

## TB collective agreements now posted



The new collective agreements for three of the Treasury Board units are now available:

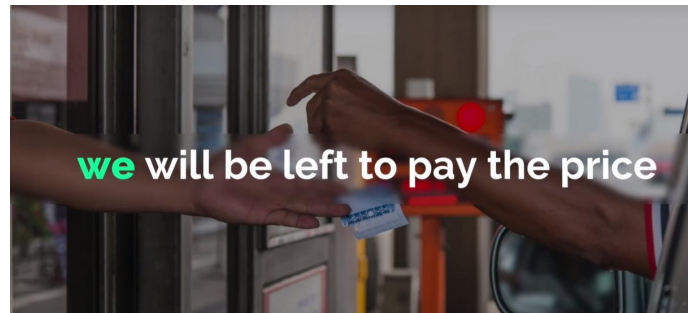
**PA:** [psacunion.ca/collective-agreement/pa-group](http://psacunion.ca/collective-agreement/pa-group)

**SV:** [psacunion.ca/operational-services-sv-group](http://psacunion.ca/operational-services-sv-group)

**TC:** [psacunion.ca/technical-services-tc-group](http://psacunion.ca/technical-services-tc-group)

**Note to EB group members:** We have not yet received the signed collective agreement from Treasury Board. It will be posted on the PSAC web site once it is received.

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### Quick facts about the proposed Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB)

Government is rushing the \$35 Billion project

The Finance Minister has said he would like the new Canada Infrastructure Bank up and running by the end of 2017. Operational details for the project were only included in the recently-tabled Budget Implementation Act, and the government has already begun a recruitment drive for the Bank's leadership.

#### What is it?

The Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB) would be located in Toronto and create a one-stop shop for new infrastructure funding, pooling investments from large investors with a small amount of seed funding granted from the Government of Canada. This approach deliberately creates huge returns for

private investors, while driving up the cost of public projects and giving up important public control.

Here are some of the problems:

### **Private financing will more than double the cost of infrastructure projects**

- While the federal government can borrow at interest rates as low as 2.2 per cent, private financiers expect returns of at least 7 to 9 percent. This could have a huge impact on federal budgeting in the future.
- Using this higher-cost private financing could more than double the interest costs of infrastructure projects. That's \$153 billion more during a project's life span than if the government borrowed directly at 2.5 per cent - equivalent to \$5 billion more per year.
- There are also significant added transaction costs with private financing, including fees paid to lawyers, financial advisors, accounting firms and other consultants. These can be double what we would see in the public sector.

### **Private control of public projects**

- Key decisions rest with private firms, even though it is a question of public investment, publicly-generated assets, and public services. Cost overruns and missed deadlines can impact the expected revenue of private investors and we might see user fees and cutbacks on services.
- The CIB has the potential to significantly increase overall costs to taxpayers while privatizing the most high-return, low-risk infrastructure assets. Why would we take our most valuable assets and sell them to the private sector?
- Documents show the bank could take on an "equity stake" in order to make a project more

attractive to private investor, meaning that the public takes on all the risk.

### **Lack of transparency and accountability**

- The public won't know who is bidding for which projects and what the conditions of the contract will be.
- The current proposal does not include enough safeguards and checks to prevent conflicts of interest and ensure responsible management of its budget. Given the projected budget of \$35 billion, this is a recipe for significant mismanagement and risk.
- We've seen with the Phoenix disaster how mismanaged contracts can affect the entire public service, and we can't let that happen again.

### **Public services will take the hit**

- As the cost of this privatization skyrockets and Canadians are on the hook for paying billions in extra interest fees, funding for important public services will be undermined.
- As more and more public services are contracted out and privatized, institutional memory disappears and drains capacity over the long run. This has a real impact on the quality of services for the public.
- When projects go to the lowest bidder, quality and accessibility suffer.

### **Public financing and public control are a better approach**

There is certainly a need to invest in public transit, green infrastructure, social services like universal childcare, and in rural and northern communities. But the public should retain control so these projects

continue to benefit everyone, and new hidden fees, costs, and cutbacks are not forced on the public.

**Instead of high-cost private loans, we could use low-cost public financing for large infrastructure projects, creating more value, saving money and making sure projects actually work in the public interest.**



## **RCMP Civilian Members: Q&A**

### **Unions and Collective Bargaining**

#### **1. Unionization, what is it all about?**

Unions are legal entities whose role and responsibility is to negotiate collective agreements on behalf of their membership and represent their members when the collective agreement is breached.

PSAC/USGE provides support to its members not only through grievance representation, but also through labour-management consultations locally, regionally and nationally. These are fora where non-collective agreement issues can be addressed and resolved.

Unions, including PSAC/USGE, are democratically run organizations where dues-paying members elect their representatives locally, regionally and nationally. PSAC and USGE hold triennial

conventions where the direction for the union is set through debate of resolutions put forward by the membership and elections are held for senior leadership positions.

PSAC/USGE locals attend to the daily needs of members involving workplace issues. Local leadership is elected according to terms set out in local bylaws.

#### **2. What are excluded positions?**

A unionized group of workers is part of a bargaining unit which is defined based on community of interest and nature of work. For the federal public service, bargaining units are determined by the Federal Public Sector Labour Relations and Employment Board.

There may be Civilian Members who are pay-matched to higher classification levels that fall outside of the established bargaining unit into which others will be deemed; these members are excluded because of the nature of the work (managerial functions, access to sensitive information, and the like). These positions are excluded from collective bargaining.

The non-pay-matched CMs (LES-IM, LES-TO/PO-IMA, PO-TCO) are not excluded positions per se, but until certified by a bargaining agent, will have the terms and conditions of the TC collective agreement applied to them.

For greater clarity, positions are only excluded when they fall outside of the definition of employee that is set out in the Federal Public Service Labour Relations Act.

#### **3. How are dues calculated and what is the dues rate?**

Dues are established at PSAC and USGE triennial conventions. Locals may set additional dues levies to address their daily work.

#### **4. How does collective bargaining work?**

Most of the Civilian Members will be deemed into public service positions that are pay-matched to existing bargaining units – with the exception of the LES-IM/PO-IMA and LES-TO/PO-TCO groups. The collective agreements of those units expire in June of 2018.

PSAC will seek bargaining input from the membership, elect bargaining teams and convene bargaining conferences leading up to the expiry of the collective agreements in June of 2018. PSAC will determine a means of integrating CM representatives into the PA and TC bargaining conferences.

#### **5. How will CMs be involved in bargaining?**

PSAC will set up an RCMP Civilian Members sub-committee that will be part of the bargaining process – thus ensuring that issues unique to CMs are addressed. The process for establishing this sub-committee will be communicated in the future.

#### **6. Will CMs be protected between now and the time that we are deemed into the public service with respect to our terms and conditions of work?**

Yes. PSAC/USGE is attempting to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding, whereby Treasury Board agrees to protect your current terms and conditions of work between now and when you enter into collective bargaining at which time a legislative collective bargaining freeze of your terms and conditions of work kicks in.

#### **7. There are a number of terms and conditions of work that we CMs currently enjoy that are superior to those in our pay-matched public service positions. How will PSAC/USGE address this?**

PSAC/USGE recognize that CMs have some superior terms and conditions of work. Our most reasonable goal is to expand these superior provisions to all of our members. If we are not successful at that, we intend to protect these superior terms and conditions of work by grandparenting (protecting) them for you.

We have experience with this type of process. For example, during the last round of bargaining, a number of employees were transferred into the Department of Heritage from Canada Revenue Agency. They came in with some superior terms and conditions and these were grandparented.

#### **8. I'm concerned that becoming a union member will mean that I will be forced to go on strike. Is this the case?**

Many rounds of collective bargaining are resolved without workers electing to withdraw their labour from the workplace. It is the workers themselves who vote to strike. During the collective bargaining process when/if negotiations stall, the union will conduct a strike vote. One of the main purposes of doing so is to demonstrate to the employer the will of its employees to withdraw their labour to achieve the improvement in the collective agreement that are being negotiated.

A strike vote does not necessarily mean a strike will occur. If a strike does occur, the union will determine the most appropriate means of striking – a general strike where all employees are out or a revolving strike where certain work locations are targeted for a specific period.

#### **9. What about essential service positions?**

The Treasury Board, as the employer, has the right to designate certain positions as essential to maintaining government services for the safety or security of the public, meaning that those designated essential would continue to report to

work during a strike. The RCMP and the Union would discuss which services and which positions are believed to be essential well prior to any potential strike, and reach an essential services agreement. Individuals in positions that were designated essential would be notified in writing by the employer. This process occurs with every round of collective bargaining.

## Deeming

Civilian Members are expressing a degree of frustration around the lack of transparency in the deeming process. Many questions remain unanswered, leaving CMs feeling as though they are being kept in the dark.

PSAC/USGE are committed to do our best to get answers for you. It is important to remember that this process is employer-driven and unions don't necessarily have any more information than you, the affected employees.

### 1. What are the steps in the deeming process?

PSAC/USGE does not have any additional information about the process than has been communicated to RCMP Civilian Members at this time. We are pressuring the employer to provide more clarity on all aspects of the deeming process.

What we know is the deeming date is set for April 26, 2018.

At that point CMs will become public service employees. The majority will be included in existing Treasury Board bargaining units with the exception of the PO-IMA and PO-TCOs who were not pay-matched.

Approximately 500 CM will go into each of the Program and Administrative Services (PA) and Technical Services (TC) bargaining units at Treasury Board. A small number will go into the Education and Library Sciences (EB) group. And an even

smaller number into the Operational Services (SV) group.

At that time, you will be fully represented by PSAC/USGE as card-carrying, dues-paying members.

PSAC/USGE and Treasury Board are in the process of negotiating the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding that will clarify the role that PSAC/USGE will play in the deeming process. Our goal is to protect your interests before deeming and during this period of transition.

### 2. Why are we not signing PSAC/USGE union cards now and becoming public service employees before deeming?

It is PSAC's position that signing union cards now is not necessary. PSAC/USGE is not blocked from protecting your interests prior to you becoming members in April 2018.

With the exceptions of PO-IMA and PO-TCOs, CMs are assigned to specific bargaining units and their union; there is not a choice of bargaining agent to be made.

By signing a union card before deeming, you do not become a public service employee, that will only occur upon the deeming process.

### 3. Many of us are fearful about the impact of deeming and its impact on our terms and conditions of work. How can PSAC/USGE protect us?

PSAC/USGE knows that you don't want to see an erosion in any of your terms and conditions of work. The union will work on your behalf to protect any superior terms and conditions of work you currently have. The union's commitment is to be there for you through this process, to answer your questions to the best of our abilities, and to defend your interests.



4. **There is a lack of specific details on many issues including pension, sick leave, vacation and other provisions. What can we expect from PSAC/USGE in this regard?**

PSAC/USGE appreciates that not all of your questions are being answered. Some of you are in unique situations that require a response from your employer. The union has limited information on many of the topics where you have concerns. We will work to get information from Treasury Board on topics like pay scales, pension conversions, etc.

PSAC/USGE also commits to bringing forward to the bargaining table issues that are specific to you. That is why we will set up the RCMP Civilian Member sub-committee of the bargaining team.

## **Phoenix**

1. **How do we know that when our pay is transferred into the Phoenix system that we won't experience delays?**

PSAC has been at the forefront of forcing Treasury Board to make this right. It was PSAC who initially called for a delay in the rollout of Phoenix and the union continues to meet with high-level government representatives as well as our members who are experiencing very real financial pain.

There is no guarantee that pay issues won't occur. In any transition of this magnitude pay issues may arise. The union will be there to advocate for you in the event that Phoenix lets any of you down.

2. **Is there any chance that deeming will be postponed as a result of Phoenix delays?**

There is no way of knowing if delays in deeming will occur as a result of Phoenix. We will ask that Treasury Board notify you if they are considering any delays.

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## Get your union news – online and screen-friendly

Published three times per year, 180,000 of our members received the winter edition of PSAC's newsletter Our Union Voice.

This format also allows for local printing and a PDF download, in order to share with colleagues, friends and family.

<https://psacafpc.ca/2oyqzjW>