

**Agriculture Union Equal Opportunity (EO) Committee
Annual Meeting - December 3 - 4, 2005
Ottawa, Ontario**

Present: Marianne Hladun (National Director, E.O.), Terri Lee (Alt. National Director E.O.), Jennie Chu (BC), Angie Chudy (SK), Janet Edwards (MB and Northwest ON), Gina Pennesi (Committee Coordinator and Rep for ON), Jane McDonald (MAR), Howard Willems (4th National Executive VP) and Sylvia Prowse (PSAC Service Officer).

Guests: André Paul and Vicki Zyzniewski from the National Aboriginal, Inuit and Métis Circle (NAIM) and the PSAC EO Committee.

December 3, 2005

1. Review Terms of Reference

1.1 - Action: Make changes as agreed upon by committee and send draft for review - PENNESI.

2. Information from NAIM Circle

2.1 - Provided a brief overview of the Think Tank held in March 2004, which consisted of 2 Aboriginal representatives from each region, 2 PSAC EO Committee reps and 2 Alliance Executive Committee (AEC) Officers. One of the issues raised was the variance of terminology used among the members to describe their heritage, which was considered both offensive and non-offensive depending on where the member originated i.e. Aboriginal vs First Nations vs Indian vs Indigenous.

There was an Aboriginal members caucus held at the PSAC Unity Conference to have discussions and to provide a unified voice for all Aboriginal members. The resolution was raised from both the Aboriginal members as well as the Racially visible members to propose splitting the conference into two separate events, in line with the other equity group conferences organized by PSAC. The priorities for the members centred around outreach, communication, education and terminology to work towards building the union and making it more inclusive. The following website is available for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members to visit and receive information:

<http://www.pfac-afpc.org/issues/naim/index-e.shtml>

A list of regional contacts appears on this webpage and a promotional brochure can be downloaded for distribution. **Action: EO committee members are encouraged to contact the members for their regions and create a network for information - REGIONAL REPS.**

3. Review of Budget

3.1 - Funds remain in the budget which are available until December 31, 2005. The committee decided to purchase additional promotional items to be distributed at local or regional meetings. **Action: Coordinate with National Director to purchase items and distribute to regional EO reps - PROWSE and HLADUN.**

4. Debrief of Convention 2005

4.1 - Of the 5 resolutions submitted through the regions from the EO committee, 3 were passed and are listed as follows:

- Any member in good standing can run for a National Officer position without being in attendance at convention. (see by-laws amendment for process).
- EO Committee can submit resolutions as a body.
- Each local is required to establish a local EO contact and an OSH contact.

The 2 resolutions which did not pass were:

- Establish a triennial Agriculture Union EO Conference
- Allow the entire EO committee to be delegates at Agriculture Union Triennial Convention.

4.2 - The first EO caucus was held at convention, lead by the National Director and attended by approximately 30 delegates. The discussion included a brief description of the EO committee and its mandate as well as provided an overview of the rationale behind the 5 resolutions.

4.3 - The EO committee also initiated a drive for spare toiletry items from the hotel rooms and helped organize a silent auction. The proceeds from both events were donated to a local women's shelter.

4.4 - Promotional items were distributed to show support for EO, including some handmade bracelets, water bottles and post-it pads.

4.5 - Feedback from delegates provided the inspiration for the training session currently under development by the National Director, which will cover the fundamentals of EO, the EO committee and how it fits into Agriculture Union. This training will be available for delivery at Regional Seminars beginning in 2006. **Action: Finalize development of training and make arrangements with regional reps to deliver it to members - HLADUN.**

Meeting was recessed until 9:00 December 4, 2005.

December 4, 2005

5. Update from PSAC EO Meeting

5.1 - Racially Visible members have piloted a newsletter and have plans to continue to produce it for members.

5.2 - Electronic flyers will be available on the web, slogan is Think, Ask, Vote. Flyers will cover topics such as anti-scab, human rights, pension, pay equity, child care, etc.

5.3 - Extended medical coverage cards - in negotiations with John Gordon, could be available to members by 2008.

5.4 - Federal Disability Insurance Plan to be circulated.

5.5 - The 8 equity reps are to have a conference call with the alternates and the Regional Council Equity Reps.

5.6 - Transfer of maternity leave credits between TB departments and Agencies - currently no agreement exists for this provision.

5.7 - Scent-free policy in draft form has been circulated for review and comments.

5.8 - Recommendation to promote National Day Against Homophobia at work sites.

5.9 - Health Canada periodic medical evaluations - new form asks member to authorize access of human resource personnel files to doctors. PSAC raised the issue with Health Canada and they are changing the forms. PSAC is considering filing an Human Rights complaint.

5.10 - Human Rights Grievance Representation training will begin development in 2007.

5.11 - PSAC Anti-Oppression Kit - different modules are under development. Pilot of Disability Rights section was unsuccessful and is undergoing revisions.

5.12 - Visit www.labourstart.org for issues needing international solidarity.

5.13 - If interested in standing for elections for CLC positions, let the PSAC know in advance. Lack of awareness about their election process resulted in vacant equity seats.

6. Activity Reports

6.1 - **Atlantic** - Attended AGM's, either in person or via the alternate rep. Attended Regional Seminar and made a presentation. A multi-cultural pot luck dinner was held to celebrate diversity. Still working on getting local EO contacts, there are 10 locals and 5 contacts in place. A lawyer specializing in GLBT rights attended a meeting and gave a presentation which was well received. Prepared and submitted item for Orientation binder as outlined in the National work plan.

6.2 - **Ontario** - Attended 1 AGM and the Regional Seminar, made presentations at each, noting in particular the importance of establishing a local EO contact. Promoted all key Equity dates, including National Day Against Homophobia. Presented all 5 resolutions for consideration and obtained support from Ontario RVPs to submit all resolutions to the Agriculture Union Triennial Convention. Attended the convention as the EO delegate. Maintained the EO information table, promotional materials and participated on the by-laws pre-convention committee. Prepared and submitted item for Orientation Binder as outlined in the National work plan.

6.3 - **British Columbia** - Attending AGM's was at times difficult due to repeated date changes, but in total, meetings were attended. There are four alternates who assist the Regional rep in her duties, to cover the entire region. Attended several community events, including Chinese New Year / Robbie Burns' Day - a combination Chinese and Scottish community event. Attended the PSAC Access conference in January and held a Human Rights Day. Produced an annual newsletter which was widely distributed to members in and outside of BC region.

Attended the PSAC Women's Conference in February, including an auction fundraiser. Attended an employer's face-to-face meeting in Burnaby.

Was nominated and received an award from the Public Service Commission for "Women Making a Difference in the Public Service". Participated in the provincial elections in collaboration with the BC Federation of Labour, by talking to people about voting and going door-to-door to communicate the message.

Attended International Women's Day event at Vancouver City Hall. Attended BC Regional Triennial Convention in April. Attended NDP electoin training and was a scrutineer. Attended political celebration at NDP headquarters.

Attended PSAC Unity Conference in September. An Agriculture Union caucus was held. **Action: Recommend to National Council that an Agriculture Union caucus be held at each and every PSAC National Conference / Convention - HLADUN.**

Promoted support for Telus and Teachers' strikes. Attended mediation training. Attended a community forum with municipal officials to make the neighbourhood more safe and has volunteered for foot patrol.

Organizing a Human Rights Day on December 15, 2005. Various prominent speakers

are attending the event, which will be filmed and distributed. Worked with Manitoba & NW Ontario rep to submit item for Orientation binder as outlined in the National Workplan

6.4 - Manitoba & NW Ontario - Attended convention as an observer. Attended the PSAC Unity Conference in September. Participated as part of a focus group for review of the Public Service Modernization Act (PSMA), organized by Agriculture Union National Office. PSMA poses an impact to Racially Visible members. Hosted a multicultural evening, sponsored by the CGC. Held a half-day event honouring Aboriginal culture with arts and crafts on display as well as a display of events that had been held in Thunder Bay.

Attended PSAC Regional Women's Committee meeting in Winnipeg, resolutions to be submitted at PSAC Convention. Participated on Winnipeg Area Council. For March 21st, organized a concert at the workplace where the EO Rep's Gospel Baptist Church choir performed for members. Plans to attend the Dec. 6 vigil being held at the legislative buildings in Winnipeg. Initiated a networking relationship with a member who has newly self-identified as belonging to the GLBT equity group. Worked with BC rep to submit item for Orientation binder as outlined in the National Workplan.

6.5 - Saskatchewan - Attended CLC Disabilities Conference and created a network for information. Attended both the PSAC Access and Women's Conferences. Delivered a presentation at the Regional Seminar. Had Saskatoon Federation of Labour Pride VP attend as a speaker. Plans to have a speaker for Aboriginal issues at next seminar. Will be attending a local forum on missing Aboriginal women who have been murdered and abandoned. Attended most local AGMs, one alternate serves Swift Current and one serves Wynyard. Obtained a video and binder for circulation that covers dealing with workplace injuries. Prepared and submitted item for Orientation binder as outlined in the National workplan.

7. National / Regional Workplans

7.1 - National workplan was reviewed and adjusted to reflect the priorities and focus for the 2006-2008 workplan. (See workplan for details).

8. Strategies for Regional Seminars

8.1 - M. Hladun has designed a training course on EO to be delivered to each region at the 2006 Regional Seminars. M. Hladun will make arrangements with the RVP's to attend the meetings and deliver the training to members. The training is designed to further educate members on EO, the purpose of the committee and the responsibilities the committee has to its members.

8.2 - Regional reps to deliver a consistent message regarding the work of the committee and its priorities.