This could be a matter of process or attitude.
6. There is a lack of knowledge of historical and present distribution of EGs in relation to themselves and other occupational groups. This hinders planning and the identification of career opportunities.

Recommendations

Based on the causes identified above, the Committee makes the following recommendations. Management Committee should:

1. Send a clear message to the organization that EGs should not be classified based on budgets, rather it should be based on their responsibilities and duties;
2. Annual review:
 - a) Ensure that Directors provide more oversight for annual reviews of EG work and make career development part of annual conversations, with supervisors and managers as well.
 - b) Encourage managers/supervisors to ensure that learning plans are targeted to EG training that are linked to career development
 - c) The contribution of EGs to scientific publications should be recognized. Although it is noted that the publications by themselves do not constitute grounds for promotion, it is recognition of high level skill sets and responsibilities by the EGs.
3. Develop a database on EGs and the other different occupational groups and levels annually within the CFS as a way to develop a strategic plan for career development, understand changes, identify opportunities and project future needs for the organization. Accordingly, CFS should review EG career development plan annually and make decisions on what issues require attention.
4. Broad-banded work descriptions (BBWD)
 - a) Further investigations are required to understand why there are differences in the application of the BBWDs in CFS and other departments and if appropriate, propose to the Department and Treasury Board Secretariat to review the broad-banded work descriptions accordingly;
 - b) Managers and supervisors within CFS should be encouraged to bundle responsibilities of EGs in a way that truly reflects their duties;
 - c) Actively look for ways to use the EG7 to EG8 levels including writing BBWDs for those levels.
5. The CFS should develop a framework to recognize the uniqueness of EGs working in a pool situation, and a consistent way to use this information for career development;
6. Develop a consistent process across and within management groups for classifying EGs by providing classification training to all supervisors/managers of EGs and where appropriate, assign a Director in the Centre to champion EG career development issues such as mentoring and coaching EGs on their careers.

ANNEX A

Union Management Consultation Committee – EG Career Progression
Canadian Forest Service and Union of Environment Workers

PURPOSE

The committee is being established to carry out the following functions in a timely fashion:

- 1) To provide a national forum for consultation and the exchange of ideas and information to analyze EG career opportunities and progression and conditions of employment as they apply to EG technicians on a nation-wide scale within CFS.
- 2) To foster effective two-way communication and mutual understanding.
- 3) To identify areas and matters of national concern.
- 4) To develop a clear definition of the problem and present possible solutions to achieve EG career progression for review at the CFS LMCC.

The intent is that the committee will operate in a cooperative atmosphere in which members can express themselves freely.

JURISDICTION OF THE COMMITTEE

To consult does not imply unanimous or majority agreement, nor does it in any way interfere with either Management's or the Unions' legal rights.

SUBJECT MATTER FOR CONSULTATION

All matters may be subject to consultation, except:

- a) Those which could modify Acts, Regulations derived from these acts governing Terms and Conditions of Employment, and Collective Agreements.
- b) Those for which formal channels of redress have been established.

The subject matter to be discussed should be of nation-wide concern.

PARTICIPANTS

Department Representatives

One or more senior department representatives with knowledge of EG career progression issues.

Union Representatives

Representative(s) from the EG group as determined by UEW-STE and Staff officers of the Union of Environment Workers.

Additional Participants By Mutual Agreement

The committee may invite additional persons to attend meetings for the purpose of addressing a particular subject on the agenda.

ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

Representatives on the committee or other employees who are invited guests shall be protected against any loss of regular pay due to attendance at meetings. Travel authority shall be the appropriate mechanism for approval to attend these meetings. The requests for travel authority shall be submitted and approved one month in advance.

LOCATION AND SCHEDULING

Meetings will be held on the employer's premises at times determined by mutual agreement.

Meetings will normally be scheduled during working hours where feasible.

AGENDA ITEMS

At least six weeks before the meeting, the respective chairperson will confirm the agenda. In order to ensure that meetings are productive, agenda items should be accompanied by short explanatory notes, so that preparatory work may be completed in advance of the meeting. All members will be provided with the agenda four weeks before the meeting.

CONDUCT OF THE MEETING

Management will be responsible for chairing meetings.

These Terms of Reference are subject to review after one year and may be amended at any time by consent of the parties.

For Canadian Forest Service

Date

For the Union of Environment Workers

Date

ANNEX B

DISTRIBUTION OF EG INCUMBENTS ACROSS THE CFS

Can we get a Table or Tables that will reflect the distribution of EGs and is it possible to get some information from Northern and Quebec to include? (This line should be removed from final document but if possible we should try to include data from these centres)

A. Great Lakes Forestry Centre

Table 1. Actual distribution of EG population at GLFC (2000- 2010)

Year	EG-02	EG-03	EG-04	EG-05	EG-06	Total
2000	0	4	5	42	21	72
2001	0	4	6	41	21	72
2002	1	2	7	38	20	68
2003	2	6	5	38	22	73
2004	4	8	7	33	19	71
2005	5	6	9	32	16	68
2006	5	4	11	34	17	71
2007	6	3	9	34	14	66
2008	4	4	8	37	15	68
2009	1	7	12	36	14	70
2010	1	10	13	34	12	70

Table 2. Percentage distribution of EG population at GLFC (2000- 2010)

Year	EG-02	EG-03	EG-04	EG-05	EG-06
2000	0	6	7	58	29
2001	0	6	8	57	29
2002	1	3	10	56	29
2003	3	8	7	52	30
2004	6	11	10	46	27
2005	7	9	13	47	24
2006	7	6	15	48	24
2007	9	5	14	52	21
2008	6	6	12	54	22
2009	1	10	17	51	20
2010	1	14	19	49	17

Table 3. Percentage distribution of EGs at GLFC as a percentage of total EG population in the CFS

Year	EG-02	EG-03	EG-04	EG-05	EG-06	Total%	Total Pop
2000	0	2	3	21	11	36.73	196
2001	0	2	3	21	11	35.55	197
2002	1	1	4	19	10	34.52	197
2003	1	3	3	19	11	34.52	200
2004	2	4	4	17	10	36.22	196
2005	3	4	5	19	9	40.00	170
2006	3	2	7	20	10	42.01	169
2007	4	2	6	21	9	40.74	162
2008	2	2	5	22	9	39.77	171
2009	1	4	7	20	8	39.11	179
2010	1	5	7	18	6	37.63	186

B. Pacific Forestry Centre

Table 4. Distribution of EG population at PFC from 2000 to 2011

Year	EG-02	EG-03	EG-04	EG-05	EG-06	Total
2000	5	4	2	24	6	41
2001	5	5	1	24	6	41
2002	5	8	4	23	6	46
2003	5	5	5	22	5	42
2004	4	5	6	20	4	39
2005	2	7	7	19	4	39
2006	2	7	8	17	4	38
2007	2	4	7	18	3	34
2008	2	2	7	15	2	28
2009	0	2	7	12	2	22
2010	0	1	7	12	2	22
2011	0	1	8	11	2	22

Table 5. Percentage distribution of EG population at PFC from 2000 to 2011

Year	EG-02	EG-03	EG-04	EG-05	EG-06
2000	12	10	5	59	15
2001	12	12	2	59	15
2002	11	17	9	50	13
2003	12	12	12	52	12
2004	10	13	15	51	10
2005	5	18	18	49	10
2006	5	18	21	45	11
2007	6	12	21	53	9
2008	7	7	25	54	7
2009	0	9	30	52	9
2010	0	5	32	55	9
2011	0	5	36	50	9

Table 6. Percentage distribution of EGs at PFC as % of Total EG Population in CFS

Year	EG-02	EG-03	EG-04	EG-05	EG-06	Total%	Total Pop
2000	0	2	3	21	11	36.73	196
2001	0	2	3	21	11	35.55	197
2002	1	1	4	19	10	34.52	197
2003	1	3	3	19	11	34.52	200
2004	2	4	4	17	10	36.22	196
2005	3	4	5	19	9	40.00	170
2006	3	2	7	20	10	42.01	169
2007	4	2	6	21	9	40.74	162
2008	2	2	5	22	9	39.77	171
2009	1	4	7	20	8	39.11	179
2010	1	5	7	18	6	37.63	186

Committee members:

Nick Humphreys _____

Date _____

David Nanang _____

Date _____

Vincent Roy _____

Date _____

Chuck Davis _____

Date _____