

Government must address staffing issues to smooth refugee process



PSAC is calling on the federal government to address organizational and workload issues resulting from the influx of asylum seekers from the United States. Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Minister Ahmed Hussen must take responsibility for fixing these persistent problems.

“There are not enough front-line workers,” said PSAC National President Robyn Benson. “And, from what we are hearing from our members, it is an organizational nightmare.”

Employees at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) have been given new assignments, made family arrangements to accommodate their new schedules, and are then

told the plans have changed again. Confusion over assignment of duties and failures of communication in the workplace are also putting undue stress on these PSAC members working on the front lines.

Our members at Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) say more resources are needed, including more Border Services Officers. The number of new workers being hired is insufficient. Harper-era job cuts have not been restored by the current Liberal government, and these workers are being asked to do more with less.

“People arriving in Canada, particularly those in duress, deserve to be treated with dignity,” said Benson. “Our members are doing their best. However, without additional resources, clear directions from management, and adequate facilities, these workers will continue to face a workplace crisis.”

PSAC encourages the Ministers responsible for IRCC, IRB and CBSA to listen to their employees about the specific issues that need to be addressed. As always, listening to the people doing the work, and the unions representing them, is crucial to delivering quality public services.



Arbitrator named for wage dispute with CRA

Parties unable to agree on arbitrator – Labour Board assigns one in dispute.

In May our PSAC/UTE Bargaining Team met with the CRA to discuss wage increases for 2014 and 2015, consistent with our collective agreement signed last year. Because we were unable to reach an agreement over the two days we therefore proceeded to next step under our contract and the law – to discuss and agree upon an arbitration process.

During the summer the parties met and had several discussions concerning an arbitration process. Once one was agreed upon we set about selecting an arbitrator. Because the parties were not able to ultimately agree on which arbitrator should hear our case, the Public Service Labour Relations and Employment Board has selected one for us, consistent with our agreement.

We are now in the process of setting a hearing date. Once a date has been selected we'll be sure to provide an update. Should the CRA receive a mandate to resume negotiations with us, we will be prepared to set dates and return to the bargaining table. Otherwise we will await our hearing date.

In the meantime, preparations continue for the negotiation of our next collective agreement. The UTE Collective Bargaining Committee is reviewing the membership demands submitted by locals across the country earlier this year. A Negotiating Team will be established later this fall for the upcoming round.

Stay informed and get involved

We will continue to update as things progress. Be sure to go to visit UTE's website and PSAC's national page for updates. Also, should you have any questions please contact your UTE Local President.

PSAC/UTE members at Canada Revenue Agency: United for a Fair Contract



Treasury Board clarifies deeming of Civilian RCMP members into public service

A recent letter from the president of the Treasury Board to the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) helps to clarify many of the outstanding issues related to the deeming of Civilian Members (CMs) in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) into the federal public service.

RCMP civilian members will be deemed into the Public Service Employment Act on April 26, 2018.

PSAC and the Union of Solicitor General Employees (USGE) believe that employees should not suffer a negative impact because of this process, and that their existing terms and conditions of employment should be "grandparented" where reductions would otherwise occur.

"Without an agreement to "grandparent" these employees, we are concerned that some may lose rights and benefits that they currently have," said Robyn Benson, PSAC National President in a letter to Treasury Board President Scott Brison. "This is unacceptable and does not show these valued employees the respect that they deserve."

PSAC raised several concerns, which were addressed by Minister Brison:

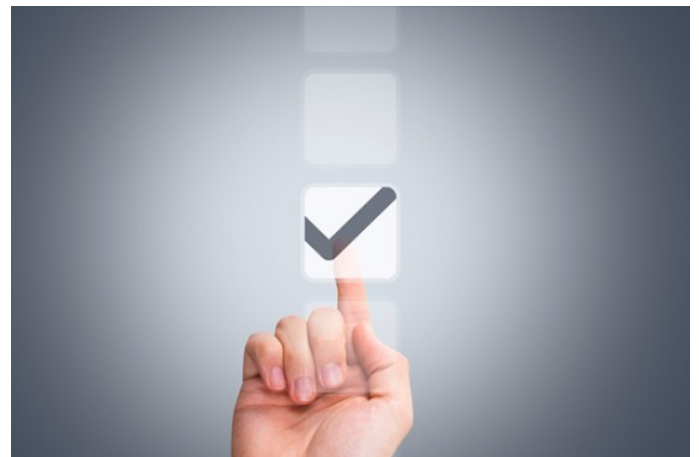
1. **No employee should be worse off under a new collective agreement.** Deemed employees will maintain their existing retirement age and join the employer's insurance and benefit plans without any lapse of service. Employees will also have full opportunities for career mobility and advancement in the broader public sector. **The Government of Canada has no plans to undertake unilateral changes to terms and conditions.** PSAC is working with the employer on a process to negotiate the treatment of differences found in CMs' terms and conditions.
2. **All RCMP civilian members should receive the pay package afforded to regular RCMP members.** TB: The rates of pay for civilian members are pay matched to the rates of pay of similar groups within the public service. "The majority of CMs will receive pay increases once the collective agreements for these groups are signed," stated Minister Brison in his letter. The collective agreements of the PA, TC, SV, and EB groups have since been signed, on June 14, 2017.

3. **CMs from the Police Operations Support (PO) group should also benefit from the same protection.** TB: The terms and conditions for the PO group, which is currently unrepresented, will follow those outlined in the Technical Services (TC) group's collective agreement.

"Once collective agreements are ratified, salary adjustments for pay-matched CMs can begin," stated Minister Brison. **[Since Minister Brison's response, the tentative agreements have been ratified; we currently await processing of retroactive payments.]**

The Treasury Board has not yet issued a decision on whether and how rates of pay will be adjusted for PO members.

The Treasury Board is awaiting the consent of the Federal Public Sector Labour Relations Board to implement pay increases in the LES and PO groups that would match the increases of the TC group.



PSAC surveying members through Environics

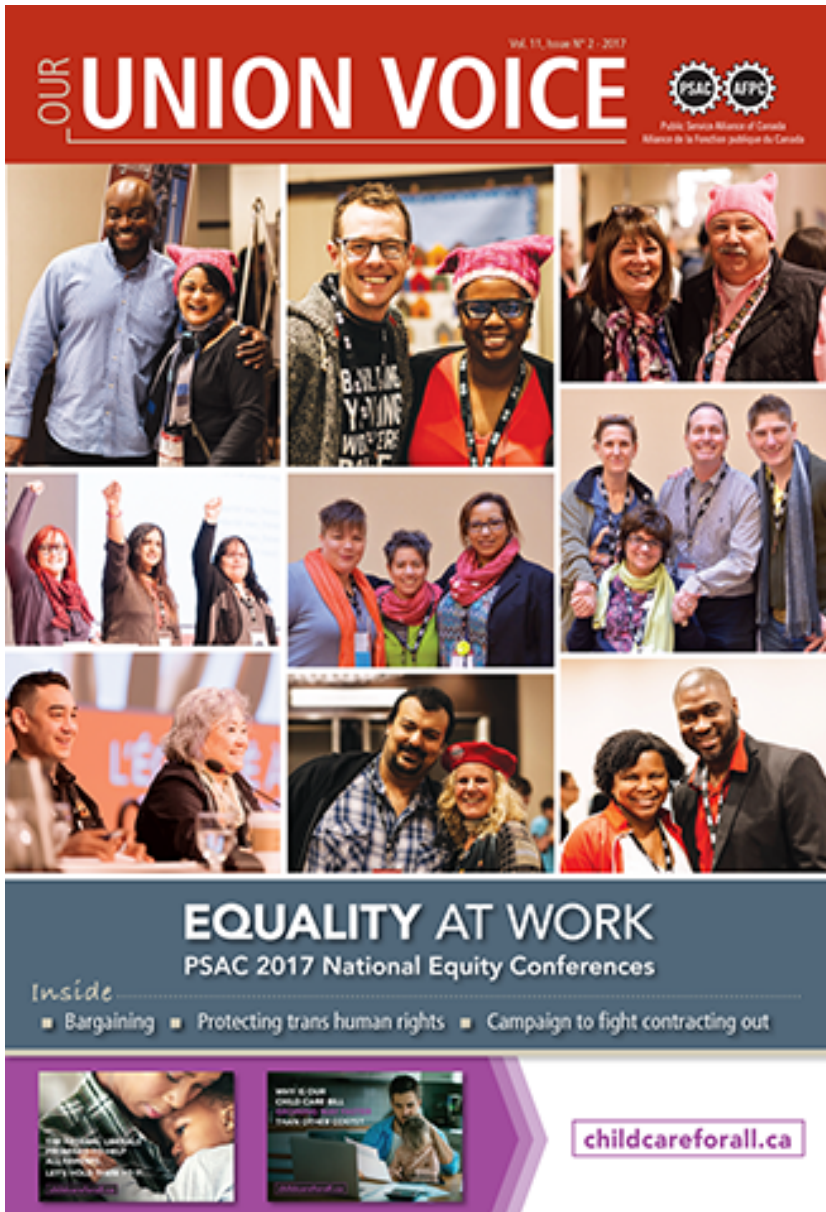
This is to let you know that PSAC has commissioned the Environics Research Group to conduct an online survey with PSAC members.

The objective of the survey is to gauge opinions on union priorities and will be conducted in the beginning of October.

A random selection of PSAC members will be solicited. You may be contacted by e-mail to take part in this 15-minute online survey.

We encourage your participation and assure you all answers will be kept anonymous.





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/2wax25k>