

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
National Union-Management Consultation Committee (NUMCC)
November 18, 2009
Minutes

Present:

AAFC

John Knubley	Deputy Minister
Andrea Lyon	Associate Deputy Minister
Pierre Corriveau	ADM Corporate Management Branch
Marc Fortin	ADM Research Branch
Catherine MacQuarrie	ADM Human Resources Branch
Andrew Marsland	ADM Strategic Policy Branch
Richard Butts	on behalf of J. Merchant ADM Agri-Environment Services Branch
David Phillips	on behalf of J. Merchant ADM Agri-Environment Services Branch
Greg Meredith	ADM Farm Financial Programs Branch
Donna Mitchell	Executive Director Rural & Co-Operative Secretariats
Rita Moritz	CIO Information Systems Branch
Jodi Redmond	ADM Communication and Consultations Branch
Laura Ruzzier	DG Office of Audit and Evaluation
Bill Bryson	on behalf of L. Sénéchal A/General Counsel, Legal Services
Steve Tierney	ADM Market and Industry Services Branch
Laurie Hunter	Acting Director General, Performance Excellence, HRB
Lisa Imbesi	Acting Director General, Workplace Relations, HRB
Ceci O'Flaherty	Director Labour Relations, Workplace Relations, HRB
David Swol	DG Integrated Internal Services, HRB
Céline Tremblay	Principal Consultant, Labour Relations, HRB

Agriculture Union (PSAC)

Bob Kingston	President
Debbie Forsythe	First National Executive Vice-President
Denis Sicard	Second National Executive Vice-President
Howard Willems	Third National Executive Vice-President
Fabian Murphy	Fourth National Executive Vice-President

Professional Institute of Public Service Canada (PIPSC)

Linnell Edwards	President, AAFC National Consultation Team
Catherine Keir	Vice President, AAFC National Consultation Team

Canadian Association of Professional Employees (CAPE)

Karen Brook	Labour Relations Officer
Stan Spak	EC Director, National Executive Committee

Association of Canadian Financial Officers (ACFO)

Vicky Ringuette	Labour Relations Advisor and General Counsel
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Regrets:

Mélanie Chenier
Ed Fletcher
Salma Jaroudi
John Leduc

Labour Relations Officer (PIPSC)
Assistant Business Manager (IBEW)
President, AAFC – NCR (CAPE - Local 507)
Vice President (ACFO)

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Summary and Action</u>	<u>Accountability</u>
1. Opening remarks J. Knubley	<p><u>Action:</u> As agreed, we will continue to meet on a regular basis to discuss where we are headed and what it means to our employees.</p> <p><u>Information:</u> Introduction of Andrea Lyon as new Associate DM.</p>	ADM HR
2. Approval of Minutes J. Knubley	<p><u>Information:</u> Minutes were approved as presented.</p>	
3a. FIPD and Provincial Delivery of AgriStability G. Meredith	<p><u>Summary:</u> Negotiations with BC and Saskatchewan have been completed. Transfer of delivery of the AgriStability program to these provinces to start January 1, 2010. Maximizing continued employment opportunities for AAFC employees continues to be a key priority for the department.</p> <p><u>Actions:</u> Keep staff informed of developments through regular updates.</p>	ADM FFPB
3b. Agri-Environment Services Branch D. Phillips	<p><u>Summary:</u> High level organizational structure has been developed and approved by AAFC senior management. Branch is working on developing the detailed structure.</p> <p>Significant staffing work has been undertaken to stabilize the organization. Processes will help resolve many of the long-term acting situations.</p> <p>Recommendation to the department on the new Service Delivery model is targeted for the end of calendar year.</p>	

Most AESB related issues will be dealt with through the AESB Branch Union Management Consultation Committee.

Action:

AESB speaking notes to be shared with union representatives.

ADM AESB

**3c. Land Resources
Unit (LRU)
M. Fortin &
R. Butts**

Summary:

AESB is taking responsibility for some of the key activities performed by the former LRU group in Research Branch. Three teams will be transferred to AESB and the remaining positions will stay in Research Branch. All efforts have been made to respect the technical capabilities and strengths of the employees concerned when deciding on placements so that employees can continue to make a positive contribution to departmental priorities. RB and AESB worked in close collaboration with HR to develop next steps and communication plan.

Action:

Communication to employees will take place during weeks of November 23 and November 30.

**ADM AESB &
ADM
Research**

**3d. Public Service
Employee Survey
D. Mitchell**

Summary:

All AAFC Branch Heads led their branches in identifying workplace improvement areas they will focus on this year. These branch-level commitments will be incorporated into their 2009-2010 performance agreements. Review of PSES follow-up plans is a standing item at all Departmental Management Committee (DMC) meetings.

AAFC's corporate response will focus on improvement efforts in six theme areas. Deputy Minister will continue to work with his management team and continue to engage AAFC managers in moving forward on this action plan.

**3e. Business
Continuity Plan &
H1N1
P. Corriveau &**

Summary:

There are three main components to AAFC's Emergency Management and Business Continuity Pandemic Planning. AAFC has undertaken all

C. MacQuarrie

necessary activities to ensure it meets its obligations towards the public and its employees, and is up to date.

**4a. Royalties paid to AAFC employees
B. Kingston**

Summary:

Agriculture Union representative submitted questions regarding the payment of royalties to AAFC employees.

Union's questions on this matter were responded to by ADM Research Branch (RB). It was mentioned that AAFC has replaced the TB policy with its own policy. The AAFC policy recognizes all innovators who have contributed to the invention regardless of whether there are royalties involved.

Action:

Remind all RB staff of the AAFC policy.

**ADM
Research**

**4b. Regional/Branch Union-Management Consultations
D. Forsythe**

Summary:

Agriculture Union considers there is a lack of commitment from some regional managers towards the union management consultation process as there are no Regional UMC Committees in some regions or, where there are, only a few Regional Managers attend. Agriculture Union questioned the need for a Regional UMC.

ADM HR will establish a working group to look at the UMC Framework.

Action:

Unions to communicate name of representatives for the working group.

ADM HR

Unions

**4c. Use of casual workers
D. Forsythe**

Summary:

Agriculture Union was informed at a Regional Union Management Committee meeting that management uses casual workers to meet short term needs due to delays in staffing. This causes stress on indeterminate staff who constantly find themselves having to train new staff. Unions feel that the use of casuals should be kept to a minimum.

ADM HR reported that there is no apparent systemic problem in AAFC on the use of casual workers. Our data shows that AAFC use of casual workers is at a lower rate than other government departments. However, to address the issue of lengthy staffing processes, the HR Branch is developing a departmental Staffing Strategy to address immediate and long term staffing needs identified by branches through staffing forecasts. The strategy will be presented at the HRUCC meeting in December.

Action:

Staffing Strategy to be presented at HRUCC meeting in December.

ADM HR

**4d. Non-employees performing work of the EG group
B. Kingston**

Summary:

Agriculture Union continues to hear from their members that visiting scientists, post-Doctorate fellows and Phd students are performing work normally performed by the EGs.

ADM Research Branch advised that he would be pleased to address this question when he has received information on specific cases.

Action:

Provide information on specific cases.

Agriculture Union

**4e. Growing Forward and Lab Transfer
D. Forsythe**

Summary:

Agriculture Union expressed concerns with AAFC's direction in its latest round of Growing Forward with respect to federal government research in agriculture, specifically in the area of horticulture.

ADM Research Branch reassured the unions that AAFC is not getting out of research. AAFC continues to partner with other research sectors. A document titled "Research Branch Science and Innovation Strategic Action Plan" was sent to all RB employees. Science Directors and ADM Research have travelled to most of the research centres to discuss the document. The DM recognized that this is an ongoing concern and that there is a need for balance between public and peer research.

**4f. Strategic Review
B. Kingston**

Summary:

Agriculture Union asked if there were any issues or recommendations from the Strategic Review which have yet to be implemented and whether there has been any negative impact from those that were implemented.

ADM Corporate Branch stated that Strategic Review recommendations will be implemented over a three-year period as highlighted in Budget 2009. These savings will be achieved concurrent with the additional investment provided to AAFC under 2009 Budget. Strategic Review is not expected to negatively impact staff.

**4g. Independent Audit
of the Food Safety
Systems
B. Kingston**

Summary:

As per Agriculture Union's request, the DM provided information on his role in relation to the Independent Audit of the Food Safety Systems.

Next meeting

Next Meeting date will be confirmed and scheduled in the new year. **ADM HR**