

**Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)
National Union-Management Consultation Committee (NUMCC)
December 11, 2018 Minutes**

Present:

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)

Chris Forbes	Deputy Minister
Annette Gibbons	Associate Deputy Minister
Lisa Foss	Corporate Secretary
Christine Walker	ADM, Corporate Management Branch (CMB)
Brian Gray	ADM, Science and Technology Branch (STB)
Michel Lessard	CIO, Information Systems Branch (ISB)
Jane Taylor	ADM, Programs Branch (PB)
Gilles Saindon	Associate ADM, STB
Andrew Goldstein	Director General, Human Resources, CMB
Kathleen Donohue	Director General, International Affairs Branch (IAB)
Matt Parry	Director General, Strategic Policy Branch (SPB)
Kimberly Saunders	Director General, Office of Audit and Evaluation (OAE)
Aaron Fowler	Director General, Market and Industry Services Branch (MISB)
Nathalie Gour	A/Director General, Strategic Planning, Advice and Coordination, Public Affairs Branch (PAB)
Nathalie Leblanc	Executive Director, Workplace Relations and Classification, CMB
Nickie Felts	A/Director of Workplace Relations, CMB
Krista Levesque	Coordinator, Union/Management Relations, Workplace Relations, CMB
Kayla MacCullough	Student, Workplace Relations, CMB

Agriculture Union (PSAC)

Fabian Murphy	National President
Milton Dyck	A/First National Executive Vice President
Patrick St-Georges	Third National Executive Vice President
Randy Olynyk	Fourth National Executive Vice President

Professional Institute of the Public Service Canada (PIPSC)

Catherine Keir	President, AAFC National Union-Management Consultation Team
Jean-Francois Prigent	Employment Relations Officer
Tim MacKay	Union Steward

Association of Canadian Financial Officers (ACFO)

Danielle Viel	Labour Relations Advisor
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Canadian Association of Professional Employees (CAPE)

Patricia Hoy	Vice President, AAFC – NCR Local 507
Bertrand Myre	Labour Relations Officer

Regrets:

Carole Bidal	Executive Director and Senior General Counsel, Legal Services, AAFC/CFIA
Paul Cameron	Assistant Business Manager, IBEW
Greg Phillips	President, CAPE
Steven Jurgutis	Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, PAB

Agenda Item

Summary and Action

Accountability

**1. Introduction and opening remarks
C. Forbes**

C. Forbes welcomed all participants and provided an update on changes to the AAFC senior management team since the last meeting. M. Dyck (PSAC) and C. Keir (PIPSC) also provided an update on the changes to their executive teams. C. Keir announced that she will be stepping down from her union role.

C. Forbes provided a departmental priority update:

- Food policy will become a priority for the June meeting and will be subject to a 70 million dollars investment
- An EX conference was held and focused on workplace culture as well as defining effective leadership characteristics.

A brief update was provided on the Phoenix pay system. It was noted that AAFC remains deeply concerned about the impact it has had on its employees and acknowledges the support the union is providing to their members. Phoenix will continue to be one of our main priorities and AAFC acknowledges that, although there has been improvement, the number of backlog actions remains too high. The department will continue to invest capacity to support employees with pay issues.

AAFC pay team have started to visit regional centers and the new POD team has been successful at processing new pay actions 90% of the time within service standards.

Confirmation that quality assurance measures are in place to ensure that calculations are accurate remains a concern for union partners. C. Walker confirmed that the POD is focused on doing a full review of the file when processing a pay action so final calculations should be accurate. Reducing the backlog is the number one priority, and the pay transfer team is the first contact in terms of pay issues.

DG-HR,CMB

ACTION ITEM

Prepare a list of key activities to be performed and key contacts for employees and managers to avoid delays with pay

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Summary and Action</u>	<u>Accountability</u>
<p>2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes C. Forbes</p>	<p>The meeting agenda was approved. The June 7, 2018 minutes were approved. C. Forbes committed to the minutes being posted for review within one month of the meeting as M. Dyck reiterated that having minutes to review prior to the next scheduled meeting would be beneficial.</p>	
	<p>ACTION ITEM Ensure meeting minutes are posted and circulated to participants within one month following the meeting.</p>	<p>DG-HR,CMB</p>
<p>3. Action items from June 7, 2018 NUMCC meeting</p>	<p>C. Forbes gave an update on the two action items from the previous meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The June 7, 2018 meeting minutes were distributed on July 7, 2018 to the Unions, and were posted on the AgriSource Labour Relations page on July 17, 2018. • The department will ensure interpretation services are in place for the next NUMCC. 	
<p>4. AAFC Plans and Priorities 2018-2019</p>	<p>i. Strategic Policy Branch (SPB) M. Parry</p> <p>M. Parry provided an overview of SPB's key priorities, highlighting the continued focus and priority of working with other government departments to develop the Food Policy, and commented how a food policy for Canada will be the first of its kind.</p>	
	<p>M. Parry also mentioned that they continue to support and work with groups that are under-represented in Canadian agriculture sector in hopes to increase opportunities for people of these groups.</p>	
	<p>Several union members raised the concern to M. Parry surrounding the investment in plant breeding and what the policy was. They were concerned for plant breeders rights since a lot of their members could be affected by this. The Deputy explained that at this time it is not about making decisions, we are in the phase of gathering information only.</p>	<p>No follow up required</p>

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<p>ii. Science and Technology Branch (STB) G. Saindon</p>	<p>G. Saindon presented STB's plans and priorities, noting the priority since September was on having a working group implementing changes to the model of the Science Integrity Policy for their department. They have consulted with numerous departments across AAFC and asked for feedback from PIPSC and PSAC. The Policy has been presented and an internal communications plan is in place for December 31, 2018. Union members stated that they felt they had not been consulted as much as they would have liked. G. Saindon acknowledged the comments and thanked the union for their feedback.</p>	<p>No follow up required</p>
<p>iii. Market and Industry Services Branch (MISB) A. Fowler</p>	<p>A. Fowler provided an overview on how the main priority for MISB remains on enhancing the competitiveness of agriculture both at home and abroad. More Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Canada-United States- Mexico Agreement * CPTPP * MERCOSUR and pacific alliance negotiations <p>Employee engagement remains a priority. The MISB branch is developing a people framework that is aligned with the AAFC people strategy</p>	<p>No follow up required</p>
<p>iv. International Affairs Branch (IAB) K. Donohue</p>	<p>K. Donohue provided an outline for IAB's priorities for 2018-2019 with staff remaining one of the key focusses. In July 2018 it was announced that CFIA's Animal Health and Plant Health Directorates would be merging within the Internal Affairs Branch to form the IAB branch. As of October 1, 2018 CFIA's directorate became operational.</p> <p>A branch succession plan is in the development stages and over the next year the aim is to develop a "Guide to becoming a Trade Commissioner/Technical Specialist Abroad".</p>	<p>No follow up required</p>

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<p>v. Programs Branch (PB) J. Taylor</p>	<p>During the year PB has continued to work on branch-specific priorities, organized under three pillars: Programs, Services and People.</p> <p>J. Taylor touched on issues discussed at the executive conference which included moving workspaces and consolidating teams. The reaction from employees has been mixed but teams have been working more collaboratively since. The Farm Income Programs Directorate will be moving to another space in 2020.</p> <p>The union had a number of questions pertaining to workspace 2.0 and telework. J. Taylor commented that they do have a team working on internal practices and considerations concerning flexible work arrangements. The union expressed concern regarding their engagement in these discussions.</p>	<p>No follow up required</p>
<p>vi. Information Services Branch (ISB) M. Lessard</p>	<p>M. Lessard provided an overview of ISB's priorities this year, stating that this year has been an extremely heavy year for ISB with the migration to @canada.ca and Windows 10 updates. He reported that the migration to @canada.ca is now completed and Windows 10/Office 2016 is almost complete. M. Lessard mentioned how the branch is looking at ways to make things more concurrent.</p> <p>Unions thanked the ISB team for all their hard work they have put in. PSAC did mention that some of their devices had glitches in them and commented on Wi-Fi access. ISB is looking into those technical issues that have arose and made note.</p>	<p>No follow up required</p>
<p>vii. Office of Audit and Evaluation (OAE) K. Saunders</p>	<p>Priorities within OAE were provided by K. Saunders. The branch has been working with employees to implement several priorities. They have staffed a position to provide French language training for employees currently evaluated below an "A" PSC rating. Employees have had positive feedback. OAE has also seen movement in staff, and is proud to report that this is largely due to promotions through the EC Development Program. R. Olynyk asked if the OSH committee was involved. K. Saunders replied that they are not, however moving forward they will be.</p>	<p>No follow up required</p>

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viii. Public Affairs Branch (PAB) N. Gour	<p>N. Gour provided feedback on their branch priorities and stated that as of November 30th, 2018, PAB is on track to delivering all branch priorities. However, Bill C-58 is pending Senate committee approval and action is being taken to comply with the bill. One of their highlights was the all staff retreat that took place on October 16th, 2018. Feedback was later gathered from employees and was positive. P. St-George from PSAC mentioned the inconsistency he has been seeing amongst ATIP redactions.</p> <p>ACTION ITEM Nathalie was not in a position to respond as this had not been raised before the meeting so she committed to bring it back to the attention of the branch.</p>	CMB, PAB
ix. Corporate Management Branch (CMB) C. Walker	<p>C. Walker provided an overview of the priorities of the branch, specifically Priorities on Mental Health, Harassment and Workplace Violence and the Phoenix Pay Support. She noted that mental health continues to be a government wide priority and although PSES results indicate lower levels of stress, we still need to work further on reducing stigma and increase awareness around mental health and a workplace wellness. C. Walker also commented that the PSES survey is already completed and results from the survey will be released In January 2019 for the department, and in February for organizational units.</p> <p>C. Walker touched on the key initiatives surrounding the Classification Refresh priority. The Unions expressed interest in being included going forward.</p>	No follow up required
5. IT Performance Issues, carryover item (ISB) M. Lessard	<p>M. Lessard provided an update on recent and ongoing activities to improve performance issues. They are working at improving network services and desktop file access for employees and receive a monthly network report from SSC which will be beneficial with upgrades to AAFC in the future. Also, ISB collaborated with SSC to install new storage capacity at several AAFC research centres. Updates will continue to be provided as things move forward.</p>	No follow up required