



Minutes
National Union-Management Consultation Committee Meeting
Joint PIPSC / PSAC

October 7, 2014

Room T2-3-313, 1400 Merivale Road

1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Present:

CFIA

B.A (Bruce) Archibald
Catherine Airth
Richard Arsenault
Julie Burns
Shalene Curtis-Micallef
Geneviève Desjardins
Gérard Étienne
Laurel Herwig
Theresa Iuliano
Tammy Jeffery
Karen Jesset
Barbara Jordan
Traci Mathias
Cynthia Richardson
Susan Shaw

PSAC

Bob Kingston
Rick Cormier
Barb Kristjansson
Fabian Murphy

PIPSC

Dr. Lina Johannson
Hussien Bashah
Sylvie D'Alcantara
Jean-François Prigent
Heath Klippert
Dr. Krista Puddester
Dr. Umadatt Singh
Dr. Ayman Soryal

Guest Presenters

Andrée Bérubé
Annie Champagne
Chantal Seeton

1. Opening Remarks

Dr. Archibald welcomed the members to the meeting and informed the group that Mary Komarynsky retired from the Public Service in March 2014 and that Carolina Giliberti joined the Agency as the Executive Vice President in August 2014. Dr. Archibald also announced that Mr. Neil Bouwer, Vice President of Agency Transformation, will be taking on a new role at Natural Resources Canada in mid-October and that Cathy Airth will be retiring at the end of October. No replacements have been identified at this time.

Dr. Archibald provided an update on the budget and informed the committee that the Agency is in its last year of the deficit reduction action plan exercise.

Dr. Archibald congratulated Ms. Geneviève Desjardins, Champion of Public Service Employees Survey (PSES), and indicated that the rate of response of the PSES is 84%, which is above the

average rate of the Government of Canada, at 68%. Dr. Archibald also stated that action plans will be developed to address any issues as a result of the findings.

Dr. Archibald also indicated that the GCWCC campaign is underway with very good participation to date.

Dr. Archibald informed the table that he had the opportunity to tour many CFIA locations over the summer period including some of the less travelled locations to hear staff concerns and suggestions related to Agency Transformation. He further stated that despite the many challenges staff are faced with, employees continue to impress him with their dedication.

2. Agency Transformation Update

Cathy Airth explained the Agency's long term strategic plan that sets out a clear path forward. This path includes increased focus on prevention, whereby stakeholders have a clear and common understanding of the role they play in managing risk; a service delivery culture that is embedded in the Agency that is adaptable, predictable and ensures consistent program delivery; optimizing talent with strong systems and governance that support risk-based planning; and a plan to continue to retain and attract competent and motivated personnel.

Ms. Airth further explained the Integrated Agency Inspection Model, which will allow the Agency to adapt more readily to emerging risks and trends. She informed that while the largest focus to date has been the Agency's legislative and regulatory framework, there will be changes to how the mandate is delivered in four key areas: our people, our processes, the technology we use as well as the organization, and our partnerships.

Bob Kingston expressed concerns related to how front line staff is going to be able to deliver the new model without the required resources. He pointed out several programs he felt were suffering from a shortage of staff already, such as Humane Handling and Transport of Animals, Meat Hygiene in both processing and slaughter, and the Fair Labelling/Consumer Protection program where he thinks staff have been instructed to stop carrying out several enforcement activities. With the addition of several thousand new licensees in Food Imports and many of the staff who could have dealt with them he believes were recently laid off he was concerned that the Agency was going to be in big trouble without some help. In his opinion, industry complains that it is not a level playing field and is already concerned that American imports do not receive the same level of scrutiny that Canadian exports do, so new import requirements will put too much strain on the system. Ms. Airth responded that the desire is to provide a system to manage risk based on science and in which industry is responsible for its own processes.

Barbara Jordan stated labelling falls under her area of responsibility and that the CFIA responds diligently to complaints.

Action:

- **Ms. Jordan to schedule a meeting with Mr. Kingston to discuss the concerns he raised.**

- **Unions to contact Ms. Airth should they require further discussion to clarify changes to each of the inspection activities.**

3. Regulatory Changes

Richard Arsenault provided an update that the *Safe Food for Canadians Regulations* are still on track to consolidate existing commodity regulations into one single set of food regulations. As the Agency moves to this change, the existing manuals of procedure will be replaced with a new suite of guidance documents that facilitate compliance and explain the regulatory requirements in a clear and simple manner. There should be a product in place by the end of the year.

Regulatory changes occurred in the summer of 2014 to the Meat Inspection Regulations which allow the processing of hunted game in federal plants, Dr. Arsenault stated that guidance documents will be distributed in December 2014. PIPSC reminded management of the bad publicity regarding the proposed regulatory changes that would allow the processing of downer cattle in federal plants. Management stated that the most recent changes were different. Dr. Lina Johansson expressed concerns on behalf of PIPSC members on how the most recent change managed to go through and whether or not our trade partners were notified, as certain changes will affect inspection duties.

4. Training Architecture

Annie Champagne provided an update on the Agency's Training Architecture and Framework and indicated that with Agency transformation underway, the timing was right to change the way in which learning/training is being delivered at the Agency from an ad-hoc basis, in the past, to that of a more collaborative approach with a joint partnership between industry, government and academia to define competency-based learning.

Ms. Champagne indicated that several consultations have been done on how to adopt a similar model to the US International Food Protection Training Institute at the Agency.

Ms. Champagne further explained that a select group of CFIA employees from Policy and Programs and Operations Branches, along with science specialists from Science Branch and Learning Division were brought together to develop their architectures.

Mr. Étienne indicated that with this new approach to learning/training, the expectation is that employees would be better equipped to self-direct their careers by looking at the training architecture to identify their required competencies, thus enabling them to manage their careers.

Full implementation will likely take one to two years. The biggest challenge identified was determining unifying factors, common to all parts of the Agency to lead the integration. Mr. Kingston asked if there was an updated list of schools and commented that in the past BCIT worked quite well as an Agency training partner.

Action:

- **More in-depth discussion related to the Framework will be held once the competencies are identified.**

- **Ms. Champagne will provide the unions with a list of consortiums.**

5. Mediation Prior to the Grievance Process (ICMS)

Andrée Bérubé presented information to the committee to seek support for one of the initiatives of the Office for the Prevention and Resolution of Conflict (OPRC). She explained that, where it makes sense, the OPRC offers informal conflict resolution in an effort to resolve grievances. Ms. Bérubé advised that this was piloted in the Ontario Area in the interest of bringing issues at the lowest level possible to a resolution. The intention would be to address concerns when a grievance has been filed. Ms. Bérubé stated that there have been discussions about incorporating this initiative across the country.

Dr. Ayman Soryal informed the committee that there has been positive feedback from members relating to the initiative, and it is strongly recommended to continue with this approach.

6. Management Disciplinary Intervention Plan

Chantal Seeton briefed the committee on a request from the National Managers Community to develop a tool to assist managers with a more consistent approach to discipline. This plan will articulate the disciplinary process and is intended to be used to assist managers facing disciplinary situations with their staff. The tool is not intended to replace the disciplinary policy, but complement it, and will consist of three key tools: a severity assessment questionnaire, disciplinary intervention grid, and a risk matrix.

Fabian Murphy suggested that the information be shared as soon as possible for input and feedback from the unions.

Mr. Kingston inquired whether there will be mandatory training associated with the tool and hopes that managers do not confuse equity with uniformity. Mr. Étienne indicated that training will be made available to the management cadre through the management network and through PREP. Mr. Kingston suggested that Human Resources Branch also sit through the same training for consistency.

Action:

- **Ms. Seeton will share the plan more broadly with Senior Management and the unions.**

7. Inspection Manuals of Procedures

Dr. Krista Puddester on behalf of PIPSC requested information on the future plans for the retention and development of inspection manuals.

Dr. Arsenault indicated that there is a plan to replace procedure manuals with a suite of documents that describe the Agency's regulatory requirements. Operational guidance will be instruction that is targeted to the field and will encompass how compliance will be verified. The

manuals will be kept and made available for reference purposes. As new regulations are rolled out, engagement with the Agency's trade partners will be critical and they will be engaged accordingly.

Ms. Jordan indicated that the Agency is not rewriting all the Regulations right away, but that adjustments are being made and will align with our trade partners. She explained that everything is being done to mitigate risk, to have a detailed plan to finalize the regulatory process, and to ensure the readiness of staff.

Mr. Cormier expressed concern with the CFIA unilaterally changing things. Ms. Jordan gave assurance that moving forward there would be pre-consultation following regulatory change processes.

8. Reporting of Inspection Activities

PIPSC raised concerns with the Agency's way of identifying gaps between program requirements and the actual inspection activities in many of the CFIA's programs. Inspection activities are planned according to resources available, not according to frequencies required by program manuals. Industry is well aware of the fact that the CFIA does not conduct inspections outside regular hours, which has resulted in poor publicity. Members who negotiate international trade on behalf of the CFIA sometimes inform trading partners about inspection frequencies using program manuals, however in many cases that frequency is not met in the field.

Ms. Jordan indicated that certain activities have not changed over a long period of time. The Agency is moving away from documented program frequency and requirements of planned and reported inspection activities to a frequency that will be dictated by risk.

Mr. Kingston indicated the need for more resources as industry is trading much more and much faster.

Dr. Archibald indicated that resourcing will always continue to be a challenge and reiterated the need to move to a risk-based approach as well as using our resources more effectively.

9. Incident Response / Emergency Management

PIPSC raised concerns that the CFIA lacks a nationally implemented, coordinated response that is applicable to all business lines and incidents.

Ms. Jordan responded that the role of the Office of Emergency Preparedness is to respond to emergencies and that the Agency has recently restructured to better align. Theresa Iuliano explained that the staff functions of the Office are to ensure effective response by assisting and advising the line. A draft strategy is being developed that will validate the mandate, define and stabilize the organizational structure and clarify roles and responsibilities within a broader framework. Ms. Iuliano further explained that a needs assessment will be conducted to identify what the most important emerging risks are.

PIPSC questioned whether or not the Agency will maintain a list of external experts in various fields to develop and maintain incident recognition and response procedures, as the CFIA lacks expertise in many areas.

Ms. Jordan indicated that the Agency does have contacts, but may not systematically maintain a list.

10. Duty to Accommodate

PSAC asked about the arrangement for the Joint Learning Program to deliver Duty to Accommodate training for the Agency. Mr. Étienne had carried out discussions with the Joint Learning Program Directors and had worked out a tentative process which the Directors were waiting to hear back about. Mr. Étienne responded that there is still a strong desire to provide training; however, there have been some logistical and budget issues that have prevented it. Mr. Étienne indicated that the Human Resources Branch is looking at e-Learning modules but that with the current capacity and resources, training will be committed to the coming into force of the *Safe Food for Canadians Act*.

Mr. Étienne indicated that he was unsure of the Agency's eligibility to participate in the regular Joint Learning plan. Mr. Kingston indicated that both program Directors sent his Branch a letter confirming that the material is available for CFIA employees and indicating what the conditions for using it are.

Action:

- **Mr. Étienne to look into the possibility of Duty to Accommodate training and the Agency's participation with the Core Public Service in the Joint Learning Program.**

11. Terms of Reference

PIPSC raised concerns that the Terms of Reference for this committee are out of date. Dr. Soryal raised concerns regarding three issues: the minutes of these National Union-Management meetings posted and accessible for all members within 4-6 weeks following the meeting; all relevant documentation for the meeting sent approximately 2 weeks before the meeting as well as time set aside for PIPSC and PSAC to discuss together; and to resolve outstanding items in a timely fashion following meetings.

Action:

- **Mr. Étienne will schedule a call to meet to discuss how best to effectively plan the next meeting.**

12. Scheduling of the Next NUMCC meeting.

A place holder meeting request has been sent for Tuesday, April 15, 2015, for the next National Union-Management Committee meeting and a date in the fall of 2015 will be determined.

Round Table

Sylvie D'Alcantara thanked Mr. Étienne for his support in dealing with issues throughout the year and indicated that he has been invaluable to successfully communicating with staff.

Mr. Kingston requested that the Agency communicate with the unions in advance of messages going out to all staff, specifically if it relates to PSAC employees receiving payments as a result of the new collective agreement.

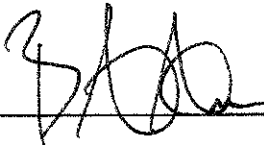
Heath Klippert inquired about the possibility of holding another Union-Management Symposium.

Action:

- Mr. Étienne will bring the recommendation of another symposium forward to Dr. Archibald.

Closing Remarks

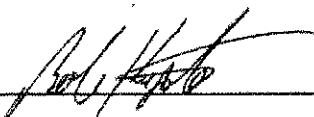
Dr. Archibald thanked everyone for taking the time to attend this meeting. He looks forward to continuing to discuss important Agency issues.



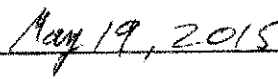
Dr. B.A. (Bruce) Archibald
President, Canadian Food Inspection Agency

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Date



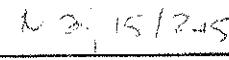
Mr. Bob Kingston
National President, Agriculture Union
Public Service Alliance of Canada



Date



Dr. Lina Johansson
President, National Consultation Team
Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada



Date

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