



Winnipeg 2014

REPORTS

**RVP and
NATIONAL DIRECTORS**

Agriculture Union

16th Triennial Convention

Winnipeg

August 13, 14 & 15, 2014

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION – 2014

BARB KRISTJANSSON – REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT MANITOBA NORTH WESTERN ONTARIO AND NUNAVUT

As this is my first activity report as RVP, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has provided assistance, advice, and support to me over the past year. I would especially like to thank Sam Barlin, previous RVP, for his guidance and advice, and for helping my transition to go as smoothly as it could. It has been quite a steep learning curve, and I thank you all.

I started out my term as RVP by continuing Sam's work with all of the DRAP fallout. We had cuts and slashes to departments and agencies across the board. The closure of the AAFC Cereal Research Centre in Winnipeg dealt a huge blow to our membership. Some folks transferred to Morden and Brandon Research Centres, and some could not make the moves that were offered due to personal circumstances and have gone on to other careers. Many were not offered relocations, and had short time periods to try and determine where their future endeavors would lead them. These hard working and dedicated staff will be missed.

We also saw the closure of the AAFC Beef Research Program at Brandon Research Centre. That program had been running for about 100 years, and had done some fantastic research on cattle forages, beef reproduction and many other important areas of beef research that was specific to the prairies. The current government is continuing to prove they are not interested in assisting farmers or livestock producers with research and seems to have forgotten where our food supply originates.

This past year I have taken on the role of both Regional and Western Area OSH Committee co-chairs with CFIA. We are still struggling with the conflict between our Union and the Agency and the use of their Harassment Policy. We strongly feel that our members need to use Part XX of the CLC when dealing with harassment in the workplace.

I am also co-chair of our Regional UMC Committee with CFIA, and also sit on our Western Area UMC Committee with CFIA. The Agency continues to shuffle management around at both the Regional and Area level, and this proves to be challenging to those of us trying to solve problems and conflict in the workplaces.

I have been actively involved in the AESB (used to be PFRA) portfolio as well. DRAP announced the closure of the AESB Tree Farm in Indian Head, SK, as well as the devolution of all the AESB Community pastures in MB, SK and AB. This has had and will continue to have a huge impact not only on our members, but also on the thousands of patrons who rely on the pastures to have grazing for their cattle. This is somewhat of a unique situation for some members, as not only is their work gone, or going, but in many cases their homes are on these pastures as well, and they will be uprooting spouses and children due to job losses. There have been many other groups and communities come on board to assist in saving the pasture program, but its future is not looking good.

I am currently sitting on the PSAC Bargaining team this round with CFIA. This was my first time on the team, and what an experience it was! I was so glad to be able to touch base with so many members in the course of this effort. The work that our members do

in this country, from coast to coast to coast is exceptional, and needs to be recognized as such. Our current government does not see this, they only see our members as a cost to be cut and downsized. This is unacceptable, and I sincerely hope we can do something about that in 2015.

Our tentative agreement with CFIA will be voted on by the membership electronically for the first time. This has been a bit of a challenge, but we are certainly up for it! We are using webinars across the country to allow members to virtually attend a ratification meeting, and then are able to cast their vote by computer or by phone. I believe this will make it easier for members to exercise their right to vote.

Nationally, I sit on the By-Laws and Regulations Committee, and we have been working hard on cost saving within the Agriculture Union. As our membership declines, so does our dues revenue. We have been able to cut spending in many areas, and continue to look at innovative and effective ways to conduct our business.

I look forward to continuing to serve our Ag Union members in any way I can. The next few years are going to continue to be tough on Public Service, and we need to be prepared to defend it and to represent our members. The government attacks on sick leave are just one more example of this, and I am glad to see all of us standing together to defend our services, and to protect our rights that have been hard won in the past.

Thanks again for all of your support in the past year.

In Solidarity,

Barb Kristjansson
RVP – MB, NW ON, NU

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014

CHARLENE VIDITO-MILNE – NATIONAL DIRECTOR – HUMAN RIGHTS

I have considered it a great privilege and honour to serve our members as the National Director for Human Rights and will always hold this experience and the relationships that have been fostered with my union Sisters and Brothers close to my heart.

My main role as Director has been to coordinate and chair the National Human Rights Committee meetings. During the past three years, I have seen many changes within our National Human Rights Committee (NHRC). The commitment, passion and drive that our committee members have is always consistently demonstrated.

We have moved toward a more consistent approach across the Nation delivering the same presentations, providing the same information and developing initiatives our members have said are important to them.

We have continued to work toward inclusive workplaces and communities affiliating with many groups and organizations, building allies and strengthening our fight for rights we have simply because we are human.

Every year that the NHRC meets we engage in discussions on how to better serve the membership. It has been challenging with changes in committee members throughout the past three years because with change in committee members comes a new passion and a personal vision for the direction of the committee. This past years (2013) meeting the committee engaged in training with the objectives to

- To better understand the definition of human rights, discrimination, and harassment
- To better understand the importance of defending and advancing human rights issues in the workplace
- To better understand a union representative's role in advancing human rights in the workplace
- To better examine available resources and tools helping us become more effective representatives in the workplace

From this training came a tangible action plan for our committee. - "Rethink Child Care" as a part of the "Family Care is a Human Right" theme.

In this three year cycle PSAC held a National Equity Conference and one of my roles included reviewing applications and making recommendations to our 1st National Vice President. The amount of applications that were received was very encouraging as the level of commitment and interest from our membership was evident.

With a very heavy heart, I had to resign as National Director effective January 6, 2014 as I took employment in the private sector. I have considered it an honour to be your voice at the table and to stand at your side.

Agriculture Union has taught me more than I ever thought possible about what it truly means to be a union member, amongst people standing united in solidarity.

In Solidarity,

Charlene Vidito-Milne
National Director – Human Rights

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014
DANIELLE MOFFET – NATIONAL DIRECTOR – DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL
DEFENCE

At the closing of the last Convention, I began a new term as National Director for Department of National Defence (DND). I would like to thank all the delegates who had confidence in me and who elected me.

Over the last three years, I have had the honour and pleasure of serving EG Group members, whom I represent proudly within DND.

During my term, I was faced with some serious problems relating to various major issues affecting our members. I would mention the high rate of turnover among military personnel, which exacerbated management of complex situations needing resolution at the lowest level, as with each change in personnel at the level of command, we must reiterate, for new military leaders, the Union's 'raison d'être', collective agreement articles, and Treasury Board Guidelines. In any case, our Union managed to settle some difficult and important issues, such as the Work force Adjustment measures taken following the closure of the Canadian Forces Language School at Borden Detachment, complaints to the Public Service Staffing Tribunal, and several grievances. Concerning the policy grievance we had filed in 2010 regarding joint consultation (Art. 35 of our collective agreement), we were successful. Grievances presently at third level, and not yet settled, should soon be heard.

To the best of my knowledge, I have also helped and advised my members concerning several sensitive files, including: the establishment of committees on the right to return to work when a member gets back from an extended leave of absence; explanation of the makeup and function of the Health and Safety Committees; skills improvement; application of Canada Labour Code (CLC) Part II and Part XX – Violence Prevention in the Work Place of the Canadian Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (COHSR) to ensure employees work in a safe, healthy and violence-free work place, including harassment and bullying; skills enrichment; and application of the Public Service Employment Act.

As well, I advocated: the Joint Learning Program (JLP); the Employee Assistance Program; courses provided by Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC); the Rand Campaign; and various political actions developed by PSAC, as well as those designed by our Component.

I took part in several union demonstrations and attended all meetings and most conference calls of our Agriculture Union National Council. I sat on the Agriculture Union By-Laws and Regulations Standing Committee, followed all meetings of the National Health and Safety Policy Committee, was a member of the ED Group Education Leave Committee (Education), and attended seminars and conferences while I was a delegate at various conventions.

I gave advice to members faced with complex mediation situations and attended several general meetings of Locals (Gatineau, Kingston, and Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu).

I registered in various training courses to better understand the issues involved and to be better qualified to help EB Group members (training on WFA, Advanced Course on Representation Services to the PSST, and courses to improve leadership skills, etc.).

During my term, I did my best to improve leadership skills of our union activists, since we need their help and the help of all our members to demonstrate to our Employer our determination not

to lose rights we have won over many years. We are at the start of bargaining rounds for various collective agreements. With our members' engagement we shall be in a stronger position to negotiate better and fairer agreements in order to improve the working conditions of public servants and better serve the general population.

Having been elected to participate in EB Group bargaining, I hope all our members will support us so that our Bargaining Tables will be able to improve the collective agreements of all federal employees.

Despite all my daily union duties, attendance at meetings, union courses, conferences, regional seminars, and triennial conventions attended as a delegate during my term of office, I always took into account the priorities of the members of the group I represented.

Since the beginning of my term within Agriculture Union, I have learned a lot and continue to learn every day. I have accomplished much to improve our members' working conditions. However, I must acknowledge that there is still much more to do.

Over the next few years, we will have to focus on the survival of the Canadian Forces Language School, on bilingualism at DND, and on the retention of teaching positions, as well as on contracting-out. We will also have to maintain our vigilance regarding: staffing procedures, to guarantee that there is no abuse of power; frequent restructuring measures within DND so as not to affect our members; implementation of succession plans; follow-up of files in the event of frequent changes of military managers. We will have to ensure that various laws on health and safety in the work place are complied with, and that harassment, psychological violence and bullying are eliminated within DND.

To conclude, I would like to thank all elected members of the National Office and National Council who helped me to improve my union skills, as well as the National Office staff who are always ready to assist me or refer me to the available person able to quickly answer my questions. I thank all union officers who helped and guided me in solving major issues. I am grateful to all elected union representatives of the various Locals and all members I represent, be they in Halifax, Val Cartier, Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Gatineau, Kingston, Winnipeg or Esquimalt -- it is thanks to their questions that I have learned so much during my term.

Have a successful Convention!

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014
DON BOUCHARD – REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT - WESTERN ATLANTIC

The previous Western Atlantic RVP, Rick Cormier nominated me as replacement for his position in December of 2013. It was seconded by Alyre Richard and I accepted the position effective January 15th, 2014. Mr. Alyre Richard was nominated for Alternate RVP and has accepted the position.

Since my start as RVP I have attended only one AGM this was the one for my local #60063, this is back in January. I have since then helped to plan and organize the Atlantic Regional Seminar in Saint-John, with the Eastern Atlantic RVP Sue-Ann Glavine, on 21st to the 23rd of February. It was a very good experience and learned a great deal from it.

I had been attending the quarterly OSH/UMCC meetings in Fredericton as local president so I have continued to attend those as RVP as, well as the Area one in Moncton.

I also have been involved in mediation with one employee and actively involved with some issues related to workplace safety, as well as harassment and failure to accommodate.

I have been since the mid-April actively looking at issues at the local level for the Fredericton local #60006, since there seems to be no desire from the executive from that local to do their duties as members of the Agriculture Union.

I have assisted to the National Council meeting in Winnipeg back on April 8th to the 12th. There I was assigned to the general committee where I took part to the best of my abilities. Overall it was a great experience and I've had the privileged to meet and work with other RVP's from across Canada, where I learned a tremendous amount from. And can now use this new found knowledge to better apply it in my district.

I look forward to more challenges and for the chance to responsibly represent the interest of all our members.

I would like to personally thank Brother Rick Cormier for given me this opportunity to take on such challenging position.

Sincerely,

Don Bouchard
RVP Western Atlantic
Agriculture Union

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014

ELENA BEYNON - REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT - NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN

I was elected alternate RVP for Northern Saskatchewan at convention in August 2011 and became RVP in April 2012 when Marianne Hladun became REVP for the Prairies. I served until March 31, 2014 when I went on maternity leave at which point, my alternate Karen Zoller took over. Along with Milton Dyck, (the RVP for Southern Saskatchewan for most of my time as RVP), I worked to represent Agriculture Union members working for the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), Canadian Grain Commission (CGC) and Pari-Mutuel in Saskatchewan. I am an employee of AAFC where I have worked as a Research Technician since 2000.

This RVP term was particularly busy as it coincided with layoffs resulting from the Conservative government's Deficit Reduction Action Plan (DRAP) which aimed to reduce 19 200 positions within the public service and in the case of AAFC, a "Transformation" initiative which took place in May 2013 and saw further reductions resulting from the merging of AESB and Research Branch into a single Science & Technology Branch.

During this time, I was a member of the Regional & Western Area OSH committees, Western Area UMC and Western Area Employment Transition Committee (WAETC) for CFIA as well as the Regional Workforce Adjustment (WFA) Committees for the Community Pasture Program and Science & Technology Branch for AAFC.

Included in this report is a summary of some of the activities I participated in as RVP. It is by no means exhaustive. In addition to the fallout of DRAP, I was also involved in work related grievances for both CFIA and AAFC and spent a significant time working on a Workplace Violence complaint against CFIA. As needed, I provided advice and service to the 4 locals in my region: Saskatoon, Watrous, Scott and Melfort.

CFIA:

As a result of DRAP, Provincial meat inspection was slated to be transferred to the provinces effective

January 1, 2014. Impacted employees (~5) were given Guaranteed Reasonable Job Offers (GRJO's) in 2012. In Saskatchewan provision of these inspection services was eventually outsourced to the Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre Inc. (Food Centre) in Saskatoon.

The Wynyard District Office was slated for closure in March 2014 and surplussed veterinarians (PIPSC) and inspectors were given GRJO's while administrative staff were given options under the Employment Transition Policy (ETP).

The Prince Albert District Office also lost one inspector position as a result of a SERLO process and the incumbent was given options under the ETP.

Separate from DRAP, the Maple Leaf Plant in North Battleford was closed, resulting in surplus of 2 inspectors who were given options under the ETP.

A lot of work was done with regional and area management to ensure that our members were made aware of vacancies within the province and outside so that they could self identify for positions of interest rather than waiting for (potentially) less desirable job offers to be made by

the employer. The unions involved did their best to ensure that employees were kept informed of the assessment process used for appointments and to ensure that this process was fair. Where possible, employees were offered positions in their current work region, however in some cases, relocation was required.

AAFC:

The majority of cuts within Saskatchewan took place in Southern Saskatchewan due in part to the closing of the Indian Head Shelterbelt Program in December 2013 and cuts that occurred as a result of “Transformation” in 2013 that mainly impacted former Agri-Environment Services Branch (AESB) employees and Human Resources employees in Regina.

In Northern Saskatchewan, DRAP resulted in the loss of 2 Research Scientist positions (PIPSC) and 1 graphic design position (PSAC) at the Saskatoon Research Station (Research Branch) in 2012. Agri-Environment Services Branch and Research Branch were eliminated and merged into a new Science & Technology Branch (STB) effective July 2012. The Community Pasture Program (CPP) which was under AESB was moved into Programs Branch (PB) while all other AESB employees were moved into STB.

The Rosetown office of AESB was slated for closure in March 2013 as were a number of other offices in Western Canada. The impacted EG's (14 in all) took part in a Selection for Retention (SERLO) process for new positions located across Canada while the administrative staff were given options under the WFAA. This SERLO process was significantly delayed only to have some of the potential positions targeted a year later under Transformation.

Another decision resulting from DRAP was the elimination of the Community Pasture Program (CPP) under AESB which operates in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba with divestiture of pasture lands to occur over a 5 year time period. A total of 182 employees (pasture managers, riders, administrative, construction services, land managers, headquarter staff) received affected letters. Approximately 120 term riders (not covered by WFAA) were also impacted. The majority of pasture lands will revert back to their respective provinces however some are federally owned. A divestiture schedule for the pastures was developed and shared with the union and affected employees. In Saskatchewan, an average of 10 pastures per year will be going in each of the first 4 years (2013-2016) with the remainder (~22) going in 2017. The Saskatchewan government has not indicated that it wants to take on management of these lands and it is unclear what will become of them in the future. The hope is that patron groups will be able to buy some of the pastures but it remains to be seen if this is a viable option.

There was only 1 pasture in Alberta (DND base in Suffield) which was given over in 2013. In Manitoba, the Manitoba Cattleman's association was in talks with the provincial government to take over all the pastures as a group and the initial divestiture schedule was to be 10 pastures in 2013 and 3-4 in each of the next 4 years. This was amended in 2014 however and all remaining Manitoba pastures are now slated to be given over in 2015.

Milton Dyck (RVP, Southern Saskatchewan) was instrumental in setting up the online Protect the Prairie Campaign sponsored by the Agriculture Union to fight the decision to eliminate the Community Pasture Program and ensure the preservation of these lands in the future. This campaign was supported by the Saskatchewan Environmental Society and the Saskatchewan branch of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS). Along with Bob Kingston and Fabian Murphy, I attended the National Farmer's Union Convention in November 2012 as RVP to help raise awareness of the campaign and the impact of losing these protected lands.

In Northern Saskatchewan, AAFC's Transformation initiative in 2013 resulted in the elimination of 2 PSAC positions at the Saskatoon Research Centre, 2 positions in North Battleford and 3 positions in Watrous. PIPSC members in Saskatoon were targeted as well, and the Centre lost both Scientist (3) and engineering positions (2?). In Saskatchewan, former AESB employees working in water resource management and technology transfer were targeted in this round of cuts. A number of support staff who were originally moved to Science & Technology Branch from AESB were subsequently transferred back to the Community Pasture Program (under Programs Branch) and designated affected under the WFAA. The cuts under Transformation combined with the elimination of the CPP will result in the closure of several former AESB offices in Saskatchewan. In all 40 employees of STB were impacted by Transformation.

All surplus employees were given the options under WFAA. No Guaranteed Reasonable Job Offers (GRJO's) were given. Employees of CPP were deemed affected and will become surplus according to the divestiture schedule.

GL Review (AAFC):

The results of the GL Review were released starting in December 2011 and members who were not satisfied could grieve their work description and classification. A number of these grievances are still underway with priority being given to employees impacted by DRAP and Transformation.

EG Review (AAFC):

Final level grievance hearings were done for the outstanding grievances resulting from the EG Review.

Canadian Pari-Mutuel Agency:

Two part time positions in Saskatchewan were identified as affected.

Collective Bargaining:

The TC group (Treasury Board) came to a tentative agreement on August 1, 2013 and that agreement was ratified on October 18, 2013. This agreement affected TC members of AAFC and the Canadian Grain Commission (CGC). The agreement reflected the "pattern settlement" of other Treasury Board groups and included salary increases of 1.75%, 1.5% & 2% over 3 years retroactive to June 22, 2011 in exchange for giving up severance for retirement and resignation. Indeterminate employees and terms with at least one year of continuous service, then had up to 6 months from the date of signing to decide if they wanted their accumulated severance paid out in full or in part or kept until retirement or termination. The agreement also contained some modest improvements such as 1.5% annual allowance for all EG's effective June 22, 2013, improvement to bereavement leave, family related leave, improved protection for term employees, etc.

Details of the agreement can be found on the PSAC website or in the collective agreement itself.

CFIA also reached a tentative agreement in February 2014 after 2 years of collective bargaining. As with the TC group, the agreement reflected the "pattern settlement" of other Treasury Board groups and included salary increases of 1.75%, 1.5% & 2% over 3 years retroactive to January 1, 2012 in exchange for giving up severance for retirement and resignation. If ratified, members will have to make a decision with respect to payout of their accumulated severance pay. The

agreement also contained some modest improvements such as increase to bereavement leave, improvements to personal, volunteer and family related leave, increase of the opting period under Employment Transition from 90 to 120 days, improved protection for term employees, etc. For the first time, members will be voting online and as of the date of this report (May 2014) voting was still underway.

Details of the tentative agreement can be found on the PSAC website or in the collective agreement itself.

In the case of both groups, while the agreements reached did not address all bargaining demands and/or recommendations made by the Public Interest Commission (PIC) report, the general feeling from the bargaining teams was that given the current political climate, they were the best agreements that could be reached and for that reason, recommended unanimous acceptance.

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014 **GUS MARDLI – NATIONAL DIRECTOR – HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE**

I was honoured to be elected the Alternate National Director during the 2011 Triennial Convention; which gave me a great opportunity to attend my first National Council meeting as an observer during the 2011 Fall. It was a valuable experience that taught me a great deal about how our National Council carries on our union business between conventions. I was also able to experience being a part of the General Standing Committee with other RVPs, Directors and Alternates.

The Human Rights Committee's first meeting, after the 2011 convention, took a place in November 2011. The Committee wanted to work on a list of all the local human rights reps and decided to reach out to RVPs and Local presidents to facilitate the regional reps' tasks in promoting Equity and Human Rights and to disseminate all information to the grassroots' level.

We also prepared a document to define the desired attributes and roles/responsibilities of Regional Representatives. The document was to be utilized by RVP's as well when they were conducting an election for Regional Human Rights Reps and their Alternates. This document was very helpful since electing new Regional Reps is usually conducted at the first Regional Seminar following each Triennial Convention.

The Committee members also committed to finding 'already available' resources whether from a national source or from each Region (i.e. documents, videos, books, web links, formal training, hand-outs, etc...). These already available resources are great way of educating and informing members from coast to coast with a minimal cost; which would be easier on the committee's limited budget and on the component's budget in general.

We came to a consensus that delivering the same message and the same action plan in each region is the best way to stay on track and to follow through on the positive results the committee was to accomplish. Everyone felt, from a past experience, that union members wanted to learn more about what Human Rights are. The committee then decided to update the pamphlet that was in the work previously along with a PowerPoint presentation as an introductory to the committee and a brief explanation on Human Rights. These materials were to be delivered at Seminars and Local AGMs by Regional Reps.

A time slot was allotted for training/presentation during the meeting, so the Regional Reps received training on: '**Why Workplace Mental Health Matters**'. It was facilitated by **Renée Ouimet**, a registered Social Worker in Ontario who is also the Director of the Capacity Building and Education Division in Ottawa. The presentation was very well received and it was decided to include it in the committee's work-plan to be delivered at Regional Seminars.

The Committee also had an idea about producing videos to tackle various Human Rights concerns. The Director was to propose this idea to the next Council meeting seeking their support and maybe their participation if interested:

- The Québec Region volunteered to initiate some work on a video about **immigrant workers**. A questionnaire to be sent to the Committee about the type of questions to tackle on the video.

- The Director was to prepare a questionnaire for a video on ***Invisible Disability***. The Human Rights Committee had another face to face meeting in September 2012. We realized that newer regional reps were elected - since most Regional Seminars are held during the first quarter of the fiscal year and because Regional Human Rights Reps are normally elected during the first Regional Seminar, following the Triennial Convention. It was then decided to move the committee's yearly meeting to June, which was believed the month when most Regional Seminar would have been taken place. The committee felt that this way the same reps will remain on the committee between convention and that would help the committee's work-plan to be more effective when actions and activities are divided amongst Regional Reps.

The outstanding project to come up with a Logo for the committee was tackled and the consensus was to stay with the blue and gold colors of Agriculture Union Logo. This idea was to be taken back to each region to find a local artist who can come up with a logo with the committee's design idea. Ultimately, a Logo was produced by a team effort between the Alberta and Manitoba regions. The Logo that was agreed on resembled two birds in the shape of a hand embedded in the core of the Agriculture Union current Logo.

The committee also received a training on "How To Build Allies?" that was delivered by Sister Karina Sihota, a Political Action Rep with the Canadian Labour Congress. The training consisted of 4 modules:

- 1- Why Unions do what they do.
- 2- Who we should be building allies with.
- 3- How to build Alliances.
- 4- Planning Outreach.

This training was also recommended to be the committee's yearly work-plan, when Regional Reps feel comfortable delivering/facilitating it with the help of other Local Human Rights Reps and their alternates as well. It could be delivered along with the committee's Power Point Presentation and Introduction to Human Rights.

The Human Rights Committee finalized their 2012-2014 Work-Plan which included:

1. Training on engaging membership and building the movement.
2. Common "feel" approach for regional seminars.
3. HR Regional Reps (or their alternates) to attend Local AGMs.
4. Continue to lead and encourage members to participate in HR activities in their locals and communities.
5. Encouraging members to use social media to be informed of HR events and activities. As well as sharing Locals' websites that can be a useful tool.
6. Finalizing a pamphlet to distribute to locals.
7. Producing five videos with each video deals with an issue related to one of the Equity Groups:

- This project was launched right at the same meeting where one video dealing with immigrants (in French by the Quebec Regional Rep) and another video dealing with disabilities (in English by the Director) were shot.

In December 2012 I represented our component (as the Alternate National Director) on the PSAC's newly re-vamped NHRC (National Human Rights Committee – formerly National EO Committee). This was the very first meeting of this national committee after they added to it regional representation. You probably would guess when something is that new, would usually need a lot of tweaking and adjustment to be done along the way. Component Representatives (including myself) received the Advanced Duty To Accommodate workshop while Regional Representatives were receiving other workshops (e.g. workshops related to each equity group they represented). As component representatives on the NHRC, we voiced our opinion that a National Committee needed to have a common and inclusive work-plan involving all committee members.

In June of 2013, the Human Rights Committee met over a 3 day period. Sister Seema Lamba and Sister Sylvie Rochon spent one day and a half facilitating Human Rights training. The committee learned about the importance of defending and advancing human rights issues in the workplace and where the role of union activists falls in all that. Members also examined the Mandate of the Agriculture Union Human Rights Committee which was very helpful when focusing on an action plan.

The Human Rights Training was well received by committee members and that knowledge was applied when the committee was building their action plan.

The Action-Plan was to mainly focus on the “Rethink Child Care” project as a part of the “Family Care is a Human Right” theme. Committee members who had not received the Rethink Child Care and hosting the “**Kitchen Table Conversations**” training, were to seek this training by contacting PSAC Regional offices to get the information needed. Committee members were to target audience (both in the Agriculture Union and the public) in each region.

The committee also decided to have a couple of Conference Calls to follow up and report on the Action-Plan and to get the ball rolling prior to Convention. We also decided that the next face to face meeting should be held a little earlier than June, to finalize resolutions and meet the deadline; and also to finalize any other convention related business; which is all currently being worked on.

In Nov. 18-22, 2013 I attended the National Equity Conferences that took a place in Toronto. I was very fortunate to participate in 5 workshops tackling Human Rights issues and concerns. The learning opportunity was an enriching experience when networking with other activists as well. Every participant was a great contribution to the success of this educational event. The information I gathered at the Equity Conferences is going to be disseminated and shared with the Committee as well.

The PSAC's NHRC (National Human Rights Committee) was supposed to be held in December 2013, shortly after the Equity Conferences to report on the conferences' feedback and to carry on with a National work-plan. The meeting was postponed until spring of 2014 due to timing restraints and the Holiday Season was approaching very quickly.

On December 13th, 2013 I assumed the National Director – Human Rights' position as Sister Charlene Vidito-Milne stepped down.

The committee started the New Year with planning a conference call to follow up on the work-plan progress and to gear up towards planning for Convention and other related activities. The committee decided, during the conference call, to start working on Human Rights related resolutions to go to Convention and to make sure they would be finalized when the committee meets face to face; which is all currently being worked on.

I am very excited about the potential this committee has to offer and what we can accomplish. We have great team players on the committee represented by the Regional Reps. Their experiences and dedications as activists in each region are paramount. Everyone is committed to do what it takes to be the help and support needed, from the grassroots level up to assisting at the national level. The committee is looking forward to work with each and every Local Executive, RVPs, Directors and our National Executive.

I like to take this opportunity to thank the staff employed by the Agriculture Union for their continuous support and advice. Also a big great thank you to each and everyone of you's - out their activists - for giving so much of yourselves for the great cause our union is striving to accomplish: This of course would include the National Executive and the National Council that never waiver when it comes to offering their guidance; and all Executive at the Local level who are the backbone of the Union when serving and supporting every employee.

Respectfully Submitted

Gus Mardli

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014
JEAN CLOUTIER - REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT – EASTERN QUEBEC

As Regional Vice-President for East Quebec, I represent the following Locals: Quebec 10008 (AAC, CFIA, ND), Sherbrooke 10011 (AAC), Normandin 10037 (AAC), and 10036 Bas St-Laurent, Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Island (CFIA). The territory I cover exceeds 1,000 kilometres. I offered to help Mariette Beaudet deal with many issues at the Canadian Grain Commission.

I attended all local and regional Union-Management meetings at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Canadian Grain Commission during my 2011-2014 term. I also participated in all of my Locals' Annual General Meetings in order to introduce myself, interact with members and answer their queries. I attended my Locals' Executive Meetings at their invitation. I met my Locals' members to discuss the ratification vote for TC Table and also met members at CFIA to try to reach a satisfactory agreement.

I attended all National Council and By-Laws and Regulations Committee meetings, as per our National President, Bob Kingston's instructions. With Brother Raphael Tarasco, I continued working on improving our Component's By-Laws and Regulations to finalize corrections to French and English versions that did not always match, this work having started during my first term with Brother Denis Sicard.

I followed all National Officers' meetings of PSAC-Quebec, and participated on several occasions in my region's PSAC Regional Council at which I presented information relevant to my Locals in order to keep them abreast of new developments within the union movement. I organized information meetings with PSAC-Quebec, funded by the Education budget, in order to have a facilitator explain to members the impact of various bills the Harper government is trying to adopt. We need to inform our members before we can mobilize them.

Each year during my term, I organized the Agriculture Union Regional Seminars for the Quebec Region with Sister Mariette Beaudet. I always invited our National President and/or First Vice-President to these seminars. They consistently responded with enthusiasm to our invitations. I also invited Magalie Picard, PSAC-REVP for Quebec, to our seminars to talk to us about various political and union issues.

Recently, in November of 2013, I attended the Quebec Federation of Labour Convention in Quebec. I will participate in the next PSAC Regional Triennial Convention for Quebec of June 2014.

I was involved in representation at the Public Service Staffing Tribunal, which turned out to be an enriching experience requiring lots of time. We must not forget that we are not lawyers. I believe such files should be handled by National Officers.

I would like to thank all presidents of my Locals for their engagement and union activities, as well as for the warmth they communicate. I would also like to thank my alternate, Mrs. Normande Ouellet, for her availability and assistance during my absences.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all the National Office staff for their accessibility, their kindness and dedication. Special thanks go to Éline Massie and Érick Martel both for

their engagement and quality of work. I would also like to thank Sylvie Rochon for her sound advice and invaluable help in dealing with the Public Service Staff Tribunal file I represented.

Sincerely,

Jean Cloutier
RVP-East Quebec
Agriculture Union

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014

JOSÉ EVANGELHO - REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT – SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO

UMCC

CFIA - Did attend Area UMCC, many changes over the last year with the retirement of Executive Director Bill Teeter, the arrival of new Executive Director James Crawford, and the retirement of Ontario Central RVP John Langs.

Working with locals to restart participation in CFIA SW regional UMCC as these have not had full participation from all locals. We must remember that UMCC provide a forum for Union representatives to communicate their views on subjects of importance to the membership; Management to make known its plans regarding the subject under discussion, the reasons for taking such action and the expected results; Discussing such items as proposed changes in conditions and programs; physical working conditions; equipment, tools and uniforms; training programs; and Alleviating fears and prejudices created by workplace rumors.

History has identified that management says they want participation and discussion but at every step are continuously derailing the process.

Major concerns are General management governance and Canada labour code sec XX complaints, investigations and lack of action and or process to follow up with the investigation process and the requirement for qualified impartial investigators are ongoing.

AAFC – Local UMCC working well

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Did attend Local, Area, Regional and National Health and Safety Committees.

This experience has been improving with the interregional Local communications and the success with CFIA's scent free policy, started in Ontario now national. This policy will go a long way to educate all and through this education facilitate accommodation needs for members with environment sensitivities.

NOSH have noted that past meeting minutes have not been posted as per regulations on merlin due to both stretching timelines for minutes review, French translation and it's inability to timely post minutes of NOSH in merlin due to IT concerns. This has been temporarily corrected with the enforcement of timeline and the email distribution of minutes to all regional Health and Safety Committees.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

Did attend all scheduled AGM in my region, all have a full executive. This being said, I find my challenge will be to ensure this stays so and that members are educated and that we promote member participation in the Local and Executives positions

Common statement heard that PSAC education is not timely for our executive representatives, we strongly need to look at all options in education of our entire

representative whether they be Local, Area or National. We need a system whether we train 1 or 100 regardless, we have PSAC staff in the regional offices, why can we not train 1 member??

STAFFING

Staffing policy changes and or interpretation at CFIA and AAFC have resulted to loss of opportunity to members and less promotion from within. This has resulted in capable members being overlooked for promotions and or having to compete in external competitions.

WORK FORCE ADJUSTMENT

Unfortunately we have lost a few good members in SW Ontario, this to date has amazed me for as soon as we went through WFA CFIA and now AAFC started hiring new staff??

NEGOTIATIONS

I would like to thank all our negotiation teams for all the time they spent away from their families to support us at the negotiations table(s).

Have and continue supporting PSAC education and mentoring my executives as needed.

In solidarity;

Thank you and have a great day,

José Evangelho
AGR Union R.V.P.
South Western Ontario

Sapientia est Potentia"

"The best way to find out if you can trust somebody is to trust them." - Ernest Hemingway

Thanks to Nancy Richter

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014

KEN DEOBALD - REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT - SOUTHERN SASKATCHEWAN

The first thing I did when I took over from Milton was to amalgamate the Tree Nursery Local 40021 with the Indian Head Local 40229. They combined under Local 40229 and Milton and I were able to get a an Executive elected.

The next thing I did also with the help of Milton Dyck was to call a meeting between Moose Jaw CFIA Local 40053 and Regina Local 40020 and got them to amalgamate under Regina 40020. We really had to battle to get an executive elected for this union but finally succeeded in getting one.

The reason we had these amalgamations was that in the last two years these Locals had lost a huge number of members due to all the cuts and the closure of the Tree Nursery and meat packing plants.

I have attended a lot of Meetings in the past few months:

Occupational Health and Safety Meeting in Regina for the Pasture Riders.

Occupational Health and Safety Meetings in Calgary for Western Area for CFIA.

UMC Meetings in Calgary for Western Area of CFIA.

I attended the National Counsel Convention in Winnipeg.

I've also been on a lot of Conference Calls (Grievances, Pasture Riders, Health and Safety Meetings, etc.)

Ken Deobald

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014

MARIA-LUIZA ROMANO - REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT - EASTERN BRITISH COLOMBIA

1. Locals

The AGRU - Eastern BC is composed of 5 (five) Locals, with members working for two employers, as follows:

Local 20027 - Central Okanagan (CFIA)

Local 20038 - Agassiz (AAFC)

Local 20039 - Kamloops (AAFC)

Local 20041 - South Okanagan (CFIA)

Local 20043 - Summerland (AAFC)

AGRU Locals in Eastern BC share similar situations regarding the following:

1.1 Local Executives

Some Locals have introduced extra Executive positions (2nd Vice-President, Public Relations, etc.) with the intention of encouraging the participation of members in Union activities, and for the preparation of members for taking over other roles upon retirement of activists. That tactic is being rewarded by the involvement of members in their Local Executives, and by the understanding that there is a need for everybody's participation.

1.2 Meetings

During this triennial period some Locals held quarterly Executive meetings, others varied from one to two meetings/year.

All active Locals had their annual general meetings. Tech changes were introduced by some Locals on the way meetings are conducted, which allowed the participation of members from remote locations. The allotment of phone lines for conference calls and use of Skype/Facetime were successful endeavours which brought together members that never before had the opportunity of participating in AGMs, and increased willingness of members to run for Executive positions in their Locals.

2. Health & Safety

As RVP I participate in Health & Safety meetings for CFIA on both Regional and Area levels. Union attendance at AAFC meetings are covered by the Alternate RVP.

The Union continues to fight hard for our right for a safe workplace, bringing to the employers' attention, at all levels, the obligations they are to fulfill in order to guarantee and protect the health and safety of our members. The Union is also pressing employers to face and discuss Mental Health issues in the workplace, and how much the lack of resources (both human and financial) affects our membership.

3. UMCC

I attend the Union-Management Consultation Committee meetings for CFIA (Local, Regional and Western Area). Again, the Alternate RVP is responsible for attending meetings held by AAFC.

CFIA is the employer who presents bigger challenges. Unfortunately Local UMCC meetings at CFIA in 2013 did not happen with the expected frequency; it worked better in the two previous years. The Regional meetings were postponed with higher frequency, but the Union pressured the employer for the established frequency of quarterly meetings to be observed.

The amount of issues regarding Staffing is again more pronounced at CFIA. There is a need for changes in the culture at the Agency, with more attention being devoted by Management on respectful workplace, harassment and manipulation of staff, and education of supervisors/Managers on such issues.

4. Regional Seminars

Regional Seminars provide members with a great opportunity to discuss issues, answer questions they may have and prepare delegates to represent their Locals.

In BC, the two areas (Western and Eastern) hold Regional Seminars together. Although we also try to keep the practice of rotating among the three geographical regions (Vancouver, Interior and Vancouver Island) to encourage the participation of more members from each part of the Province, we did not hold a Seminar in Vancouver Island during the current term, due to cost. Instead, the Interior held two Seminars. Participation of the membership was great for all three Seminars.

Education of members continues to be an important item on the Seminar's agenda. A careful selection of guest speakers, to address issues relevant to our membership also contributes for a great event.

5. Work Force Adjustment (WFA) / Employment Transition Policy (ETP)

To deal with the effects of Budget 2012 and DRAP, the Agriculture Union and the employers formed the WFA Committee at AAFC and the ETP Committee at CFIA.

Those Committees were initially formed at the National Level, which set the parameters for the formation of Area and Regional Committees.

In the Western Area, CFIA placed many roadblocks for the establishment of Regional Committees. Locals were affected by the abolishment of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between CFIA and three of the Western Provinces, with Meat Hygiene term employees being terminated at the end of 2013 and indeterminate staff declared surplus with an offer of a job. Most of those job offers, declared a "reasonable job offer" as per CFIA policy, were for placement of inspectors in other provinces.

Local 20027 was heavily affected by DRAP. The Local lost 13 (thirteen) members from the Meat Hygiene group who provided inspection in provincial establishments, from the initial number of 17 (seventeen) members declared surplus. Four inspectors were able to remain in their area of residence.

Local 20039 voted to join Local 20038. The merge is again the result of DRAP, with the Government closing down completely the Research Station in 2014, after years of depriving the station of all sorts of resources.

There are still 3 (three) members at the station for the current year (one leaving at the end of May, one leaving in September and the last one leaving at the end of December). Members opted to join Local 20038, due to its geographic location (closer to Kamloops than Summerland).

6. Membership Participation

The importance of the participation of members in our Union, the fundamental stone in our Labour Movement, becomes very apparent in difficult times. The Union will not be able to fight for our rights without the support of the membership. Being part of the Union, either by participating in the Local's Executive or by helping promoting the grassroots movement, will ensure that we keep united and strong, perpetuating the ideals of better working conditions, respect for workers and equality for all Canadians.

Maria-Luiza Romano
RVP, Eastern BC

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION – 2014
MARIETTE BEAUDET – REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT – WESTERN QUEBEC

With pleasure, I submit my report as Regional Vice-President-West Quebec, for my first term (2011 to 2014).

I am responsible for seven Locals totalling 950 members who work for six employers (CFIA, AAAC, ND, CGC, CSPS and PSC). I regularly attend Union-Management meetings with some employers (AAAC, CFIA and CGC). Union representation for other employers (ND, CSPS and PSC) was guaranteed by the respective national directors.

Below is a summary of main activities during my three-year term:

- Attend Joint Work Adjustment Committee (AAAC) and Employment Transition Policy (CFIA) meetings following job cuts in the federal government and closures of slaughterhouses (CFIA).
- Organize and attend with RVP-East Quebec all Regional Seminars, held twice a year. As of 2014, it was decided that there would be only one Annual Regional Seminar.
- Attend all Annual General Meetings of those seven Locals under my responsibility, and advise Local Executive members, if needed.
- Attend all meetings and conference calls of Agriculture Union National Council.
- Take part in the evaluation of projects submitted for financing under the Agriculture Union Social Justice Fund.
- Sit on the Agriculture Union Collective Bargaining and Health and Safety Standing Committee. Example: I asked our representative at the National Joint H&S Committee at AAAC that the file on defibrillators at their various work sites be updated and issues resolved as quickly as possible in the interest of our members.
- Attend meetings of PSAC-Quebec National Directors.
- Act as Agriculture Union delegate at the following conventions: PSAC Triennial Convention (2012), FTQ Convention (2013) and PSAC-Quebec Triennial Convention (2014).
- Take part in Joint Training of JLP on “Duty to Accommodate – To build an inclusive workplace”, as well as training on Employment Equity within AAAC.
- Attend PSAC Training on complaints to Public Service Staffing Tribunal (PSST).
- Prepare a file of complaints to PSST and act as Union Representative before PSST.
- Help to mobilize all members to repel attacks on Rand Formula (PSAC Pledge Cards Campaign).

Due to the tabling of various bills aimed at weakening our Union, it is of the greatest urgency that we demonstrate our solidarity. We are unfortunately witnessing an erosion of rights we gained following long and challenging fights. I am nevertheless confident that we will be able to mobilize. I am proud of the work accomplished over my first term as RVP-West Quebec.

In Solidarity,
Marianne Beaudet

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014

MIKE VANSON - REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT - NORTHERN ALBERTA & NORTH WEST TERRITORIES

As per Bylaw 9, Section 4 of the Agriculture Union Bylaws the following is my report.

First of all I am not letting my name stand for re-election as the RVP of Northern AB and the NWT.

Second I am not going to speak about all the meetings and committees I and all my fellow Agriculture Union colleagues attend and sit on.

I will speak upon, completion of this three year cycle it will be nine years as a RVP for my region. The time has passed, sometimes way to fast to even look at what we as a Union have done. We have battled and fought an almost always uphill climb with some victories; but looking back now it is hard to even pinpoint them as I look into the future and see what we as Union members have in store for us from this Government. But we must keep up the fight, if we don't we will lose everything what we and the people before us gained. I think you know what I am talking about...meaningful collective bargaining and our sick leave.

An example of why we must fight is...

When I first started with Agriculture Canada as a PPI 01 (meat inspector) in 1982 I was introduced to PSAC by the Local Pres.

I was then invited to a meeting at his home which I attended. The main theme of the meeting was how the Gov. of the day was trying to de-index our pensions.

I was very young (18 years) and a pension was the last thing I was thinking about, let alone what de-indexing or indexing was all about.

It was explained to me and I sort of understood but it was still clear as mud. I remember there were some protests or maybe even a strike of some sort but PSAC won the right to have our pensions indexed.

Fast forward 32 + years and now I am nearing the magic number of 35 years of service and now I know and fully understand what indexing of pensions does and why PSAC fought so hard for it. It is a benefit that is worth a ton of monthly Union dues to each retired member. Every time I hear someone ask or comment about why we have to pay union dues I use this example.

In solidarity,

Mike Vanson
RVP, Northern AB & NWT

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014

NANCY ROGERS – NATIONAL DIRECTOR - CSPS/PSC

I assumed the position of National Director for PSC and CSPS in the summer of 2013 when Érick Martel took a term position as a Labour Relations Officer in National Office. I've tried to capture all the key details.

Since the last convention, both the Public Service Commission and the Canada School of Public Service have undergone great changes. Many positions have been lost through WFA and some locals which were comprised of PSC and CSPS employees have been merged with CFIA or AAFC locals due to having insufficient numbers after cuts were implemented. There are other locals with reduced numbers who will have to consider if they are still viable or should merge with other locals, and discussions have commenced with the appropriate RVPs.

For PSC, which already had seen the closure of several offices in the regions approximately 8 years ago, was faced with further cuts in 2012 due to DRAP and later due to the elimination of the provision of cost-recovery staffing services to departments. In June 2012 the closure of the Edmonton and Winnipeg offices were announced. A WFA committee was established and the director at that time was involved in supporting surplus employees. It was a difficult time for these employees. One issue still unresolved for some of them is an ongoing classification grievance for the CR-04 human resources assistants which are now in the hands of PSAC.

In May or June of 2013, there was the announcement that due to declining revenues, it was decided that the PSC would no longer provide cost-recovery staffing services to departments. As a result, there were positions eliminated in Staffing and Assessment Services Branch in NCR and all regional offices. Once again, there was a need to support members and advise management of concerns. Volunteers for departure were sought, and as a result, some SERLOs were cancelled. Many employees were placed relatively quickly and at this time there are less than 5 members left that are affected, most of whom are on sick leave. There have been changes to reporting relations in the regions, and regional structures and work plans are not yet fully in place.

In the NCR, another key change was the relocation to 22 Eddy in Gatineau, and PSC become the lead tenant of the building. This has been a key topic for labour-management consultation and OHS committee meetings in the past year. Along with members of the executive, I have been participating in these meetings and communicating with the local executive who has carried out a lot of work on this. Over the past few years, the local has been successful in ensuring greater consultation with management. Erick has worked closely with the local president and the RVP to ensure good communications.

One area in particular where there has been insufficient consultation is employment equity and diversity, including the drafting of the EE plan. This will now be a standing item on NLMCC meetings.

In dealing with all these files, it has been immensely helpful to have a strong local in the NCR which represents the large majority of PSC members.

At the Canada School of Public Service, in addition to dealing with workforce adjustment, a key concern over the past several years has been OHS. Violence in the workplace has been a problem in a few regions, and Érick, working with the RVPs ensured investigations were carried out and supported members through mediation to deal with grievances. We continued to press management to meet their obligations to implement a violence prevention policy and to provide OHS training as required under the Canada Labour Code. This year, some training was finally rolled out. We still need training for committees and OHS reps, so work continues on that file. We are also dealing with the HRSDC investigation of a suicide of one of our members.

In regards to workforce adjustment, in Jan 2012, it was announced that CSPS would no longer be delivering language training, and as a result, many employees would be surplus. In many regional offices, language training represented up to half the staff. There were particular challenges in placing ED-LATS as there were questions as to equivalent classifications for alternation purposes due to their

unique pay scale. Unfortunately, not all were placed. For the remaining staff, the nature of their work has changed, and we'll have to continue to see what happens in the long term.

In June 2012, it was announced that due to the previous changes to language training, fewer positions in corporate services would be required and approximately 70 positions were eliminated. There were serious problems with how this process was carried out, particularly due to the unethical actions of one vice-president. Erick had many meetings with senior management to seek out remedies for employees, and there was some success in that regard. There was also much suffering, and Erick sought out resources to support the mental health of employees. Several grievances were filed, and Erick assisted with several mediation sessions.

Due to turnover in the CSPA NCR local executive, and delays in planning a general meeting, I have been the front line union contact for NCR employees, and have been participating in local OHS committees. Given that I'm in Halifax, this has been a challenge. With the help of the RVP, a general meeting will soon take place, and with a new executive, I hope that local representation will soon be in place, and that concerns are addressed by members in that workplace.

On May 12, as part of the Blueprint 2020 plan, it was announced that further changes are coming to the School. Over the next 3 years, funding will move from cost-recovery to re-allocation, and most courses will move to on-line deliveries. Consultation is just beginning on this, but we are concerned about the impact of members. While staffing numbers are expected to remain stable for the next 12 months, it is expected that fewer employees will be needed by 2016-2017. However, we do not yet know what the full impact will be.

Last year, a new committee for consultation on HR matters has been established. There has also been consultation on the review of HR policies, and the School will be carrying out a review of classification and work descriptions. We are requesting union representation on any working groups. Like a lot of other departments, consultation in matters of employment equity has been lacking, and we are seeking to rectify this. While there are still matters to improve, the current president of the School and management team are a lot more open to consultation than what was seen previously.

For members of both employers, going forward from this convention, if the proposed changes to national council are approved, will need to consider how to ensure information and concerns are shared without having the role of national director. There will be impacts for local presidents, RVPs and executive members. There is no one single way to carry out our work, but discussion is needed to determine if the current local structure is compatible with our reduced membership and whether it aligns with a likely-to-be reduced council and the need to consider new ways of doing our work to maximize the use of our resources. In my remaining time as director, that's the conversation I'm hoping to start.

In conclusion, I want to thank Erick for all his hard work during his time as national director. I don't know how he managed to deal with everything that was thrown at him as a new director. I want to thank the executive and RVPs for their support as I've stepped into this role, and thank you to the local presidents and executive members for representing the members and for your collaboration.

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014

PAT ST-GEORGES – REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT – EASTERN ONTARIO AND NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

This was my first term as a Regional Vice-President, representing the following locals: 70067 (CFIA-Ottawa), 70075 (AAFC-Ottawa), 00032 (AAFC-Kapuskasing), 70138 (DND-Gatineau), 70155 (PSC-NCR), 70139 (CSPS-NCR) and 00978 (DND-Kingston).

On the National Council, I was allocated to the Health & Safety / Bargaining Committee, since I have extensive OSH involvement and I was recently elected to the Technical Service (TC) group. I was also elected to participate on the AAFC Policy Health and Safety Committee.

Initially, I began by familiarizing myself with the locals, by establishing their respective contact information and enquiring about their most common work place issues. Soon there after, I attended almost all their AGMs and kept in regular contact.

With the participation of the other two Ontario RVPs (Jose Evangelho & John Langs), we organized our yearly Ontario Seminars; in Kingston, London and Ronia Gortsos did a great job replacing John for the Burlington seminar. These events proved to be very beneficial for local members to share their recent experiences. We also gave various information sessions and updates on Component issues and bargaining updates.

When DRAP hit us in 2012, I participated in several of the WFA Committees, both local and national. These were very difficult times for everyone; as the PSAC slogan states “we are all affected!” The cuts included the closing of the Kapuskasing AAFC Research Station; the impact of this news to these members was overwhelming. And we were left with great suspicions of foul play, when every local 67 executive member was handed an affected letter. The sweeping cuts amongst our teachers and translators at the CSPS & PSC, were also devastating.

If DRAP wasn't enough, AAFC rolled out more cuts, with their Transformation measures, again I participated in several branch WFA Committees. Again, the NCR was hit very hard. This brought moral down to records lows for our members.

All throughout these waves of cuts, our members have been dealing with all kinds of work place violence issues. If that isn't enough, we have been battling against the various employers to respect the provisions under the Code and part XX of the Regulations. There's still a lot of work to resolve many of these differences, between the various employers and us.

After over 30 months of negotiations for the TC team, we managed to get a signed agreement, just in time for the National Bargaining Conference, where I was re-elected back on to the TC team. We are anticipating another long, difficult round of negotiations, for all the tables.

The NCR & NE Ontario is a challenging region due to several levels of complexity; geographical distances (Kapuskasing to Kingston), several employers (all but CGC), being bilingual is almost necessary, combined with the sheer number of members within this region. Therefore, I'm grateful for the support I received from my alternate RVP (Marlene O'Neil) and the National Directors for DND (Danielle Moffet) and CSPS/PSC (Eric Martel & Nancy Rogers). I also want to acknowledge the hard work and dedication the local presidents and their local executives contributed.

Of course, I received valuable guidance and advice from our National Executives and our Labour Relations Officers (Nancy Milosevic, Sylvie Rochon, Elaine Massie and Erick Martel). And saving the best for last... I'd like to thank our Component Administrative Assistants (Christine Gauthier, Debbie Ramsay and Nathalie Cale); always cheerful, energetic and ready to help out!

I have to say, the Agriculture Union is a great PSAC Component to belong to 😊

In solidarity,

Patrick St-Georges
RVP in the NCR and NE Ontario

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014

RONIA GORTSOS – REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT – CENTRAL ONTARIO

I was elected to replace Brother John Langs back in March. I would say large shoes to fill. Nonetheless my theory is sink or swim and I have been doing my best to stay afloat. I attended my first Regional Seminar in Burlington as the RVP for Central Region. I would say that the organizing committee did an excellent job predominantly Brother Evangelho. This seminar proved to be very busy as we had to run elections for standing committees and upcoming Bargaining committees. I had my hands full trying to co-chair this event. After becoming elected I canvassed for the right person to become my alternate Brother Richard Hilson. I wanted to ensure that we have a good working relationship and that we will work as a team. In fact Brother Hilson attended what would have been my first Council meeting on my behalf. No problem there Brother Hilson stood up to the task.

Since the Regional Seminar I have been communicating with the local Presidents to get updated on local issues. There have been many issues to which I have been working closely with local Presidents such as Fact Finding Meetings due to Administrative Investigations. This is an area that we will all have to become experienced with and understand the nuances of in order to best represent our members.

Recently at Est # 14 in Toronto a Pork Slaughter Plant that has been around for 85 years went into receivership. This was like pulling the carpet out from everyone's feet. Over 700 employees and 27 CFIA employees and all their families will be affected.

I have been actively involved in those meetings from the dissemination of information to insisting on information sessions explaining the process in detail and EAP session for how to deal with life altering changes to resume writing coaching.

One thing I have always prided myself in is wearing someone else's shoes to really understand what they are feeling. I am actively involved in Occupational Health and Safety from employee co-chair on two committees to an Area OSH Rep for over 18 years. This is the core of the Union movement and one that I believe strongly in.

One thing is for certain in this short period of time I have been gaining some good experience. I thank you all for this opportunity.

Respectfully,

Sister Gortsos aka Sister G!
RVP Central Region

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014
SUE ANN SULLIVAN – REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT – EASTERN ATLANTIC

Locals: 90076, 90001, 80003, 80010, 80002, 80323, 80058

Affected Members

As a result of the 2012 Deficit Reduction Action Plan, Eastern Atlantic realized the closure of the St. John's Laboratory, removal of the treatment process in the Port Aux Basque Quarantine Station as well as a loss of 3 FTE's in Yarmouth, NS, a total of 45 members were affected.

3 members availed of transfers to other Laboratories in Dartmouth and Charlottetown. All members who were placed on priority lists have been staffed. As of October 24/13, all affected members of resulting from the 2012 cuts, were placed in indeterminate positions. There was a lot of juggling positions to accommodate our affected members. Although this was positive, many rural FTE positions have been moved to various offices throughout the region, mainly the urban areas. The inspectors are feeling the strain of less staff to complete work plans.

The CFIA Bonavista office closed effective May 2013. The Port Aux Basque office approached the deadline (April 2014) that resulted in the treatment aspect of their operations at the Quarantine station being discontinued and now transferred to Marine Atlantic. All affected members decided to take early retirements. The members are very upset at this site as their building is now being transferred to Marine Atlantic along with their treatment work. This issue has been raised at UMC meetings on every agenda since the cuts were announced.

As of April 2014, the final 4 FTE's (4 indeterminate employees) have retired taking the TSM. The treatment work will cease as of April 1/14. This treatment will now be delivered by Marine Atlantic. The cost to complete this work will increase. The employees were concerned that additional inspections will be required to ensure the treatment is sufficient to ensure compliance to regulations. This concern has been tabled at the 3 UMC meetings and management has not been able to answer the question except to say that the way we inspect and the frequency may face changes. This concerned the members as they are worried there may be systematic changes coming that they are not aware of.

Grievances

There have been a variety of grievances filed over the past year including Duty to Accommodate, Classification, and Harassment. We are seeing more of an effort by management to resolve grievances at the lower levels. The informal conflict resolution process seems to be catching on and we are seeing it used more often with positive results. Also, the Harassment Awareness Course (delivered by management and union) seems to be sparking a lot of discussion and positive feedback. The members are starting to better understand their rights and the proper procedure as well as options when faced with harassment.

Miscellaneous

There are serious concerns on the part of inspectors from CFIA, that their work plans are not being completed as they have traditionally been. Product inspections are not being completed as per the protocol. Basic Compliance Verification Audits, Shellfish Sampling and food safety actions (i.e. Effectiveness checks on recalls) seem to be the only work that is being done. With Inspection Modernization on the horizon, members are worried about what work they will be doing, where the work will be completed and how? This is causing a lot of unrest among our membership.

Modernization seems to be the hottest issue right now in CFIA. Members are getting mixed messages about the upcoming changes and rumours are spreading non-stop. Positions are not being filled. Rumours of how our work will be completed, where and by whom have been spreading constantly. Members are feeling very uneasy and insecure about their positions with CFIA and are unsure of what their future work will look like. Fear of job losses in the Fish program are felt by our fish inspectors as they feel much of their work is being lost/modernized. Management keeps saying at the Area level that new regulated party work will replace the losses, but in NL and NS that is highly unlikely as we do very little interprovincial trade. Local management seems to think our members close to retirement will balance the loss of work, but any members that were eligible to retire would have done so during the affected stage, therefore it seems highly unlikely that there will be enough retirees to balance these changes.

AAFC local UMC meetings in St. John's, NL are not going well. There is a serious issue with the way management deals with union representatives and their respective issues. Also, the Regional AAFC UMC meetings are dysfunctional with very few managers ever showing up to the meetings. There is a serious issue with the way management deals with union representatives and their respective issues. The local President, an AAFC member has worked extremely hard to resolve the dysfunction but with little success. She has had the committee complete Joint Learning for both Duty to Accommodate as well as the UMC Committee training. Management was not receptive.

Challenges for Next Mandate

There will be two prevalent challenges for the next mandate of the RVP for Eastern Atlantic. For CFIA, it will most likely be dealing with the effects of Inspection Modernization on CFIA members. It will be vital that our union watch the FTE's closely as this transition occurs. Secondly, AAFC will need much effort from union representatives to improve the functionality of Union-Management Consultation Committees.

REPORT TO THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AGRICULTURE UNION - 2014
TERRI LEE – REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT – WESTERN BRITISH COLUMBIA AND
YUKON

This was an extremely challenging term marked by extensive downsizing of all locals I represent. Budget 2012 had dramatic effects on members and locals. The current Harper Conservative Majority Government has not been good to unions or government and the onslaught continues.

CFIA

The transfer of Provincial meat inspection duties to the Provinces and subsequent placement through the CFIA's Employment Transition Policy affected members in all CFIA locals. I participated in Regional and Area Employment Transition Committees (ETC) with the goal to place affected members in reasonable jobs. Meat Hygiene inspectors working in Provincial slaughter facilities would no longer have jobs after Dec 2013. BC had approximately 40 members affected. The ETC's role expanded once Budget 2012 decisions were announced. Announcements included the transfer of a portion of the Sydney Center for Plant Health to Summerland, and the creation of Centers of Expertise. Thankfully, the decision to transfer CFIA staff to Summerland was reversed; however, members were affected by the uncertainty & emotional trauma of the situation. CFIA members who worked in Provincial meat were not offered a surplus option, but guaranteed reasonable job offers. Many members relocated, while some, including terms accepted jobs with the Provincial Government.

I was a member of the PSAC - CFIA Negotiations Team. The term was marked by delays by the CFIA. They seemed to lack a mandate to negotiate with the PSAC. A tentative agreement was finally reached after 29 months, highlighted by the loss of severance pay and the Treasury Board pattern settlement. The agreement has yet to be ratified. I spoke with many members in BC who were supportive of the efforts of the negotiations team. I would like to thank all the members for their feedback, support, photos and mobilization efforts. This is really appreciated by the team & helped to reach an agreement.

I represented many members in grievances, Union Management Committees, Occupational Health & Safety committees, staffing complaints and other forums with management. I also supported and provided advice to locals. There were some successes this term, with management backing down, but there are also many grievances awaiting 3rd level hearings. I encourage locals to try to resolve issues locally with management, where possible.

CGC

This term has been detrimental for members at the CGC. The both the Vancouver and Prince Rupert CGC locals have lost about half their memberships as all GL's and PI 01's were let go. I represented members in Public Service Staffing Tribunal (PSST)

Complaints. A settlement was reached with a group of members who were unsuccessful in a PI03 pool. The CGC agreed to complete a reassessment which resulted in some of the complainants being placed in the pool and subsequently appointed to PI 03 jobs. A second group of members were unsuccessful in participating in a PI 03 pool. These complaints are ongoing. The PSST has very strict timelines and is very judicial. It is very difficult to prove abuse of authority.

Locals continue to function in their diminished capacity with some adjustment to local executives. I will continue to support the locals.

PSC/CSPS

Members in Vancouver experienced downsizing this term. Some members participated in SERLO exercise and other left the government. We have a handful of members left at these organizations in Vancouver.

Media

I spoke to the media numerous times to highlight the work done by PSAC members with efforts to minimize the impact of budget cuts. I participated in a BC - CBC TV story about retail food and Consumer Protection which ran on CBC radio and news. Consumers cannot detect the fraud based on examination of a product's label. Verification of net quantity, ingredients and claims, such as organic must be verified by the government. I also spoke about cuts to Federal Programs which was picked up by CBC National and various newspapers. I continue to speak out about Harper's anti-union agenda.

Regional Seminar

Regional Seminars were held each year with the assistance of the RVP BC Interior. Locations rotated throughout the Province, with seminars held in Vancouver, Kamloops and Harrison this term. The newly renovated Vancouver PSAC office was used in an effort to reduce costs. Member turnout was generally good with approximately 20 – 25 each year. We try to provide a good mix of training, updates, workshops and Q&A's. This format seems to work as members keep attending.

BC Regional Council

I continued my mandate as a Metro Vancouver Co-ordinator on the BC Regional Council. I continued to participate and lead Vancouver Area Council activities, such as Labour Day, Pride Parade and other community events. I also participated in many Vancouver & District Labour Council events such as International Women's Day, Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives and various community fundraisers.

I have enjoyed my term as a PSAC activist and National officer. Hosting the 2011 Convention in Vancouver was tiring and hard work, but the members had a good time &

were exposed to some diversity and west coast culture. We will face additional challenges in the next 3 years, including a fight to keep our sick leave, pensions and many other negotiated benefits. There will also be a Federal election, which is our opportunity to defeat the anti-union Harper Majority.

I look forward to the 2014 convention in Winnipeg. This will be a very challenging convention for us with many changes on how we run our union. I intend to run for a position on the National Executive as I have a few years (7) before retirement and still have much to offer. I look forward to your continued support.

In Solidarity,

Terri