



EES negotiations continue

Since the employer notified us they intended to commence Essential and Emergency Services (EES) negotiations on January 27, 2015 after walking away from issues bargaining, your Central and Unified team has received training and preparation for the extensive EES bargaining required by CECBA (Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act). These negotiations must be completed prior to the issuing of a No Board Report, which must predate a strike or lockout.

The Central/Unified Bargaining Team was divided into three tables of five members each, with OPSEU staff support. When the Corrections Bargaining Team was served with EES negotiations, a fourth table was added.

Each EES sub-table of the Central and Unified team has about seven ministries to negotiate worksite agreements for. Negotiations to date have been thorough and detailed. At first, the employer set up a timetable of one month to complete negotiations. This was ridiculously unrealistic given the change in workplaces since 2005 when EES were last negotiated. To date, a few agreements have been tentatively reached in two Ministries. Each team is still working on their first Ministry.

At the Corrections EES table, the team has filed a dispute over the non-disclosure of documents from the employer. That hearing is still being scheduled.

We want disclosure and a full review of all previous agreements. We can't review the previous agreements properly if we don't get proper disclosure and cooperation. This includes disclosure of all relevant information that helps us determine the jobs, duties, what is essential or emergency work, and

how to get the right numbers and scope of essential and emergency duties. We must negotiate effective agreements so that in the event of a labour dispute, we can have a meaningful strike.

This is an arduous process and the work is tedious but it is important for us to negotiate the best agreements possible. So far, we have managed the process well and the employer knows it. This is why they have filed disputes against the agreements in which we have been successful.

Unfortunately, there is no way that anyone can predict the length of these negotiations, the probability of a potential strike or lockout or even the timing. If we continue to negotiate meaningful EES agreements, perhaps the employer will have some motivation to return to issues bargaining.

Many of you have been concerned about the timing of a strike and expressed fear that there is no known date for a potential labour dispute. Some have suggested targeting a strike to occur for the May long weekend and the opening of the provincial parks, or in July for the Pan Am Games.

Unfortunately, we cannot "cherry-pick" a strike/lockout date due to the complexity and length of EES negotiations. However, this does not preclude actions by our members on both these target dates to make the government sit up and take notice. Our mobilizing activity continues to be a major irritant to the employer while we are at the EES table. If this continues, that also could be an incentive for the employer to revise their mandate and return to the issues bargaining tables.

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We would like to thank our members, mobilizers, OPSEU staff and the Executive Board for your patience and tireless mobilizing activities in the workplaces, at demonstrations and rallies. Political pressure on Liberal MPPs will continue, together with a campaign exposing the lack of openness and transparency regarding the government's privatization initiatives.

Together, we can defeat the employer's agenda and ultimately get a collective agreement free from the draconian concessions tabled during issues bargaining.

Direct deposit information is protected

Some members have raised concerns about the confidentiality of the banking information they provide for direct deposit of their strike pay. It is always wise to ask questions about your personal data.

Be assured that this information is held in strict confidence, and this data is kept secure apart from your regular membership information. Also note that the information you supply can ONLY be used for the purpose of depositing money into your bank account, and cannot be used for any other purpose.

Stay tuned

OPSEU Communications will send out bargaining bulletins with updated information during OPS negotiations.

Stay informed, get involved, and show your solidarity. Together we will get a fair and decent contract!!

*Don't listen to rumours!
TableTalk Update is your only
official communication from the
OPS Bargaining Teams.*

Your OPS Bargaining teams

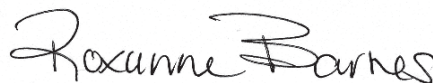
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