



CEP Atlantic Communications Council Membership Bulletin December, 2006

Workplace Change

Our last meeting of the Workplace Change committee was Nov 16. Everyone in the Test and Dispatch Area in Nova Scotia have found new positions, while 2 employees in NB remain. The transition of the work to NL is moving forward. We have been advised that the full transition will be complete by first Quarter 2007, including the outsourcing of Residential Test. Our next meeting is scheduled for Jan 11, 2007.

Part-Time Employees

As per our Bulletin from June, we asked the company to investigate the movement of PT to FT per Article 30.04 (b). A full investigation has been completed by the company to ensure that the correct employees were given the benefit of this Article. It did appear that there were some errors and they have since been corrected. The company has made a commitment to regular monthly reports so that we may see who has worked the 1500 hours and who was offered the FT position as a result of this.

CEPACC Website

Even though the company has replaced the Gateway with the new Bell Aliant Connexion the link into the CEPACC Website still exists on Gateway as per the collective agreement. The Council website provides links to local and national websites, collective agreement, council by-laws and bulletins. We have asked the company to add our link to this new intranet site and they will investigate.

New CEPACC Strike Policy

After many months of work our Council has created a Strike Policy which can be found on Local websites or from your Local's office. The Policy was designed to address issues arising from our 2004 Strike and to create fairness and consistency across all of the Council's regions. This is a 'living' document which may be 'fine tuned' as we move towards our next round of bargaining.

Local Elections

Local 401 (PEI) – Congratulations are extended to re-elected President, Noel Pauley, Vice-President Queens Cathy Morrell, Vice-President Kings Bobby MacDonald; re-elected Treasurer Terry Pauley and newly elected Secretary Matthew Hennessey. The position of Vice-President Prince will to be determined at a later date. Thank you to outgoing long time Secretary Reg Doyle, Vice-President Prince John Perry and Chief Steward Clerical Valda Sencabaugh for their commitment and contribution to the Local and the Council.

Local 410 (NL) – The Council would like to welcome Phil Briffitt, newly elected President, and Mary Croke newly elected Vice President, who will assume office on January 1st, 2007. Bridget Rowe (Treasurer) and Karen Lewis (Secretary) will join us for another term as well. We look forward to working with you! A special thank you must be extended to outgoing President Wayne Walsh and VP Gary Moore for their hard work and dedication to their members.

Local 506 (NB) – Re-elected by acclamation is Ron Dorcas as Secretary-Treasurer. Norm MacDonald has been appointed to the newly established position of Provincial Chief Steward. Congratulations Ron and Norm! Elections are ongoing in Local 506 and an updated report will be included in our next bulletin.

Canadian Industrial Relations Board (CIRB)

Finally after a 3 year wait, we have received a decision from the CIRB on our application regarding 'scope' of the Bargaining unit. The Council received the document on Friday Nov 17th and will be meeting with our lawyers to discuss the content of the decision and formulate plans to move forward. We will then be meeting with the affected employees and Aliant to discuss terms and conditions of employment. Although this decision is a long time coming, we will need time to work through the issues at the Council level. We hope to provide addition information in the coming weeks.

Health and Safety

Forbes St, New Glasgow NS

While attending the Aliant Joint Consultation meeting held in NB on November 16th, we received disturbing news that there was a situation at our Work centre on Forbes St that employees were ill,

being transported to Hospital and that the building was being evacuated. The fire department did initial testing and found no reason for the illnesses. Shortly after that an environmental hygiene company was brought in to do further testing. Employees and contractors from buildings did investigating on the different air systems in the building and still nothing was found that could cause the problems. The air quality testing equipment was left running and it was decided to have a meeting of OH&S and others involved on Friday morning at the Plymouth St. office in New Glasgow. The new head of Health and Wellness Dr. Burnstein was present who reported that he had been in contact with public health officials. Employees were deployed to work in other report centers or sent home for the rest of the week and the Forbes St. building was locked down. Employees were informed that the building would not be reopening until at least Monday morning. At the meeting on Friday Don MacKay, the regional manager for the area, chaired the meeting giving all involved a briefing of what had happened and what testing had been carried out to that point. Suggestions were made by all (one being to do mold testing) and a tour of the Forbes St office was given for those who wanted. The Local OH&S comm. co-chairs (Janice Dooley and Robin McKay) and others were involved in this meeting. Peter Henderson, Manager Safety & Fleet and Noel Pauley represented the OH&S Policy Committee. After the tour it was decided that employees would be asked to report to the Forbes St office for work at the scheduled work times on Monday morning if no cause could be found. There would be group briefings and Q&As for employees before they started work to bring everyone up to speed on what had happened up to that time. There were a few who could not go back to work on Monday morning for one reason or other but there were no formal refusals to work. Tuesday evening some of the CSR's in the inbound (first floor area) contact center noticed a rubbery smell. One of the CSR's described the odour as the same as she had smelled last Thursday. A check was made in the operator area (all the operators had gone home for the day) and no smell was detected. All CSR's stayed and finished their shifts with the last group leaving around 9pm. When people returned to work today there was no smell detected. The test equipment that was running in the operator area was checked and it did not detect anything. More environmental testing equipment is being brought into the first floor area along with what is now in the operator area. Testing continues as this report is written and additional permanent air quality monitoring equipment is being placed in the building soon.

50 Allandale Rd, St. John's, NL

On Oct 20, 2006 at approximately 10pm, a cable connector sparked a fire on the Toll Floor of the Allandale Rd. Central Office. In order to contain the fire, power was shut off and subsequently 100,000 customers were left without local, long distance, cellular, internet and 911 emergency services for a 5 hour period. Thankfully, there were no injuries. There is an ongoing intensive investigation into the incident by an independent firm and members of the Local OSH committee are being updated on a regular basis. An air quality study in the Allandale building will be done early in December. We'd like to recognize Terry Tavener, Network Technician at Allandale who discovered the fire, called 911, ensured the building was evacuated and extinguished the fire all in a matter of minutes. If it wasn't for Terry's quick thinking and actions, the fire could have had a much bigger impact to employees, customers and the company.

Biennial Council Locals Meeting

In accordance with Article 13 of the CEPACC By-laws, the Council is currently planning the 1st Biennial Council Locals Meeting in May, 2007, in Memramcook, NB. This meeting will have delegate representation from each Local who will vote on resolutions submitted by member Locals on proposed by-law changes and policy recommendations. It will also serve as a venue to exchange ideas and elect the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Recording Secretary of the Council Executive. Early in 2007, a notice providing more detail will be sent out to all Locals.

Future Members at xwave

The following is a letter written in Sept/06 by CEP Atlantic Region Vice President, Ervan Cronk in response to inquiries from some xwave employees about the status of their union membership. Now with the 1st scope decision from the CIRB behind us, we can now move forward with the xwave application.

Hello Future Union Member;

Thanks for your inquiries re Union status of former xwave employees. In summary, the situation is as follows:

- *When Aliant brought xwave and its former employees "in house", a dispute developed between the company and the union over which of the former xwave jobs would be included in the bargaining unit (union). In essence, the company has*

argued that only about 168 of the 455 former xwave employees would become bargaining unit employees. The union has argued that the # of employees to be included within the “scope” of the bargaining unit should be far greater.

- *The Union filed an application with the Canada Industrial Board (CIRB) to have this matter reviewed and resolved.*
- *At the time of our application, there was another decision pending from the CIRB, which will ultimately determine how broadly the “scope” of our bargaining unit at Aliant is to be defined.*
- *The above referred to “pending decision” is still pending and the CIRB has recently promised that we can expect to hear from them very soon.*
- *In the meantime, because the pending CIRB decision is expected to greatly assist the parties and the CIRB in determining which of the former “xwave” positions are to be considered “in scope” (within the description of the newly defined bargaining unit), the CIRB has stalled it’s proceeding with that application until the 1st decision is released.*
- *I know that this all sounds “bureaucratic to the extreme” but that is because that is exactly what it is. The CIRB is understaffed and backlogged to the point where something has to give. Generally speaking, workers and their unions are the ones who are paying the price for this. CEP has recently initiated actions with other labour organizations to create some political pressure to get the CIRB working as it should.*
- *Finally, I am expecting to receive our pending “scope” decision from the CIRB any day now and, once received, we will proceed accordingly with the xwave application. My hope is that the xwave application will be decided fairly quickly.*

I hope you understand from the forgoing that, regrettably, this ridiculous delay is beyond our control. I also hope that the forgoing provides you with at least a little light at the end of the tunnel. I can assure you that the union is equally frustrated over these unacceptable delays at the CIRB. I can also assure you that, as soon as we receive our 1st decision from the Board, we will do everything possible to expedite the xwave decision.

Feel free to contact me either by phone or email anytime you have further inquiries. Thanks for your interest.

*Ewan Cronk
Administrative VP – CEP Atlantic Region
VP Administratif – SCEP Région de l’Atlantique
(506) 857-8647 (Office/Bureau)
(506) 434-3488 (Cell.)
(506) 485-1983 (Home/Résidence)
(506) 858-8313 (Fax/Télec.)*



Well it’s that time of year again, which comes all too quickly, when everyone is very busy getting ready for the holiday season. As always, there’s lots of shopping to do, lights to put up, parties to attend and old friends to see again. While all this is important, don’t forget that being safe is important too. Your life can change in an instant when you are not paying attention to hazards. So whether you’re preparing for or celebrating the season, remember to have fun, exercise good sense while putting up those lights and above all, drive safely.

The CEPACC Council Executive, wish you and your families a Great Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.

In Solidarity,
Penny Fawcett, Chairperson
Noel Pauley, Vice-Chairperson
Chuck Rouse
Wayne Walsh
Joyclin Coates, Treasurer
Mary Croke, Recording Secretary