



National Joint Employment Transition Steering Committee Meeting

July 19, 2012

President's Boardroom, 1400 Merivale Road: 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Participants:

CFIA

Ms. Mary Komarynsky
Mr. Gérard Étienne
Ms. Martine Dubuc
Ms. Colleen Barnes
Ms. Jennifer Nasrallah
Ms. Traci Mathias
Ms. Barbara Jordan

PSAC

Mr. Raphaël Tarasco
Mr. Bob Kingston
Ms. Marlene O'Neil - phone

PIPSC

Dr. Valérie Coupal
Dr. Tom Wright
Ms. Mélanie Chenier

1. Minutes of July 5, 2012

Updates:

- It was agreed that the frequency of the NJETSC will be every 2 weeks. The Co-Chairs for PIPSC and PSAC will continue to submit concerns on an individual basis to Gérard Étienne in between meetings.
- The Committee was provided with the list of positions that were approved for staffing by the HR Committee for the week of July 16, 2012. This information will continue to be provided on a weekly basis, following HRC meetings.
- An Infobulletin message will be prepared following the decision to provide access to alternation to affected employees. The draft message will be sent in advance of the next meeting for comments and approval.
- It was decided by Gérard that there is no capacity at this time to create a tracking sheet for issues pertaining to action items from this committee, as suggested by PSAC.

- A report on Employment Transition Statistics as of July 12, 2012 was provided.
- A list of employees who are registered in the alternation database was provided. Gérard indicated that the list will be provided electronically on a bi-weekly basis to the Area HR Strategic Managers who sit on the Area JETSC meetings and will be distributed to Area Employment Transition Committee Members.
- Now that CFIA has identified the positions that will be surplus in the next 3 years, **it is the role and responsibilities of the Area Employment Transition Committees to facilitate the absorption of the indeterminate employees facing employment transition situations.** Management and the Union's common goal should be the absorption of CFIA employees AND achieving the \$56M reduction in CFIA's budget by April 2014.
- It is our hope that CFIA will be able to place these employees by alternation or staffing actions. **Both Union and Area management will have to be innovative to find acceptable solutions to offer continued employment to the employees.**
- **If these solutions are acceptable to the Union/Area Management: approval by the National HR Committee or VP of HR is not necessary.** We require however, that HR Strategic Advisors be informed to allow quick updates of the information on Opting/Surplus employees.
- Both Unions have identified one representative to validate these initiatives should they go outside the scope of the collective agreements: Raphaël Tarasco for PSAC and Valérie Coupal for PIPSC. Gérard Étienne, VP of Human Resources will be the lead for the CFIA.
- An updated email message regarding lower level alternations was provided and was considered approved. The message will be sent by email to employees currently registered in the alternation database. The Alternation Request Form has been updated to include a check box for employees to indicate if they are interested in lower level alternations.
- An updated list of all surplus employees was provided. It appeared that there are individuals on the list that were identified as surplus but did not receive a letter.

Action Item: PIPSC and PSAC to provide a list of concerns on the surplus list to Jennifer Nasrallah who will follow up.

- It was decided that issues pertaining to the Western Area be raised by the Area Employment Transition Committee for consultation with Harpreet Kochhar. While it has been made clear in some areas that the intent is for the Area Employment Transition Committees to attempt to place affected employees, the cross country Management call will be used to re-affirm this message.

Action Item: PIPSC to bring individual issues back to the Area committee to be dealt with on a without prejudice basis as agreed upon.

- The Question and Answers document related to Leave without Pay Situations was approved with the Union comments/suggestions and will be released on Merlin. The additional questions/concerns that were raised will be looked at and answers will be provided to the Committee before being added to Merlin.

Action Item: Additional questions to be looked at and answers to be provided to the Committee before being added to Merlin.

- PSAC raised a concern about the AS-01 selection for retention process in Policy and Programs Branch, where the manager informed retained employees that they would be placed in CR-04 positions. Although the issue has been resolved, they would like assurance that the manager is aware that they do not have the authority to staff retained AS-01 employees into CR-04 positions.

Action Item: Gérard to advise the HR Committee of this issue.

Outstanding Items:

- A solution on how and where to post the Area/Regional/Local minutes is still being looked at. Gérard indicated that he is consulting with IMIT Branch. There are a number of requests currently with IT and there are other priorities related to finding IT solutions.
- PSAC is still waiting for answers to questions that were submitted quite some time ago regarding inner – outer office. Neil Bouwer had proposed to meet on July 11th but the meeting did not take place.
- PSAC is waiting to meet with PPB to discuss exclusions.

Action Item: Colleen Barnes was asked to follow up with Neil Bouwer's office regarding the scheduling of meetings as soon as possible on both the Inner-Outer Office as well as Exclusions.

- The Internal Communication Strategy for the COE has been approved.

Action Item: Strategy to be shared at the next meeting.

- There are concerns related to the Delegation of Authority instrument and whether employees on meaningful work assignments lose their delegation (financial and HR).

Action Item: Gérard will discuss with colleagues in the Core to determine if there have been the same issues. Mary asked that this be made a priority. It is hopeful that there will be a response next week.

- It was agreed that there is a need to look at the Student Employment Policy outside of the NJETSC.

Action Item: Gérard indicated that Pamela Larocque will spend some extra time during a co-chairs call in two weeks to discuss the Student Employment Policy with PSAC and PIPSC.

2. Meaningful Work – Additional Guidance

A document with speaking points for managers who are assigning meaningful work was provided. It was indicated that time is of the essence in releasing this information as employees have already begun to be assigned meaningful work.

Action Item: Union co-chairs to provide feedback to Gérard as soon as possible.

3. Area Employment Transition Questions - NCR

Q1. Strategic HR Plan

Branches had been asked to develop strategic HR plans which would focus on the skills set needed for the workforce of the future in CFIA. The unions would like to see the plans as it will help surplus employees potentially focus their retraining and hone their competences. Access to the plans will also help opting employees determine whether there is a likelihood of being placed in a position within the CFIA.

We've been informed the plans won't be available until late August or early September. To help opting employees make decisions, the union is seeking the plans earlier, even if in draft.

Can the plans be shared in draft in July?

Alternatively can branches brief on the plans in July?

A1.The documents are being finalized and will be presented to SMC. Gérard agreed to share where the Agency is going at the National Union Management Consultation Committee.

Q2. Organization Charts

PSAC indicated that the organization charts provided at National, dated 2011, in some cases had no classification results and have not been updated. Can organization charts be shared with the Committee, in the spirit of transparency and openness? PSAC advised that there are individuals available who have experience working on organization charts.

A2. Gérard indicated that there are no updates on organization charts at this time as there is a resource issue. This will be looked into again in the fall.

Q3. Record Retention/Disposition

PSAC has concerns employees/managers are uncertain of how to address record retention and disposition and may not be meeting their legal responsibilities. We are aware that information is on Merlin but difficult to find. Will there be a communiqué to all employees (including management) reminding them of their responsibilities for record retention? Can the information be more readily available on Merlin?

Action Item: A3. It was determined that this is not an Employment Transition issue to be dealt with by the Committee. Gérard to find the appropriate individual to respond.

4. PSAC General Issues / Concerns

PSAC is concerned that some opting employees are being asked to provide references to prospective managers for alternations while some employees are not being asked and it is felt that the references selected by management are sometimes not appropriate. Gérard indicated that management may assess the employee for the alternate's position, including conducting reference checks to ensure the employee is qualified for the position. PSAC agreed that reference checks are important, however they must be appropriate and employees should be asked to provide the names of their references.

There was discussion around the Seed Potato employees in Quebec. PSAC indicated that employees are still concerned over the way the cuts were handled in Quebec. It is still not understood why there is a difference in percentage related to the cuts in different Areas. Mary responded that different methods were used determine the amount of reductions based on proposals. It was agreed that the methodology will be explained to employees, however the tools used to determine amounts will not be revisited.

Action Item: Specific wording explaining methodologies is listed below and can be shared with employees.

To support the Government's commitment to generate ongoing savings from operating efficiencies and improving productivity, the CFIA was asked to submit proposals along with associated savings estimates. The CFIA's approach was to preserve programs of top importance to Canadians (e.g. food safety inspection); modify programs to reflect current scientific knowledge; and improve service and simplify requirements for industry while minimizing the impact on human resources. The Government decided which program activities would be cut and to what extent they would be cut as part of Budget 2012.

Recognizing that CFIA's operating budget will be reduced primarily in 2014, the CFIA determined affected staff on a national basis taking into account a number of factors, including:

- activity trends within the Areas/Regions;
i.e. inspection, workplanning, import, export, industry and production data
- the complement of staff currently performing activities;
- the proportion of staff time dedicated to activities;
- work locations of affected staff, considering business continuity for ongoing activities;
- the impact of multiple proposals on a given region/office/individual;
- vacancies, terms and upcoming retirements that could minimize the impact on indeterminate staff; and
- the use of selection for retention processes for a given classification and level within the region where activities only accounted for a portion of work performed by a number of individuals and/or where the competencies of individuals could be transferred to other positions within the region

Because all of these factors were brought to bear, this process did not necessarily result in comparable results across areas, nor did it necessarily yield results that can be explained solely by looking at the OPM (Operational Planning Module).

5. PIPSC General Issues / Concerns

None

6. Round Table

PSAC suggested that it be noted what issues have been resolved at the Area Joint Employment Committees and brought to the National Committee to acknowledge the work that was done. Mary indicated that this will be raised on the cross country call.

PSAC would like the Area Joint Employment Committee meeting minutes to be shared

Action Item: Area HR Representatives on the Committee are asked to copy the National Union Co-chairs when sending out the Area Employment Transition Steering Committee minutes.

PSAC wanted to ensure that there were no issues with the employees in the Ottawa District Office. These employees report to the Ontario area but are located in Ottawa and are part of the NCR component.

Action Item: Gérard to follow-up with Bill Teeter to get information on whether there are any affected employees in the Ottawa District Office.

Gérard Étienne
Vice President, Human Resources

Date

Dre Valérie Coupal
PIPSC Co-Chair

Date

Bob Kingston
Agriculture Union Co-Chair

Date

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