

Minutes

PSAC National Union / Management Consultation Committee Meeting

October 24, 2008
59 Camelot Dr., Ottawa, Room 102E

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Present:

CFIA

Ms. Carole Swan
Dr. Brian Evans
Mr. Omer Boudreau
Ms. Sandra Wing
Mr. Cameron Prince
Dr. Primal Silva
Mr. Stephen Baker
Ms. Martine Beaudry
Ms. Barbara Di Brita

PSAC

Mr. Bob Kingston
Ms. Debbie Forsythe
Mr. Denis Sicard
Mr. Howard Willems
Mr. Fabian Murphy
Ms. Sylvia Prowse

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Bob Kingston, National President of the Agriculture Union, PSAC.

Opening Remarks.

Mr. Bob Kingston noted that he was glad to see all participants and he expressed the need to meet every six (6) months.

Ms. Carole Swan welcomed all participants to the meeting. She stated that these NUMCCs are important meetings and agreed that they should be held every six (6) months. She explained that CFIA and its employees are currently facing a number of challenges. While this creates opportunities, we must ensure that employees are well supported. The CFIA is committed to making required improvements and any necessary changes.

1. Follow-Up on the Previous Minutes

Mr. Bob Kingston led the discussion of follow up items from the previous minutes of the PSAC NUMCC (held on October 22, 2007). The items addressed are as follows:

New Wave Project

Mr. Prince advised that in alignment with the CFIA Renewal Plan (2008-2013), the Western Area has continued its commitment towards the New Wave Leadership Development Program, now in its third year. This program has received good feedback from participants and is extremely successful.

The union raised concerns with transparency and fairness in selecting participants for the Development Program. These concerns were brought forward with the ED, West. Union representatives felt the selection process was, in effect, a staffing process and should be treated as such. In the last New Wave group, there were 9 PSAC members, 11 PIPSC members and 1 non-represented.

Action: Mr. Prince to provide notes (statistics) to PSAC and will look into the selection process.

Term Policy

Mr. Boudreau agreed to provide an updated list of term employees who are represented by PSAC. Mr. Sicard asked that they receive the information every six (6) months. It was agreed to continue this discussion at the next union-HR Branch meeting.

Action: Mr. Boudreau will update the list of terms employed more than three years with the Agency and add this item to the agenda for the next union-HR Branch meeting.

Staffing and Career Development

Mr. Boudreau indicated that all competitions are posted on Merlin. Mr. Kingston brought forward a situation in the Western Area where it is believed that employees in Red Deer are left out of area of selection in competitions for management positions in Calgary and Edmonton.

Action: Mr. Prince agreed to look into the situation in Red Deer regarding area of selection in competitions for management positions in Calgary and Edmonton.

Use of Without Solicitation and Area of Selection

Action: Add this item to the agenda for the next union-HR Branch meeting.

Feed Harmonization Project

Mr. Prince provided an update on the Feed Harmonization Project that is currently in the pilot project stage. He explained that the industry is supportive, and he believes that this project will provide a more modern approach to inspection.

Mr. Sicard expressed concerns that PSAC was not part of the process and that no real training was provided. He stated that PSAC has lost confidence in this project. Mr. Prince stated that their members were part of this project and that meetings were held with PSAC. Mr. Prince invited them to continue discussions.

Further discussions will be held during agenda item number 7, under Inspection Reform.

Meat Hygiene Modules

Ms. Wing provided a status update on Meat Hygiene (MH) Modules and its training program. She explained that the current MH Training Program was developed in the mid 1980s. The overall updates began in 2004, with over 70 modules to be updated or developed. The MH Training Implementation Guide and six poultry modules were distributed in July 2007. Other modules and training material will be distributed by the end of 2008. In addition to the MH modules update, the design and development of other training materials and/or classroom training if applicable were done in 2008. As of September 2008, 1388 inspectors (out of 1458) have received classroom training and 955 have received mentoring.

Mr. Sicard stated that we need to address the mentoring problems and that mentoring standards would be useful. Ms. Swan stated that the employees need to feel they are supported in order to have the mindset to do their job.

Ms. Wing advised that the next MH modules to be updated will be D-7: BSE and the swine module series (6 modules). She explained that one of CFIA's continuous challenge is keeping the current modules up-to-date with the policies.

2. Renewal

Mr. Boudreau explained that the Renewal Plan is the Agency's vision for Human Resources Management. Mr. Boudreau provided a document entitled "Committed to Learning: Dedicated to Excellence" CFIA's Report on Learning to be discussed at the union-HR Branch meeting. He offered to provide, if interested, a report on EGs or for PSAC members.

Mr. Boudreau invited PSAC to review the Report on Learning and provide any comments or questions to him.

Action: Add the Annual Report on Learning as an agenda item for the next union-HR Branch meeting.

Feed Inspector Safety

Mr. Kingston had concerns with respect to Feed Inspector Safety. Discussions were held around training inspectors for Feed Inspector Safety. The PSAC believes that the training should be reviewed and approved by the NOSH.

Action: Verify the policy on training for Feed Inspector Safety and if there is an obligation for it to be reviewed and approved by the NOSH.

Administering For Success

Mr. Boudreau brought forward this new item. He requested that this item be part of the agenda for the union-HR Branch meeting.

Action: Add this item to the agenda for the next union-HR Branch meeting.

3. Employee Survey

Mr. Boudreau explained that the CFIA has joined other federal government departments and agencies in participating in the government-wide 2008 Public Service Employee Survey. This will be the third time the CFIA is doing an employee survey, but it will be the first time the CFIA participates in the core public service employee survey. The CFIA will be able to compare itself to other departments and agencies, and it will be cost effective. The survey will be available electronically and in hard copy where an electronic survey is not possible. It will be rolled out by the Canada Public Service Agency in November. The CFIA expects results in March 2009.

Mr. Sicard asked if a letter could be sent to all employees signed jointly by management and the union encouraging all employees to take the time to complete the survey.

Action: Prepare a letter to all employees to be signed jointly by management and the union to encourage employees to participate in completing the survey.

4. HR Process Lab

Mr. Boudreau provided an update on the HR Process Lab. The CFIA met with PSAC representatives and received feedback.

The HR Process Lab was developed as an integral part of the CFIA Renewal Plan, to provide some flexibility to improve HR processes. It is a virtual laboratory to enable creativity and innovation in HR management; a structured environment where HR process innovations and the generation of ideas can take place. It is composed of two components: 1) invention sessions; and 2) innovation experiments. The ideas will need to be consistent with the values and ethics of the Agency and of the Public Service, must respect the collective agreements, must be legal, and must respect the delegation of authorities. Mr. Boudreau noted that employees' current recourse systems will be respected.

On September 26, 2008, the HR Process Lab was launched in the Atlantic Area with the Science Branch's laboratory network, members of the Atlantic HR team and representatives from PIPSC and PSAC in attendance.

The project manager for the HR Process Lab is Rosemary Chiarelli.

Mr. Sicard stated that this would be a good opportunity to work together and that this should be reflected in the HR Process Lab Overview document.

Action: Mr. Boudreau to clarify the union's involvement in the HR Process Lab Overview document.

Recruitment and Retention

Mr. Sicard brought forward this new item. He would like to know how the workforce will look in the next few years.

Action: Mr. Boudreau to provide information on recruitment and retention at the next union-HR Branch meeting.

5. Strategic Review

Mr. Kingston advised that they received a briefing at the beginning of the summer but they would like an update, and would like to know where the import service centre will be located.

Updates were provided on the Feed Harmonization Project, Seed Inspection and the import service centre. Mr. Prince stated that the location for the import service centre should be identified in the next few months. Concerns were raised with respect to shift work that will be introduced in the centre. It was agreed that the union will be consulted.

Mr. Boudreau advised that a meeting on Strategic Review initiatives will be scheduled soon.

6. Skyline Move

Mr. Baker explained that a move schedule has been developed for the relocation of CFIA employees into Towers 1, 2, 3 and 4 at the Skyline Complex at 1400 Merivale Road in Ottawa. The schedule takes into consideration existing lease expiries, construction adjustments, employee health and safety, and operational requirements. The first move took place on October 24, 2008. Subsequent moves are scheduled every second week thereafter and will be completed by February 13, 2009.

There will be 800 parking spaces available at the Skyline Complex. Parking rates have been established at market value rate i.e. \$70 for surface parking and \$80 for parkade parking.

A series of communication products have been made available to employees including: 1) Z-list messages with Frequently Asked Questions; 2) A dedicated and interactive intranet site called "My Office/Mon bureau" providing employees with key building information such as occupancy, amenities, and services; 3) Town Hall meetings with each individual branch; and 4) a Welcome Package will be provided to each employee moving to the Skyline Complex.

Mr. Kingston stated that the OSH committee who inspected the Skyline building were upset with the inspection that ended early. Mr. Baker stated that both sides were frustrated. Ms. Beaudry informed that the inspection will continue next week with the assistance of Vera Pasic as per the union's request.

Action: Confirm obligations with respect to ergonomics for the Skyline Move.

7. Inspection Reform

Mr. Kingston explained their concerns regarding Inspection Reform. There had been a process identified for consultation on issues such as CVS through an Inspection Reform Committee. At a time when it was most important to actually consult, meetings did not take place.

Action: PSAC to provide Ms. Wing with proposed dates for a meeting in November 2008.

Mr. Prince provided an update on his cross-country tour to meet with CFIA staff to understand their concerns. He learned that some things were working well and others need to be fixed. We made a commitment to develop an inspector survey and would like to have the PSAC's participation in developing the questions.

8. Scheduling of NUMCC

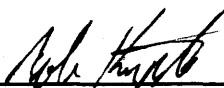
Mr. Boudreau stated that it has been more and more difficult to coordinate the schedules of all participants. A date for the next NUMCC will therefore be scheduled immediately.

Action: The CFIA to schedule the next NUMCC.

9. Round Table

Mr. Kingston and Mr. Sicard brought forward a new item: Letter of Intent regarding Leave for Union Business. Discussions will be held outside the NUMCC forum.

All participants agreed that it was a good meeting, and that we are working together toward a common goal.



Mr. Bob Kingston
National President, Agriculture Union
Public Service Alliance of Canada



Ms. Carole Swan *for*
President
Canadian Food Inspection Agency