

WFA Consultation Committee / Comité de consultation du RE
(Workforce Adjustment Consultation Committee / Comité de consultation du réaménagement des effectifs)

9 March 2012, 1300hrs to 1530hrs / le 9 mars 2012, 13 h 00 à 15 h 30
Government Conference Centre / Centre de conférences du Gouvernement
Gatineau Room, 4th Floor / Salle Gatineau, 4^{ième} étage
2 Rideau Street, Ottawa / 2 rue Rideau, Ottawa

- Co-Chairs:** Cynthia L. Binnington, Assistant Deputy Minister (Human Resources-Civilian) (ADM (HR-Civ))
Glenn Maxwell, DND National Consultation Team for the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC)
- Members:** Susan Harrison, Acting Director General Workplace Management (DGWM)
Gail Johnson, Director General Human Resources Strategic Directions (DGHRSD)
Susan Nutbrown, representing Director General Workforce Development (DGWD)
Jacqueline Rigg, representing Director General Civilian Human Resources Management Operations (DGCHROMO)
BGen Michael Dabros, Director General Land Staff/Chief of Staff Land Operations (DGLS/COS Land Ops)
Michael Margolian, Chief of Staff (COS(S&T))
Joseph Silva, representing Deputy Chief of Staff (DCOS(Mat))
Lynn Harper-Ciarroni, representing Director General Naval Personnel (DGNP)
Kathleen McLean, representing Director Military Personnel (DGMP)
Mary Chamberlain, Executive Vice-President, Union of National Defence Employees (UNDE)
Randy DeFrane, representing President, Federal Government Dockyards Trade and Labour Council (West) (FGDTLC-W)
Tom Denault, President, Federal Government Dockyards Chargehands Association (FGDCA)
Dr. Jean-Marc Noël, President, Canadian Military College Faculty Association (CMCFA)
Lorne Brown, President, Federal Government Dockyards Trades and Labour Council (East) (FGDTLC-E)
Mark Boucher, President, Canadian Merchant Service Guild (CMSG)
Fabian Murphy, Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), Agriculture Component

ITEM 1: Opening Remarks

1. Ms. Binnington welcomed members to the first Workforce Adjustment Consultation Committee meeting and thanked them for their willingness to attend the first meeting on short notice. She also welcomed Glenn Maxwell, the PIPSC representative, as the Union Co-Chair.
2. Ms. Binnington remarked on the anticipation for the results of the Strategic Review and the Deficit Reduction Action Plan. She noted the Department was not able to make commitments around when announcements would be made.
3. She further explained that the coming months and years would be challenging for all, and reiterated the Committee's commitment to ensuring the lines of communication remained open and to impacting employees as minimally as possible. Finally, she advised that it had become clear that workforce adjustment would be one of the measures the Department would need to use to achieve its targets.
4. Ms. Binnington remarked on the vision for the Consultation Committee, which would include working with Unions to ensure the right tools, processes, and training were in place. She referred to the Work Force Adjustment Information Kit for Employees (employee tool kit), which had been distributed during the HR Sub-Committee meeting.
5. She recommended that the Committee's first meeting include informal discussions around what would be expected, the Committee's Terms of Reference, alternation, and the Department's decision-making framework.
6. Ms. Binnington advised the members that the WFA Consultation Committee would be a National level committee, and lower level committees would be established as and when required.
7. Ms. Chamberlain expressed concerns about the efficacy of the Committee but noted that the addition of Level 2s from the line organization was a positive step.
8. Mr. Maxwell expressed the view that the Unions wished to have the mandate discussed prior to the Terms of Reference, and noted that PIPSC had sample Terms of Reference which could be used as a guide.
9. Mrs. Harrison welcomed the submission of the sample Terms of Reference, and noted they would be helpful in addition to the various Terms of Reference used in the past. She commented on how they had been able to establish very successful Terms of Reference for other committees, some of which were seen as best practices.

ITEM 2: Mandate of the WFA Consultation Committee

10. Mr. Maxwell initiated the discussion regarding the Committee's mandate and recommended that in addition to consultation, there should be an oversight function, including for alternation cases.
11. During the discussion questions were raised on the role, authority, and intent of the Committee, for example, the value of Committee members' expertise, how individual cases would be discussed, and mediating disputes.
12. Ms. Binnington remarked that the context discussed reflected the work they had envisaged for the Committee. She remarked on the aspects which were management's responsibility, including the Deputy Minister's accountability for Departmental decisions. Ms. Binnington also elaborated on the Civilian Workforce Management Board's (CWMB) interest in the success of the programs the Committee would deal with, such as alternation.
13. Ms. Binnington advised that individual cases and positions would not be appropriate subjects addressed by the National Committee, especially as there would be local and/or regional committees in place. She confirmed the Committee would have a role in monitoring numbers and timeframes, and noted the importance of transparency.
14. Mr. Margolian suggested that the systemic issues brought forward by contentious cases could be discussed by the Committee.
15. Mrs. Harrison explained that the Committee would be the first of its kind at the National level. She noted the objectives would be to ensure the right systems were in place, providing a forum of consultation on how the systems work and are rolled out, providing guidance and oversight in terms of affected and surplus declarations, learning plans, and identifying necessary supports which the Department may have missed.
16. Mr. Maxwell noted the importance of properly identifying the processes for affected employees and requested a discussion on the delegation.
17. A discussion followed regarding the selection of the Co-Chairs and how the WFA Consultation Committee would differ from the UMCC HR Sub-Committee. During the discussion, it was agreed that both the management and Union representatives were to select their respective Co-Chairs. It was also noted the WFA CC was established to implement mechanisms which do not normally arise, such as alternation and WFA, and the Consultation Committee would ensure a single focus for these issues.
18. Ms. Binnington explained that management's participant list was established to ensure key organizations were represented. She expressed the importance of members making the effort to be present during the meetings to ensure consistency in the sensitive discussions.

19. Mr. Maxwell proposed that the Unions provide the name of a representative, an alternate, and a resource. Ms. Binnington noted that as a practice it was preferred for meetings not to be open since this could inhibit the discussion, especially around sensitive issues. However, she also noted that presenters and limited numbers of observers may be required to move some issues forward.

20. Mr. Maxwell confirmed the Unions would identify their representatives, alternates and resources. Ms. Binnington agreed to take the same action. **Action Item: Co-Chairs to confirm Committee members, alternates, and resources.**

21. The format of the meeting minutes were discussed and it was agreed the minutes would be signed by the Co-Chairs.

ITEM 3: Decision-Making Framework

22. Ms. Nutbrown introduced Ms. Anne Finn, Acting Director Civilian Employment Policies, to provide an overview of the WFA decision-making framework. Ms. Finn outlined the changes to the delegation instrument, which included the Deputy Minister's authority to authorize WFA situations, which only Level 1s could request from the Deputy. Ms. Finn explained this would ensure the decision makers had a clear understanding of the impacts on the organization.

23. Ms. Finn noted the communication of information could be sub-delegated and the expectation was for managers to inform employees of decisions which would impact them. She further noted that managers would be advised that an invitation to attend those meetings should be extended to Union representatives.

24. Ms. Binnington remarked on the importance of the changes to the delegation instrument which would ensure the full scope and support during the decision-making process. She added that the Deputy wanted to ensure consideration for the entire scope.

ITEM 4: Alternation

25. Ms. Finn provided an overview of the alternation process. She explained that the process in alternation would commence once letters which did not include the guarantee of a reasonable job offer were provided to employees.

26. She indicated that ADM(HR-Civ) was working to establish processes and procedures for alternation in DND, and noted that the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (OCHRO) had created a GC Forum for alternation. Ms. Finn added that the Department was exploring a system which would assist in more successful coordination and placement of employees.

27. Finally, Ms. Finn provided an overview of other tools under development, which included questions and answers for employees, presentations for managers to use with an employee, application templates for alternation and affected employees, employee guide on alternation, and delineation of roles and responsibilities.

28. Concerns over the use of GC Forums as an alternation tool were raised by the members. They included its 90 day life cycle, the automatic removal of external email links by National Defence, the lack of ready access to computers by many employees, and the fact that GC Forums is a self-serve system which could not provide additional support to employees who may require assistance.

29. Ms. Johnson remarked that work was being done with ADM(IM) to establish a National Defence internal system, which would take into consideration the issues with the GC Forums system.

30. Ms. Finn noted the system would be for DND use and that different options were being explored for implementing it. For example, employees could provide information to their manager or HRO, with the HRO managing the file at the local level. The first objective would be to match employees in their local area, and expanding when required.

31. Mr. Maxwell mentioned that there must be a communications plan in place to ensure the information is disseminated to employees and managers. He also commented on the importance of alleviating some of the workload from HROs. Ms. Binnington agreed and remarked on the value of additional paths for distributing information, such as the Unions.

32. Ms. Chamberlain raised several concerns regarding a National Defence internal system. It was confirmed that employees would be encouraged to submit their names for both systems and that managers would have the authority to conduct alternation as a deployments, where possible. Ms. Binnington noted this authority was subject to change as the framework became more developed.

33. Ms. Chamberlain also noted that in the 1990s it was possible for an opting employee to identify and propose an alternate for their manager to consider. Ms. Binnington responded that the objective was to maximize work match opportunities. She further noted there were technical issues to alternation, and it would be valuable to have further discussions around the decision-making framework. **Action Item: Follow-up discussion on Alternation Framework.**

34. Mr. Denault noted the confusion resulting from the existence of both Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat and National Defence Question and Answers. Ms. Finn advised that their team had worked with OCHRO to ensure consistency with Q&As. *Secretarial Note: the DGWD Intranet page includes a link to the TBS FAQs. DND no longer has a separate departmental FAQs.*

ITEM 5: Terms of Reference

35. Mr. Maxwell initiated the discussion on the Terms of Reference for the Committee and tabled two samples secretorially. He proposed the Department draft Terms of Reference. *Action Item: ADM(HR-Civ) to prepare Draft Terms of Reference for WFA Consultation Committee.*

36. Mr. Brown expressed the need for the Terms of Reference to be developed as soon as possible.

37. Mr. Maxwell proposed that the regional and local workforce adjustment committees should be tied into the Committee's Terms of Reference.

38. Mrs. Harrison remarked that the Terms of Reference would need to provide flexibility since some areas would need local and regional committees, where others may only require regional committees. She added that the connecting mechanisms should be included in the Terms of Reference.

ITEM 6: Frequency of Meetings

39. Ms. Binnington initiated a discussion on the frequency of the Committee meetings. She suggested the Committee may need to meet on a monthly basis until September, at which time the frequency of the meetings could potentially be reduced.

40. Ms. Binnington added that Department would continue with the current practice for travel costs, at the lowest fare rate when the meetings were outside the NJC Cycle.

41. Finally, Ms. Binnington suggested the Department would work with the Unions to establish agendas and distribute documents in advance of the meetings. Ms. Harrison added that by distributing documents in advance, the discussion around those items would be more productive as the parties have the opportunity to review the documentation and prepare questions.

ITEM 7: Round Table

42. BGen Dabros remarked that members should take into account continuity when selecting an alternate.

43. Ms. Chamberlain had no issues to raise.

44. Ms. Nutbrown had no issues to raise.

45. Mr. DeFrane had no issues to raise.

46. Ms. Johnson had no issues to raise.

47. Mr. Noël had no issues to raise.
48. Mr. Boucher had no issues to raise.
49. Mr. Silva had no issues to raise.
50. Ms. Rigg had no issues to raise.
51. Mr. Brown had no issues to raise.
52. Ms. Harper-Ciarroni had no issues to raise.
53. Ms. McLean had no issues to raise.
54. Mr. Denault had no issues to raise.
55. Mr. Margolian had no issues to raise.
56. Mr. Murphy had no issues to raise.
57. Mrs. Harrison had no issues to raise.

ITEM 8: Closing Remarks


58. Mr. Maxwell remarked that the first meeting of the Committee had been good and had addressed immediate concerns. He observed there was work remaining to be done. Finally, Mr. Maxwell thanked the members for their participation and professionalism.

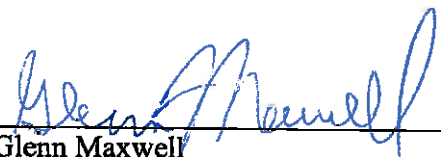
59. Ms. Binnington commented on the value of implementing the right framework. She also thanked the members for their participation and remarked on the importance of the key players' involvement during the process. Finally, she remarked on the importance of learning from the lessons of the 1990s.

60. Ms. Binnington advised that work would be done on the Terms of Reference, but noted there were other constraints on their time next week.

WFA CONSULTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES 9 March 2012

Approved by:


Cynthia Binnington
Co-Chair


Glenn Maxwell
Co-Chair

