

**Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
Ministry Employee Relations Committee (MERC)
Ministry Health and Safety Committee (OPSEU/SEFPO)**

Wednesday, December 13, 2023
1:00 to 4:30 pm
Held virtually via Microsoft Teams

In Attendance

For the Union	For the Employer	Guests	Regrets
Shawn Burr (Co-Chair)* Alex Miller Katherine Onyshkewych Kathleen Demareski (OPSEU/SEFPO Advisor)	Jacques LeGris (Co-Chair) Joseph Odumeru Peter Taylor Greg Wilson Madiha Syed Jessica Medrano (TBS Advisor) Sunil Nair (Support)	Jeff Hudebine Jacquie Williamson Melissa Weber Valerie Bowering Melissa Evers Kevin Webster Karen Puhlmann Michelle Ratsch Gillianne Marshall Sherry Curet	

Agenda Items (tabled December 13, 2023):

1. Review Previous Minutes	Referred to	Action
'Live' minutes of the MERC meeting held on March 22, 2023, have been signed and posted on the Intranet site.	Management	

<p>1.1 Workload:</p> <p>The Union has raised concerns around employee workloads with the Employer. The Employer has refused to engage the Union in these discussions. A Union Grievance (2023-0999-0020) has been filed against the Employer.</p> <p>Management has no comment as the matter is under active grievance.</p> <p>Management acknowledges that the Union may raise workload concerns at MERC Meetings as it is part of the MERC mandate to monitor and attempt to resolve specific workload issues not resolved at the local level. In consideration of the above, workload issues can be raised only if the issue remains unresolved after discussing it with the employee's Manager and after discussion at the appropriate LERC.</p>	<p>Union</p>	
<p>1.2 Near Miss Forms</p> <p>In Article 9.1 of the Collective Agreement, it states that "both the Employer and the Union shall co-operate to the fullest extent possible in the prevention of accidents and in the reasonable promotion of safety and health of all employees." The Union requested the Employer provide copies of the near miss forms at the Q1 MERC meeting in March 2023. In May, the Employer provided a response stating that they would not be providing the Union with copies of the near miss forms.</p> <p>A Union Grievance (2023-0999-0019) has been filed against the Employer.</p>	<p>Union</p>	

<p>Management has no comment as the matter is under active grievance.</p> <p>Management reminds the Union that requests for Near Miss Reports should be obtained through each respective parties assigned member in the Joint Health and Safety Committee.</p>		
2. Previous Business and Standing Items		
<p>2.1 Fixed Term Usage Report</p> <p>The Fixed term Usage report as of December 31, 2023, will be available to be sent out in the second week of January 2024.</p>	Management	
<p>2.2 Training</p> <p>The Union has raised H&S and Training concerns about ministry training - Working on Water, Working on Ice, Working Near or On Roads (Local Operational Needs Assessment). The Employer has not adequately addressed those concerns. A Union Grievance (2023-0999-0019) has been filed against the Employer.</p> <p>Management has no comment as the matter is under active grievance.</p> <p>Management recognises its ongoing obligation under the Occupational Health & Safety Act, and Article 9 of the Collective Agreement, and is committed to provide for a healthy and safe workplace for all employees.</p>	Union	

<p>2.3 Employee Engagement</p> <p>The Union has raised concerns around the Employee Engagement exercise(s) the Employer is performing. The Employer has not adequately addressed concerns raised by the Union. A Union Grievance (2023-0999-0015) has been filed against the Employer.</p> <p>Management has no comment as the matter is under active grievance.</p>	<p>Union</p>	
<p>3. New Business</p>	<p>Referred to</p>	<p>Action</p>
<p>3.1 Visual Identity & Attire Directive</p> <p>The Union has attempted to engage the Employer on their exercise of Visual Identity and Attire. Based on this discussion the Union has filed a grievance against the Employer concerning this exercise. The grievance number is 2023-0999-0018.</p> <p>The Union offered to settle the grievance today by having the Employer acknowledge that they should have come to the Union first before its members and that the Union needs to be involved in the decision making as per the Collective Agreement. The Employer has decided against solving this relatively easy grievance.</p> <p>Because the Employer has refused to settle this grievance, the Union cannot comment on the Visual Identity and Attire Directive until the grievance is heard. Further grievances may be filed depending on the Employers actions regarding their Visual Identity and Attire Directive.</p>	<p>Management</p>	

<p>Management has no comment as the matter is under active grievance.</p> <p>It is Management's position that OPSEU has always been consulted during the processes. The Employer remains committed in consulting the Union and has done this to date and was looking to providing an update to MERC and its members.</p> <p>Management has withdrawn the item from the agenda.</p>		
<p>3.2 2023 DWECD Pulse Survey</p> <p>The Union requests that the Employer commits to including the Union in discussions on the questions being asked in future Ministry Pulse Surveys.</p> <p>The Union believes that the questions posed to staff may be biased towards the Employer and may not accurately reflect the true "pulse" of our members.</p> <p>The Union requests that the Employer commits to pulse surveys be conducted across all divisions including ON Parks, including the collection of information from our Seasonal Staff members.</p> <p>Management provided a summary of the DWECD Pulse Survey results conducted during the fall 2023.</p> <p>Management thanks the Union for the feedback. In addition, OPSEU has the ability to raise any Ministry wide employee concerns in this forum at MERC which they have done.</p>	<p>Management</p>	

<p>3.3 Event Management Standard Operational Procedure (EMSOP)</p> <p>The GSB asked that an update be provided at MERC.</p> <p>The Union at this time will not be providing any further comments to the amended Event Management Standard Operating Procedure but has agreed to meet with the Employer in the new year following our review of the document.</p> <p>Management is aware of the direction provided by the GSB.</p> <p>Management has shared the latest draft of the EMSOP with the Union. Management will reconvene at a special meeting of MERC in the New Year to allow the membership to review and provide feedback. The special meeting will be arranged at a time mutually agreeable to both parties.</p>	<p>Management</p>	
<p>3.4 Security Clearance for Investigations Officer</p> <p>The Employer required EIEB Investigations Officer staff to obtain security clearance checks which is contrary to any agreement with the Union.</p> <p>A Union Grievance (2023-0999-0030) has been filed against the Employer.</p> <p>The Union encourages its EIEB members required to perform a security clearance check to utilize their collective agreement rights.</p> <p>Management has no comment as the matter is under active grievance.</p>	<p>Union</p>	

<p>3.5 EO4 Job Descriptions</p> <p>The Union is concerned around the Employers amendments to the EO4 job description harmonization exercise and their attempt to “modernize”, “align”, “enhance” and “improve” their functions within the ministry. The Union is very concerned around job security of its members, removal of regulatory duties (through the removal of legislative references in the job description), loss of officer autonomy with enforcement decision making (allowing for greater political interference), and the job classification project being undertaken by the Employer which has not been presented to this Union MERC.</p> <p>The Union is aware that grievances have been filed in relation to the Employers EO4 job description exercise. The Union encourages all of its members to utilize their collective agreement rights.</p> <p>Management has no comment as the matter is under active grievance.</p>	<p>Union</p>	
<p>4 Health and Safety (Standing Item)</p>	<p>Referred to</p>	<p>Action</p>
<p>4.1 Workplace Violence Risk Assessment (WVRA)</p> <p>The Union appreciates the presentation by the Employer on WVRA. The Union looks forward to further updates.</p>	<p>Management</p>	

5 Sign-off of Live Minutes		
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Next Meeting: TBD

There was agreement between the two parties that the above represent the formal minutes of this meeting.

For the Union: Shawn Burr

Date: December 13, 2023

For the Employer: Jacques LeGris

Date: December 13, 2023