

Minutes
BRUSH Committee Meeting
January 23, 2008

Chair:
Joy Hennan CEIU

In Attendance:
Flyod Knelsen CRA
Chuck Leech ALTERNATE - USGE
Gail Jewsbury - UEW
Tom Gallagher GSU
Gordon Law WESTERN ECONOMICS
Melvin Dureen - USGE
Stephen Chessor CUDA
James Little BC PSAC, Regional Representative
Robert Hellenius Commissionaire
Raheman nu Mohamed CIUE
Neil MacKay
Kelly Legacy - Vernon - CEIU
Carolyn McGillivray = White Rock CBS
Gwen Williams - SSO, NAT

Regrets:
Wayne Little UTE

Joy chaired the meeting

Roundtable of introductions

Agenda was emailed

Move 1 to end of agenda

Usually review of minutes - chuck/ floyd Carried

2. New ergonomic regulation update - James - sent out today , brand new regulation XX of COSH regs . Please look at it, and it was gazetted in July 07. PSAC had some input into the regulation - far amount of diverse opinion as to what should be in the regulation. It is now governing ergonomics in the workplace. There is a slight possibility that there could be some changes when it is gazzetted for the second time. We do not have the ability to make changes.

Should be accessible through the web site.

3. New Hazard Prevention regulation xix ammendments (violence). It has not gained much notoriety and employeers are forced to deal with hazard prevention. This reg states what the employers responsibility actually is.

AGR has done a lot of work to educate our members.

Recently an ammendment to include violence. PSAC intention was to include a separate reg to deal with violence. But we were unsuccessful in having it as a separte reg. so it is part of XIX.

New XIX talks about the inclusion of violence in the workplace. IT IS a start. Important that violence in the past has always been dealt with as a labour relations issue, and we have grieved it. Now, because in reg xix we can deal with it as a H & S issue.

4. Report from the PSAC National H & S rep's meeting.

Meet twice a year, and bring to the table what is new across the country. We have two national officers who review things like regs and ammendments. They sit on the NJC and negotiate the NJC agreements on H & S. NJC covers broad based issues of concern to all employees in the government - all unions, not just PSAC. On issues of general interest/purpose, eg Northern Housing allowance, Travel policy are negotiated separate from the collective bargaining tables. Because H & S issues are the same kind of issue, namely H & S. PSHCP AND Dental are also included. There are a lot of directives. NJC does a cyclical review of these directives, so that we can have input, and we try to negotiate what we want. Just completed directives A & B. Now working on C, D & G which deal with scents in the workplace, indoor air quality, temperature zones, buildings and what is in buildings, molds. What PSAC wants us to do is to look at the directives and see if we have any concerns about them or the language in them. James will send out to all the BRUSH members. This is what the document reads right now, these are the changes that management wants, then we can write in our comments. It will get posted on the website. We are tasked to look at this. Input by the end of July. Deals with egress and office arrangements. Broken down by numbers, so reply can be collated. Denis St. James is the national officer responsible for this, and he will do the final write up.

GJ How does this fit into the TB directive?

The directive is not as specific as the TB directive.

EG emergency services, where a building where co located services, eg CCRA is the larger agency and we lease the building. The onus for emergency preparedness is on the tenant with the largest number of employees in the building and the plan needs to be registered with PEP and emergency departments. Owner is not required to have one. So we need input into this.

5. Methicillin- resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) Infections

James - brought in by commissionaires. This is one of the super bugs.

Rob - currently runs the detention cells for CBSA dealing with immigrant detainees. Recently asked to pick up a detainee who had a super bug. Rob is familiar with MRSA via other sources. Gloves and hand washing are not enough. Pick up was postponed. The health nurse at the jail ensure that gloves and hand washing would be sufficient, so carried out the pick up. At that point, came across another person with health problems - lanced a large spider bit.. Which is the start of MRSA - Lots of misinformation about MRSA. Management thought that they had a spider infestation. But it was not. USA has gone through something similar. Two types of MRSA, facility acquired and community acquired. This can cause loss of limb, skin facetious, lung facetious. This was not recognized as a workplace malady. Recognized, introduced protocols, and reduced dramatically. In Canada we do not have any protocols. Rob has asked PSAC for help. Initially we were close to a right to refuse work situation - but there were some protocols in place, and probably not imminent danger.. H however we needed to bring this to the attention of the employer. For the commissionaires, and CBSA and transfer individuals. We have decided to follow 127 - internal complaint process.

JH - met someone who had this, and it took 6 months before he could go back to work.

Rob - 1/3 of the Canadian population does have MRSA, and it is contained in the nose As long as that person does not contaminate someone with a lesion in the skin, it is not a problem. MRSA can stay alive for up to two weeks, so if it is not properly cleaned, then the surface is infectious for two weeks. Supervisors do not understand the risk.

CL has gone through this a couple of times at Matsqui. Senior management was notified by the hospital, health team called, and the person was isolated.

MD - currently CSC is coming up with a draft of a pandemic. Generally it is after the fact, eg, Hep C, "hep B,

PSAC contacted Health Canada, and spoke with occupational health nurse (Ruth Nicholson). She does a lot of training for customs people at the airports around this issue. She would be willing to do some training around this area. Should workplace h& S be bringing this in. Commissionaires are collocated with CBSA - in Library Square.

CMcG could send info on who is on the local H & s committee people so that the commissionaires could have a contact.

Dave Noblaw??, is the regional OSH rep, so that would be a good contact to talk to. National Policy committee.

Rob - when you discuss this, there is a difference between the two types. Facility acquired is much more difficult to deal with. It is usually associated with hosp.

JL general concern about super bugs, but in this case, these people are identifying themselves as having the super bugs. Employees need more protection, and need to create protocols. Need to know how to use PPE and how to dispose of them.

CMacG - left the call.

6. Work reorganization and Call centres.

CEIU - Neil and Rahmen work as EI call centre agents in harbour centre. Want to raise the issue of work conditions in call centres and the impact that it has on call centre workers. Characterized by stress, burn out, and absenteeism. Research has been communicated with PSAC rep and the global. National union has raised work conditions with management but with no success. Most issues are best addressed via H & S. Want to draw attention to this. Work environment, high call volumes, non stop, on phones 6.5 hours out of 7 hours. 2 sec break. Emphasize on quantity not quality. Tethered to a desk. Monitoring and surveillance of the work force. Complex with stressed clients, rigid legislation. Lots of burn out and frustration, not a great environment. Want to spark debate, create awareness. Some of the problems that members are experiencing are burn out, hi turn over rate, hi absenteeism, management could request a doctor's note if call in sick on a Monday, low morale, intense work environment. Focused on quantity not quality. 6 to 10 calls per hour. Management has been advised and their response is typically the brush off. Suggest move to a different position for that worker, but it does not help the new worker. When raised nationally it was not a priority for that level of management. So the only recourse is to raise it through the national union.

CBSA used to have a call centre. Now all of it is in Winnipeg. CCRA also has a call centre. Pressure to move to the call centre format.

Rahmen - part of new government is to push service Canada - be the entire face of the government

JH - wonders if people know that they are looking for a new building 500 - 700 people as a call centre with processing. Is this management's way of solving the problem?

R - there is no cross training rarely do you diversify your job as you are a specialist.

Stephen - are there any alternate work arrangement.

Neil - monitoring is very big, so it is all about productivity. Even managers are under stress.

R - statistics are compared with 10 call centres across the country, even though they deal with different things. Going to try to stream line it. EAP is available and in fact is in the building. But the commitment in the workplace, to even give stress breaks is non existent. Management is prepared to bear the costs of training new employees, etc.

JL _ Labour relations aspect - crack the whip, and H & S - well being.

Read from the National board of directors meeting, John Gordon, WRT work reorganization. We have Howie west, Oct 2007 report - PSAC has been participating in call centre project with .. Survey report is nearing completion. PSAC has one of two seats for contact centre Canada. For organizations involved in contact centres. Most of work is in industry , but cares about training, working conditions and advancement. JL called Howie west. Three years ago this was started. Call Centre working group to talk about Call centres. Big H 7 S aspect, stress, those issues should be dealt with by H & S committee plus ergonomic issues. Specifically with respect to CEIU has an internal group to address with employer. Howie wants PSAC to reconvene the larger group. Government, Industry and Labour group to try to fix the problems. Feds have walked away from it. Getting more and better compliance from industry than from the federal government. Banks etc have changed their practises. Need to get back to the contact centre and go to the CEIU national president.

KL - this is not restricted to call centres, it is the same in processing, big push for production. Monitored, stressed, quantity, supports gone. Huge thing.

JL is stress a h & s issue, or a Human right's issue. Will we need a fit to work issue, will we need duty to accommodate which is a HR issue. Or is it a Labour Relations issue. The forum is a good place to address these issues and find out what others are doing

Stephen - best practises, hand them a solution.

JL we may need to do some research. Where do you want to go? Centre for research work in society.

ACTION - JH will get them in touch with the CEIU group involved with this.

Rahmen - local wp committee wanted it raised to a regional and national level.

(Gwen left)

Also raised in UMC.

JH gave Diane _____ name as a regional committee member.

Monique Bakker joined.

Sam Wiese Joined.

7. Succession planning. Joy is not running for a second term. Must be a member of the BRUSH committee.

Sam - we have terms of reference as to who is an active member.

Must have been active with BRUSH at least the past year prior to convention. Participate and attend at least 50% of the meeting called prior to convention.

8. H & S LOGO - canary in the cage is good. International symbol.

Mel will go look for the clip art.

Will decide at the next meeting what we are going to use.

JL would could have a contest. We will have a regional conference in 2008 - 09.

Kelly Legacy left the meeting.

9. PIPSC participation in the PSAC BRUSH committee

Request to join BRUSH - Joy suggested that they have to pay for it.

Sam - we might be stepping on PIPSC toes. Who is the request from? We could end up an awkward situation. Need to check with PIPSC before we open up our committee.

TG - PIPSC does not want to sit with PSAC in the workplace. Would oppose it.

JH - they sit on all the HRSDC H & S Committees.

MB - likes the all inclusive idea as the PIPSC help. It would help on some issues.

JL - checked with BC REVP, and chair of BRUSH to give guidance. Can be inclusive but need to be careful. ACTION - JL to run it by Denis St. James. Would there be any problems. And will check with PIPSC.

10. Lancaster House Audio Conference - Benefits for Disabled Workers Navigating the Maze. - we have bought the audio tape of some of these conferences. Bring labour and management together and deal with specific topical issues. This deals with WCB, DI and other benefits (EAP, fit to work). "Time is about 1 hr to 1.25 hours. This would be in conjunction with the human rights committee. Try something new for people who cannot get to the office. It will be broadcast on the DVD player and then will go over the conference call via the speakers.

1. BC PSAC Health and Safety webpage and forum. <http://www.psacbc.com>

JL - went over how to access the web site. Right hand side, title bar H & S, goes to web page, then click on person with a megaphone. Need to register

Sam - can we control who goes onto the site.

JL - it is open, so anyone including management can access this. Web master can pull anything that is inappropriate.

Guests can view the discussion.

Ray King joined the meeting

General discussion about posting to the forum.

Looks like it is all there, even saw that I am looking for clip art, however it after midnight here it is bed time.

Later Melvin