



## CUPE 4848 and NB EMS

Labour Management Minutes

Tuesday, September 17, 2013

### In Attendance

<b>CUPE</b>	Ralph McBride	Mike Harris
	Bill Flewelling	Trent Piercy
	Judy Astle	Greg McConaghy
	Brian Harris	Chris Kennedy
	Bernard Soucy	
<b>NB EMS</b>	Beth Simkins-Burrows	Yvon Bourque
	Edgar Goulette	JP Savoie
	Paul Boudreau	Robin O'Hara
	Caroline Wicherek	Paul Ward
	Phil Bellefleur	Craig Pierre

### Absent

<b>CUPE</b>		
<b>NB EMS</b>	Jacques Charest	
	JP Savoie	
<b>Invited Guest</b>		
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	Caroline Wicherek	

1. Meeting Called to Order
  - a. Beth Simkins-Burrows called the meeting to order at 10:07am.
2. Approval of Minutes from June's Meeting
  - Minutes approved by Trent Piercy, CUPE and Beth Simkins-Burrows, NB EMS (for John Dallaire).
3. Approval of Agenda
  - a. Follow Ups from June 2013 Meeting



**i. Process on yearly vacations/MCMC (3/8<sup>th</sup> rule) (NB EMS)**

NB EMS feels the 3/8<sup>th</sup> rule needs to be considered in approving vacation and we don't foresee changing the process.

CUPE doesn't see why a vacant position needs to be considered into the 3/8<sup>th</sup> rule. If it is a job posting, the position will be filled. Union will file a grievance if the issue arises again next year.

Due to the shortage of staff in MCMC, vacation approval continues to be a challenge. The goal is to recruitment more people and hires 10 new employees. It is difficult to allow people to be off with such a shortage of staff.

CUPE asked if a survey has been given to staff to understand why MCMC has lost so much staff. ANB has done exit interviews and have not identified any specific issue for leaving. They are legitimate reasons.

**ii. Uniform Committee Update (CUPE)**

CUPE is waiting on survey results from its members. Once they have the survey results CUPE will approach ANB to form a committee to discuss.

ANB would like to add linen as a topic

*Follow Up: CUPE to provide survey results at next LM meeting. By September 25, 2013, Yvon and Trent are to provide Caroline with two people to form the committee. The commitment is that the committee will meet before next LM meeting.*

**iii. EI Rebate – charitable donation (NB EMS)**

ANB is not entertaining the option to give the EI rebate to charity or to pay it out to the staff. It will be difficult to please everyone in regards to the charity picked. If the union pushes the EI rebate to be paid out, then ANB may have to cut other things such as staff bbqs etc.

CUPE will discuss at their next meeting with membership.

**iv. Driver abstract new wording (NB EMS)**

The new wording has been written but we are waiting for approval from health and safety. It will allow ANB to run drivers abstract at any time.



*Follow Up: Once the wording has been approved, Beth to provide CUPE with a copy of the updated form.*

v. **Floater agreement (NB EMS)**

ANB will write up a formal document on that will be signed off by ANB and CUPE.

*Follow Up: Beth to provide formal document for next LM meeting.*

vi. **Update shift trades in scheduling document (NB EMS)**

The corrections and typos have been fixed in the document.

*Follow Up: Beth to forward updated copy to the union.*

vii. **PT in FT TA provide document to CUPE (NB EMS)**

This was incorporated into the scheduling document.

*Follow Up: Beth to forward document to CUPE.*

viii. **Document process for 1 shift in 30 days (NB EMS)**

The process has been explained to CUPE and ANB doesn't believe a formal document needs to be created.

CUPE thinks there is a difference between how HR and Operations are handling it the process. HR said it is progressive and on an individual basis and Operations using it as a blanket statement. Casuals are not supposed to have a set schedule. Don't believe in blocking them into a 1 shift in 30 days. CUPE wants to know if ANB has spoken to the employees before they send out a letter terminating them. ANB should manage employees and should not have this policy in place.

CUPE does not see us resolving the issue today and submitted a grievance.

HR and Operations work closely together and discuss what to do on a case by case basis. ANB does not believe it is unreasonable for casuals to work 1 shift in 30 days. Those that have been terminated recently have been spoken to and have been an ongoing issue. A lot of time is put in by management chasing some casuals to get their VOKs completed and to



remind them to work a shift before a CPR is needed. ANB needs casuals employees who are willing to work.

**ix. Boot allowance increase update (NB EMS)**

At this time ANB is not prepared to increase the boot allowance. ANB feels it is a reasonable amount. This could possibly be included in the uniform discussion.

**x. Cleaning stations and decon issue (NB EMS)**

ANB has confirmed with facilities that there has been no change in the cleaning schedule. Some cleaners may not be doing a good job. CUPE should advise us if there are any issues and ANB will deal with concerns as they arise.

ANB's expectation is that staff will clean their equipment. Saint John and Moncton have a special agreement with an outside cleaner and Fleet will clean the equipment because they are trauma centers. The medics in these stations do not have the time to clean and they would run out of equipment.

CUPE states there are still issues regarding the level of cleanliness from one area to another. There appears to be a double standard. ANB should provide protective gear to staff that is expected to clean the equipment. CUPE will refer the issue back to the health and safety committee for recommendations.

*Follow Up: Beth to provide cleaning document to CUPE.*

**xi. Grievance process update (CUPE)**

CUPE has several education days coming up and they will discuss the grievance process with the shop stewards.

ANB asks that CUPE advise if Operations Managers are not following the process correctly.

**xii. Chute time study update (NB EMS)**

Yvon stated that 64% of the time we are hitting the chute time. We are trying to identify why we are not hitting it 90% of the time. Chute time is



strictly for 911 calls. Crews worked with Janelle and Tom to identify problems. Radio system failure, logging into the tough books and pager delays all contribute to the delay. We are looking into how we can resolve the issues. Perhaps we need to have other devices. We have buy in by the staff which is great.

*Follow Up: Yvon to provide another update next meeting.*

## **b. CUPE Topics**

### **i. Vacations/Short Notice Leaves/Moving Stations and Yearly Vacation**

CUPE views vacation as an entitlement and benefit. Everything should be done to allow people time off. They do not agree with vacant position being included in 3/8<sup>th</sup> rule. If there are issues next year, they will file a grievance.

CUPE wants to know if short notice leaves are not approved if they go into overtime. CUPE said short term leaves should only be denied if they can't find a replacement. Overtime should not be an issue whether the vacation is approved. Also it should not matter what the reason is for the vacation day. It does not seem to be consistent between Operations Managers. CUPE stated that during the fall tour by Alan and John, they said that no short leaves requested with two weeks' notice would be denied unless a replacement could not be found.

ANB states that overtime is a consideration when approving vacation but it not all that is not looked at. Operations Managers need to manage their budget. They will do their best to approve short term leaves but not a guarantee.

ANB doesn't see this as a huge global problem and would like to work with the Managers in the stations where there are issues. Perhaps some areas need more causal employees or they have a lot of sick time in the station.

The process has been that if an employee moves from one station to another there is no guarantee that the yearly vacation that was approved in one station will be approved in the new station. We will do our best. It is not an automatic no.



*Follow Up: RMs to follow up with their OMs and give them a reminder that they do the best to approve yearly vacation when an employee moves stations.*

**ii. MCMC – Vacation & Recruitment**

It is difficult to approve short term leaves in MCMC because they are short staffed and have very few casuals. Unlike the field MCM can't go out of service. We look at each request on a case by case basis and do our best to approve.

MCMC is working closely with HR and Communications to recruit new staff for MCMC. We will be using Twitter and Facebook to recruit. We will be attending two job fairs and having several open houses for general public. A big challenge is finding the right bilingual people.

MCMC spoke to CCTC Staff and all would be willing to job share with someone in the field. There are staff in the field that have shown an interest. CCTC staff are also willing to change their schedule from 4 on 5 off to 4 on 4 off to match the field.

CUPE mentioned that a floater position for MCMC might be an option. They suggest a proposal be made to government to lower language level for south and west dispatching regions. ANB could look at this down the road but right now are switching regions because we are shorted staffed.

CUPE states that morale and burn out continue to be an issue in MCMC.

CUPE asked if the MCMC training had been reviewed. ANB states that MCMC staff gave input into the training document and were involved in the training for certain modules. One of the problems is that there is a lot of information given in a very short period of time.

*Follow Up: ANB to put document together about CCTC job sharing and provide to CUPE.*

**iii. Bilingual Issues/Swapping Partners for Bilingual Profile**

CUPE states that RHA employees do not need to pay for language training. ANB states that the province is not providing any money for language training. It is funded by NB EMS. There are about 90 employees that have shown interest in taking training. We believe there is a limit for



Universite de Moncton class size. We are looking at options for English language training. Even if staff haven't signed up by the deadline they can still get training but they may not be in the first class. Individuals will be reassessed for their language level by U de M. HR will follow up to see if U de M can use provincial results rather than have employees tested again. CUPE states that shift changes to ensure bilingual crew causes shift overruns. ANB is doing everything to minimize OT and shift overruns as much as possible. This should only be happening when there are sick calls and vacancies. ANB has a contract to provide bilingual service. It is a law in NB. CUPE does not feel staff are being treated fairly. There should be a way for CUPE and ANB to work together with the language commissioner. CUPE will follow up to see if the recommendations by the commissioner are reasonable. CUPE will keep pushing the issue forward. There is no intention to change the call out process or scheduling document.

**iv. Health and Safety Committee Members – Compensation for Travel Time to Meetings**

The meetings are held at the regional offices and CUPE members want compensation for travel time to the meetings. Sometimes travel time it is two to three hours.

ANB will be looking at getting WebEx which will allow members to attend the meeting virtually. The option was also always available for teleconference. ANB will not be compensating employees for travel time. This is a voluntary committee and we will continue to pay straight time and not overtime.

CUPE states there is a high turnover rate of committee members. ANB acknowledged that in the past there were many issues and recommendations that were not dealt with. ANB changed the process and now try to resolve issues as soon as possible. ANB would ask that members bring any concerns to Marcus MacDonald.

**v. Casuals – Availability and Being Made Inactive**



CUPE doesn't agree with the process and states that the 5% should be dealt with and should not have a blanket policy for all. They have submitted a grievance.

CUPE would like for casuals to have the option to switch regions if there are not enough hours for them. ANB has no issue with this and has done this in the past.

There is a perception that ANB is not hiring anyone unless they are bilingual. ANB asks the CUPE help change this perception. ANB is hiring Anglophones, Francophones and bilingual staff.

**c. NB EMS Topics**

**i. Shift Switches (approval/part time/casuals)**

Policy in place that applies to all staff which states that shift switches can be done during two pay period. This is causing some problems for payroll. It causes problems with leveling and seniority for part timers. ANB will not be making any changes right now but wants to make CUPE aware of the issues. There may be more problems once Telestaff is introduced. ANB wants to find a solution.

CUPE brought up an issue in the North with trades not being approved. ANB stated that for the time being the RM and OM will have to approve/monitor the trades in Edmundston because staff were regularly switching day and night shifts. This will be done just until things get under control. Not necessarily denying the trades but doing our due diligence before approving them. This is not the purpose of the shift trades. CUPE doesn't see an issue if both employees agree to switch.

*Follow Up: Beth will discuss with the Payroll Supervisor and will forward details to CUPE about the issue with part timers switching shifts outside the four week block.*

**ii. inConnection Program**

The program will be suspended as of October 1, 2013. A note will be going out to advise ANB staff. Staff currently working with a case manager will continue to do so but any new cases/calls will not be made. The programs viability is being reviewed.





iii. **Wi-Fi Update**

Edgar states that the implementation of Wi-Fi in the stations is on track.

iv. **Telestaff – Paramedics on LOAs Wanting to Work Casuals**

Telestaff is a very controlled and rule oriented system. It has a list of people that are available to work and those that are not available. The lists do not interact with each other. Therefore employees on a leave of absence will be considered not available and will not be called for shifts. It was agreed by Operations that those on leave will not be able to work casual shifts. There are 12 employees currently in this situation. The only option would be to create something manually which leaves it open to errors.

Telestaff has been launch in PEI and is working well.

If a shift can't be filled Telestaff will send a notification out to management. Telestaff will go live around the last week of October. Training will be provided two pay cycles before the launch.

v. **ANB Provincial Tour**

The ANB provincial tour will take place in various locations from October 1 to October 10. Everyone is welcome to attend. Alan, Yvon, Beth and Paul will attend.

CUPE wants to know if they are invited to attend the tour. They would like someone from the executive to attend.

*Follow Up: CUPE will advise Beth who from the executive will attend the provincial tour.*

vi. **Personal Furniture or Equipment in Stations**

It has come to ANB's attention that some employees are bringing in personal furniture to the station. This was seen by the DH inspector. The stations are government assets therefore staff cannot bring personal furniture without the permission of the RM and OM. ANB will create a policy.

CUPE states this is the type of thing that affects employee morale.



CUPE states that more furniture may be needed such as another couch, recliner or foot stools so medics can put up their feet.

**vii. Employee Status Change – Ability to Sign Up for Shifts for the next 4 Weeks**

ANB made the agreement for part time employees in full time temporary assignment to sign up for shift for the next 4 week block in advance so they don't lose out on any shifts when their TA ends. This was not meant for full time employees going part time.

CUPE granted a grievance extension for the issue in the south.

*Follow Up: Beth to check how this will work in Telestaff. The topic will be discussed at the next LM meeting.*

**viii. Update on Floater Positions**

ANB has heard there was an issue in Woodstock with the floater medic not getting his hours. The issue was fixed but we will continue to monitor it. One point of the pilot project was to identify where we need floaters. Feedback for the pilot has been positive so far.

*Follow Up: The topic will continue to be discussed at next meeting and until February when the pilot ends.*

**d. New Items Added**

**i. Kate MacEachern (NB EMS)**

Kate is doing a walk from Canso, NS to Ottawa, ON to raise awareness for PTSD. She is doing this for all emergency responders suffering from PTSD. ANB would like to show Kate our support by providing her a support vehicle and/or escort when she enters townships. Kate is on Facebook "The Long Way Home" and twitter. She is accepting donations and selling merchandise. ANB is posting her locations on our twitter account.

Jeff Mack will be doing a presentation this week about PTSM. Memo sent to ANB staff.

HR is working an FAQ about CISM to help staff understand the process.

**ii. 24 hour base proposal (CUPE)**



There is no proposal in to the government but ANB is willing to look at 24 hour bases in certain areas.

**iii. Chipman Truck update (CUPE)**

ANB thinks the truck will stay as status quo. They have not received any new information from government.

**iv. Remembrance Day**

ANB would like to get more medics involved in the laying of the wreath. A communication will be sent out to staff.

**v. ANB Honour Guard**

The Honour Guard is having funding issues. There have been discussions to have an ANB Honour Guard. They would be wearing the ANB patches and badges.

**4. Next Meeting**

- a. Next meeting will be scheduled for October 17, 2013 at 10:00am.

**5. Adjournment**

- a. Meeting was adjourned at 2:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted and approved by:

Trent Piercy, CUPE 1252, Local 4848

Beth Simkins-Burrows, NB EMS

