

Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines

Ministry Employee Relations Committee (MERC)

Meeting Minutes

Date: June 24, 2020

Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting

For OPSEU:

- Robert Sjonnesen – Co-Chair and Member (NDD)
- Siobhan O’Leary – Member (NDD)
- Greg Paju – Member (MMD)
- Cisca McInnis – Member (Energy)
- Linda Bouchard-Berzel – Alternate (NDD)
- Julian Rickards – Alternate (MMD)
- Roxanne Barnes – Staff Resource

For the Employer:

- Caroline Savarie – Co-Chair and Member
- John Guerard – Member
- Steve Beneteau - Member
- José Yee – Member
- Melanie Muncaster – Alternate
- Denise O’Boyle – Staff Resource
- Pauline Ross – Staff Resource

Recorder:

- Carrie Anderson

The Union chaired the meeting which came to order at 9:04am.

1. Adoption of Agenda

2. Business Arising

2a. Inclement Weather Process

Messaging was sent to all ENDM leaders reminding them to consult and communicate with other leaders in other ministries.

Action Required: N/A

2b. Ministry Planning for Coronavirus (COVID-19)

2b-1: VPN Access and Employee Access to Worksites

The Union has expressed concern with staff not having VPN to access all programs and needing to go into the worksites. The Union is requesting that management ensure employees have the proper equipment at home to complete their work so as to minimise the need to go into the worksites.

Management indicated that VPN orders are being managed and continue to be managed.

Action Required: N/A

3. Internal Responsibility System – Rural Areas

The Union raised concern with lack of knowledge of the Internal Responsibility System (IRS) and its implementation, especially in our smaller offices where there is no health and safety committee or representative. The Union is asking management to consider we ensure each office has a trained health and safety representative, regardless of the number of ENDM employees within that office.

Management has indicated they have conducted a review and are following all requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA). The IRS document is posted online on ENDM's Inside OPS for all staff to access. ENDM's onboarding materials list the mandatory health and safety courses required for staff.

Action Required:

Management will send communication to the ENDM leadership team reminding them that all staff are required to take the Safe Smart health and safety training as part of their onboarding as well as sharing the IRS link with staff.

The Union co-chair undertook a matter of personal privilege at this point in the meeting and indicated his retirement and resignation to the MERC. Siobhan O'Leary will assume the position of the new MERC Co-Chair. Linda Bouchard-Berzel will assume the position of NDD representative.

On behalf of management, Caroline thanked Bob for his continued efforts to the MERC on building positive labour relations.

On behalf the Union, Roxanne thanked Bob for his dedicated service.

4. COVID-19: Return to Workplace Planning

The Union is requesting adequate consultation with the Union and Health and Safety representatives, especially in the rural and remote areas of work. The Union is requesting clarity on when and how these committees would be consulted. The Union is requesting interim meetings be scheduled before the fall MERC meeting to address return to workplace planning and consultation.

Management advised there is Return to Workplace Planning underway by Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) as the employer. Multi bargaining agent tables are being consulted during this process. Once plans have been shared with the ministry, management will consult with MERC on key considerations specific to ENDM worksites.

Management is asking the Union for their suggestions on how to approach our health and safety committees for planning purposes.

Action Required:

Management has agreed to call a meeting of the co-chairs of the JH&SCs and health and safety representatives to provide a status update on return to workplace planning and how they can be engaged.

The parties have agreed to schedule meetings over the summer to discuss return to workplace planning.

5. Standing Items

5a. Fixed-Term Reports – next report will be provided for period ending June 30, 2020.

5b. Inclusion Update – The inclusion council is now a fully integrated Energy and NDM council, supported by two executive chairs and a committee chair. Most recently, an event took place in which an Indigenous documentary was viewed followed by discussion.

5c. TEI Current Status – management provided an update.

5d. 2020-21 Multi-Year Plan (MYP) – nothing to report.

6. Other Business

Change in Management Representation:

Management informed the MERC that Melanie Muncaster will become the management representative representing NDD – John Guerard will become the management alternate representing NDD.

Transfer of Agreement on Time Off for MERC Matters:

The committee undertook the annual review of the MOA and remains as signed September 18th, 2019.

Next Meeting

Next meeting is scheduled for September 23, 2020.

For OPSEU



Siobhan O'Leary, Co-chair OPSEU, July 14, 2020

For the Employer



Caroline Savarie, Co-chair Management, July 14, 2020