

RECORD OF DECISION
Union Management Consultation Committee - Human Resources Sub-Committee
13 September 2021, 1300 hrs to 1600 hrs
Videoconference

Agenda		
Item	Subject	OPI
1.	Opening Remarks	Co-Chairs
2.	Acceptance of Agenda and Previous Minutes	Co-Chairs
3a.	Mental Health	ADM(HR-Civ)/DGWM
3b.	Compensation Update	ADM(HR-Civ)/DGCCB
3c.	Classification Update	ADM(HR-Civ)/ DGHRO
4.	Mandatory Vaccines for Public Service Employees	ADM(HR-Civ)/ DGHRSD
5.	Re-opening Strategy	ADM(HR-Civ)/ DGHRSD
6.	Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention	ADM(HR-Civ)/DGWM
7.	DGWM Update	ADM(HR-Civ)/DGWM
8.	Round Table	All
9.	Closing Remarks	Co-Chairs

Membership			
Co-Chairs		Replacement	Observer
ADM(HR-Civ)	Isabelle Desmartis		
FGDTLC(W)	Des Rogers		Kevin Walsh
Members			
DGWM	Peter Hooey		
DGHRSD	Vikesh Srivastava		
DGWD	Monica Kolstein		
DGHRO	Barbara Williams		
DGCCB	Joanne Lalonde		
UNDE	June Winger		
FGDTLC(E)	Yves Fournier		Freddie Hutchison
PSAC Agricultural Union	Milton Dyck		
PIPSC	Tom Zaharopoulos		Peter Jozsa
CMSG	Bernard Talbot		
FGDCA	Richard Cashin		
ACFO	Dany Richard		Stephanie Rochon
IBEW	Paul Cameron		
Regrets			
CMCFA	Helen Luu		
CAPE	Julie Jobin		
CMSG	Mark Boucher		
Presenters/Observers			
DCLR	Jennifer Bordeleau		
SJS	LCol Connerty		
DTHM	Véronique Lavallée		
DTHM	Nicole Schaaf		
DTHM	Charlaine Mallette		
DCCO	Carolyn Aitken		
DSPA	Anne Rahming		

ADMO	Nathaniel Cousins
ADMO	Samantha Jotham

Resources

DGWM	Ewa Zielinski
DGWM	Colleen Gibson

Record of Decision

Item 1: Opening Remarks

Summary:

- Ms. Isabelle Desmartis introduced herself, adding that she is now in her third week as Assistant Deputy Minister (Human Resources – Civilian) (ADM[HR-Civ]). She is looking forward to her new role and working with those around this table.
- Mr. Des Rogers, Federal Government Dockyard Trade and Labour Council (West) (FGDTLC [W]), commented that hopefully the committee will be able to meet face to face in the future. Mr. Rogers welcomed Ms. Desmartis and noted that the committee is a cooperative and collaborative one.
- The committee conducted a round table to introduce the bargaining agents to the ADM.

Item 2: Acceptance of Agenda and Previous Minutes

Supporting Documents: UMCC HR-Sub 31 May 2021 Record of Decision, UMCC HR-Sub 13 September 2021 Agenda, UMCC HR-Sub Action Item Matrix.

Summary:

- Mr. Rogers presented the previous meeting minutes, today's agenda, and the Action Item Matrix for approval.

Discussion:

- Ms. June Winger, President, Union of National Defence Employees (UNDE), noted that there is an item on the Action Item Matrix referring to DGMPRA survey results from June 2020. She has inquired about movement on this item.

Action Item:

DCLR will follow up with DGMPRA for the June results.

Item 3a: Mental Health

Supporting Documents: no supporting documents

Summary:

- At this time there is no union co-chair for the mental health file. Mr. Rogers volunteered to work with his bargaining agent colleagues to identify someone to fill this role.
- Ms. Charlaïne Mallette, Acting Senior Manager, Organizational Well-Being, Total Health Management (DTHM), provided an update on the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- Recent studies are revealing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on those working from home. The Canadian Mental Health Association is reporting the serious negative impact of COVID on employees, particularly the most vulnerable.
- It is noteworthy that half the disability claims in the public service are psychological claims. Public Service mental health claims are more costly on average than other types of claims (\$23,000.00/year versus \$7,000.00).

- The department's mental health courses are being refreshed and will be available on the Defence Learning Network (DLN) in the coming weeks.
- Statistics Canada has been researching connections between the Public Service Employee Survey (PSES) and the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. The goal is to provide a tool that helps managers to be proactive.
- The Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (OCHRO) is working on mental health considerations for its post-pandemic planning.
- Monthly EAP webinars continue. This month's webinar focuses on coping with stress. These monthly webinars are open to all Defence Team members.
- October is 2021 Healthy Workplace Month. This year's theme is "Feel Great at Work!"

Discussion:

- Mr. Rogers reiterated the importance of mental health now more than ever, as employees struggle with COVID-19 stresses.

Action Item:

- DTHM will share speaking notes with committee members.

Item 3b: Compensation Update

Supporting Documents: DND Compensation Update, PowerPoint

Summary:

- Ms. Joanne Lalonde, Director General Civilian Compensation and Benefits (DGCCB), provided an overview of key roles and responsibilities in the compensation environment including the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS), Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC), Shared Services Canada (SSC) and DND.
- Ms. Lalonde reported a 4% decrease in the compensation backlog. This small change reflects the fact that collective agreement implementation over the past few months required the attention of the compensation team.
- Section 34 transactions had a minor setback over the summer due to the move to PeopleSoft 9.2. This was related to system problems that were quickly resolved.
- In terms of HR transaction timeliness, DND has an overall timeliness of 67%, a decrease of 8% since April 2021. This is on par with the overall public service, which is 68%. Ms. Lalonde advised that DND's target is 90% while the rest of the public service uses a target of 80%. HR-Civ is considering a target of 80% to align with the public service and better reflect organizational capabilities and operational realities.
- Ms. Lalonde explained that client care calls, an initiative that began as wellness checks during COVID-19, have been so well received that they are now part of the compensation consultation model. There have been 1,900 consultations since 1 April 2021.
- As part of the PSPC Pension/Overpayments Initiative, 2,038 pension/overpayments personal consultations were conducted, 684 pension arrears issues were addressed and 273 overpayments were identified. The Pay Centre has now closed this project.
- Ms. Lalonde advised the committee that a number of successful Robotic Process Automation (RPA) initiatives have been launched:
 - S.34 notifications are sent to managers via email prompting them to address pending transactions;
 - Quality Assurance BOT detects anomalies in regular and acting pay; and
 - End date notification for term, casual and student employees was launched in April 2021.

- The next wave of RPA will include retirement notifications, prompts related to replacement staffing for managers, MAT/PAT Leave, and others.
- NextGen HR-to-Pay is a multi-phased initiative to make an informed recommendation to replace the current Phoenix and HR management systems across all departments. It is led by SSC and TBS. DND will participate in the technical working group.

Discussion:

- Ms. Lalonde offered to meet with bargaining agents bilaterally to take a deep dive into compensation at their convenience.
- Ms. Winger found slide 2 informative and asked that a similar slide be prepared outlining the roles and responsibilities of the pay pods (e.g. what they work on, number of clients, etc).
- Ms. Lalonde confirmed that the backlog had decreased only 4% given the need to implement collective agreements. This meant that the team had to take employees away from the backlog.
- Ms. Winger expressed disappointment that DND was considering dropping timeliness targets from 90 % to 80%. This is employee's pay; she believes it should be 100%.
- Ms. Lalonde responded that this change would reflect the operational nature of the department where there are last minute transactional staffing decisions. It is worth noting that DND's timeliness results are on par with non-operational departments, a reflection of the efforts of all involved. The target has not yet been changed to 80%, however it is a more realistic target.
- Ms. Winger commented that there were some bad staffing habits noted in fire halls where shift-by-shift actings are used rather than long term actings. Despite this, Ms. Winger noted that the HR requests submitted by Firefighter (FR) managers in a timely manner during the 1 April to 18 August 2021 period increased from 57% to 79%. She asked if this trend would continue.
- Ms. Lalonde commented that, as hard as all parties push, 100% is not likely to be achieved as there will always be managers falling behind, on leave, etc.
- Ms. Winger requested that common timeframes be used in UMCC presentations, as varying presentation formats make quarterly comparisons difficult.
- Ms. Winger raised the issue of newly retired public servants experiencing problems obtaining final and severance pays. Ms. Winger inquired as to how the department can communicate with these individuals.
- Ms. Lalonde remarked that the HR Connect portal remains available to these individuals. The HR GO app is also available on mobile devices and any information that is available internally is published on the HR GO app. Ms. Winger recommended that the department think about how it communicates with past employees who might have questions, as not all will use the app. Ms. Winger committed to following up with the Association of Public Service Retirees.
- Mr. Yves Fournier noted that a member recently contacted the Pension Centre and was told there would be a two year delay for his severance pay. Mr. Rogers has confirmed similar stories from members related to the payout of severance and annual leave.

Action Item:

- DGCCB will provide a report on time to process annual leave and severance pay upon retirement to the next UMCC HR Sub.
- DGCCB will provide a breakdown of responsibilities of the pay pods.

Item 3c: Classification Update

Supporting Documents: Classification Update, PowerPoint

Summary:

- Ms. Barbara Williams, Director General, Human Resources Operations (DGHRO) and Ms. Caroline Aiken, Manager, Directorate Civilian Classification and Organization (DCCO), provided an update on classification activities, including vacancy management, progress on standardized job descriptions (SJD), as well as mapping activities for Computer Systems (CS), Program Administration (PA), Financial Management (FI) groups, and classification grievances.
- Vacancy management is currently at 11%. Overall, SJD utilization rate at DND is 66% (+4% since May 2021). Establishment clean-up is ongoing.
- Next week, employees in the CS group will receive advance personal notice of the upcoming conversion of CS group to IT group scheduled for December 2021. CS grievances and staffing is being prioritized to ensure that there are no issues for the employees.
- Other conversion readiness work is tracking well.

Discussion:

- Ms. Winger noted that there are a number of outstanding UNDE grievances that were heard some time ago and the union is still awaiting response.
- Mr. Tom Zaharopoulos, Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC), expressed concern over the CS conversion. He believes it will cause stress and confusion and anticipates problems once the notices are delivered in September.
- Ms. Williams offered to meet separately with Mr. Zaharopoulos to discuss his concerns.

Action Item:

- DCLR will follow up with UNDE on the outstanding grievances.
- DGHRO to meet with Mr. Zaharopoulos to discuss CS conversion.

Item 4: Mandatory Vaccines for Public Service Employees

Supporting Documents: FEDERAL VACCINATION POLICY, PowerPoint

Summary:

- Mr. Srivastava, Director General Human Resources Strategic Directions (DGHRSD), provided an overview of the current context for a mandatory vaccine policy.
- The Government of Canada announced its intent to require vaccination for the federal public service on 13 August 2021. OCHRO is currently leading the policy development piece. No final decision will be made until after the election, but at this time TBS is establishing the parameters of the proposed policy.

Discussion:

- Mr. Dany Richard, Association of Canadian Financial Officers (ACFO), remarked that the topic has raised lots of questions from members. The proposed policy will depend on which government is in place.
- Mr. Bernard Talbot, Canadian Merchant Service Guild (CMSG), noted that the unions were recently having a discussion with the TBS on the topic as well. There will be one policy for all of the federal government.

- Ms. Winger remarked that there is a need for conversation with managers to ensure that they are not implementing unit level policies.
- Mr. Des Rogers advised that unions have recommended to the TBS that the public service needs a strong national policy, not something that is downloaded to departments.
- Mr. Milton Dyck, Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), Agricultural Union, believes that the September implementation date for the new policy is likely not feasible. There may even be a need for legislation to authorize the TBS to act.
- Ms. Desmartis commented that the TBS is working hard to prepare for whatever outcome arrives.

Item 5: Re-opening Strategy

Supporting Documents: SUMMER D&G INFORMATION SESSIONS: *Pilot Results PowerPoint*, SUMMER D&G INFORMATION SESSION PILOT Evaluation of Results

Summary:

- Mr. Srivastava thanked members of the Committee for participating in the ad hoc meeting of the UMCC HR Sub-Committee on 12 August 2021. This feedback helped to recalibrate and refine content and scenarios included in the information sessions including the emphasis on the need for flexibility and compassion.
- Subsequent to the UMCC HR Sub meeting, pilot sessions were held in Borden and Gagetown with additional feedback collected at these locations. Formal rollout begins the week of 13 September 2021.

Discussion:

- Ms. Winger stated that she has heard that all employees will be expected to return to work. Managers may not be understanding the flexibility piece. Mr. Zaharopoulos stated that across Canada, military members are pushing to have employees back on site. He added that DND could potentially lose some employees if they are forced back into the office while other departments are being more accommodating.
- Mr. Richard noted that OCHRO's position has not changed and that employees should work from home if they are able to complete their workload. In a post-pandemic world that may change.
- Ms. Winger emphasized that it is common for her members to be told to return to work.
- Mr. Dyck noted that there is pressure on public servants to return to work. He also stated that teachers who are doing remote classes are being asked to come in to the office.
- Mr. Peter Hooley, Director General Workplace Management (DGWM), requested that the Union Leaders please contact DCLR and DGWM should specific cases arise, they will be available to intervene.
- Mr. Rogers suggested that ADM(HR-Civ) reach out to managers who have been working throughout the pandemic, like those in Esquimalt. There have been lots of lessons learned and a lot of collaboration and consultation between Labour Relations and management.
- Mr. Srivastava added that this is good feedback and will inform messaging at the sessions.

Action Item:

- DGHRS will share the updated Summer Direction and Guidance information session package with UMCC members.

Item 6: Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention

Supporting Documents: Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Implementation Update, PowerPoint

Summary:

- Ms. Véronique Lavallée, Senior Manager, Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention, Directorate of Total Health Management (DTHM), provided an update on the Harassment and Violence Prevention program since the new Regulations came into force 1 January 2021, including work on a new Defence Administrative Orders and Directives (DAOD), an overview of mandatory training for employees and managers, new roles for National Health and Safety Policy Committee (NHSPC), mandated timelines to resolve occurrences, stronger privacy protections and more rights afforded to the principal party.

Discussion:

- Ms. Winger requested a one-on-one meeting to discuss the program more fully.
- Mr. Hooey advised that the team would be happy to meet with her and added that there is still a lot of work to be done to establish a new program.
- Mr. Dyck inquired how employees would obtain damages if it is not part of the Harassment and Violence Prevention program. Ms. Lavallee explained that when an employee approaches the Harassment and Violence Prevention team, the team will subsequently contact the Office of Disability Management (ODM) in order to obtain the necessary support. The WHVP team will also make the necessary contacts to initiate any appropriate parallel processes.
- Ms. Jennifer Bordeleau, Director Civilian Labour Relations (DCLR), commented that Labour Relations is engaged and encourages employees to file all forms of recourse to protect timelines. LR will then work with the representatives to place appropriate files in abeyance while a way forward is sought.

Action Item

- DTHM will meet with UNDE to discuss the WHVP program.

Item 7: DGWM Update

Supporting Documents: No supporting documents

Summary:

- Ms. Bordeleau provided an update on the Labour Relations final level grievance backlog.
- The initial final level backlog was 199 cases with 31 priority files for a total of 230 cases. 59% of the backlog files have been completed. 28/31 or 90% of priority files have been completed.

Item 8: Roundtable

Supporting Documents: No supporting documents

Discussion:

- Mr. Rogers invited everyone to take a moment of silence for Mr. Glenn Maxwell who passed away over the summer.
- Mr. Dyck and others wished Mr. Richard Cashin well and thanked him for his work with the UMCC and OSH.
- Ms. Winger noted that there were a few outstanding issues left by the former ADM(HR-Civ) that she is hoping to work with Ms. Desmartis to resolve. DGHRO will assist.
- Ms. Nicole Schaaf, Manager, Directorate Total Health Management, informed participants that the Return to Work (RTW) program has transitioned from the Vice-Chief of Defence Staff (VCDS) D Safe G to ADM(HR-Civ)'s Office of Disability Management effective 15 September 2021. This will also include Quebec.

Action Item:

- DTHM communications on the migration of RTW to ODM will be shared with the committee.

Item 9: Closing Remarks

Summary:

- Mr. Rogers thanked everyone for a great meeting, wished Richard Cashin well with all the future holds for him and welcomed Ms. Desmartis to the table.
- Ms. Desmartis offered her condolences on Mr. Glenn Maxwell's passing, wished Mr. Cashin well and recognized the collegial, open dialogue around the table.
- She noted that the next UMCC HR Sub Committee meeting would be held 29 November 2021 followed by the National UMCC on 6 December 2021.

Record of Decision approved by:

DESMARTIS, ISABELLE 103
 Digitally signed by DESMARTIS, ISABELLE 103
 Date: 2021.11.10 11:58:45 -05'00'

Isabelle Desmartis
 ADM(HR-Civ)
 Co-Chair

Des Rogers
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