

RECORD OF DISCUSSION

Union Management Consultation Committee –
Human Resources Sub-Committee (UMCC HR Sub)

27 February 2023, 1300hrs to 1530hrs

Microsoft Teams or Pearkes Conference Room B (13ST)

Agenda				
Item	Subject		OPI	
1.	Opening Remarks		Co-Chairs	
2.	Acceptance of Previous Minutes, Agenda & Previous Business		Co-Chairs	
3.	Update on the Hybrid Work Model		DGHRSD & DGHRO	
4.	BATUS Update		DGHRO	
5.	L2 Updates		Level 2s	
6.	Update on Arbour Report		Asst CMP	
7.	Round Table		All	
8.	Closing Remarks		Co-Chairs	
Membership				
Co-Chairs		Replacement	In Person	Virtual
ADM(HR-Civ)	Isabelle Desmartis			X
FGDTLC(W)	Des Rogers		X	
Members				
ACFO	Dany Richard		X	
	Vivian Gates			X
CAPE	Julie Jobin			X
CFPA	Justin Miller			X
CMCFA	Sylvain Leblanc		X	
CMSG	Bernard Talbot			X
FGDCA	Wanda Boudreau		X	
FGDTLC(W)	Kevin Walsh			X
FGDTLC(E)	Yves Fournier		X	
	Fred Hutchison			
IBEW	Paul Cameron			X
	Meaghan Olmstead			
PIPSC	Tom Zaharopoulos		X	
	Peter Jozsa		X	
PSAC (Agricultural Component)	Milton Dyck			X
UNDE	June Winger		X	
	Paul Jones		X	
ADM(HR-Civ), DGCCB	Joanne Lalonde			X
ADM(HR-Civ), DGHRO	Barbara Williams			X
ADM(HR-Civ), DGHRSD	Beth Champoux			X
ADM(HR-Civ), DGWM	Jennifer Bordeleau		X	
Presenters				
Asst CMP	Col Patrick Kelly			X
Observers				

DGWM, DCLR	Louise Boudreau			X
DGWM, DLRO	Kelly Walsh		X	
DGWM, DSP	Shelley Taylor		X	
DGWM, DTHM	François Bariteau			X
DGWD, DWPS	Sharon Cardiff-Pilgrim		X	
ADMO(HR-Civ)	Charlaine Mallette			X
ADM(HR-Civ), DGWM(O)	Amanda Power		X	
Resources				
DGWM, DCLR	Julie MacDonald		X	

Record of Discussion

Item 1: Opening Remarks

Summary:

- Ms. Isabelle Desmartis, Assistant Deputy Minister (Human Resources – Civilian) (ADM(HR-Civ)), welcomed all participants to the meeting and expressed her apologies for not being able to attend in-person.
- Mr. Des Rogers, Federal Government Dockyard Trades & Labour Council (West) (FGDTLC(W)), welcomed participants to the meeting and thanked those attending both in-person and virtually.

Item 2: Acceptance of Previous Minutes, Agenda & Previous Business

Supporting Documents: UMCC HR-Sub Record of Discussion – 5 December 2022, Agenda, Action Item Matrix

Summary:

- Mr. Rogers, FGDTLC(W), presented the previous meeting minutes as well as the present-day agenda.
- Ms. Desmartis, ADM(HR-Civ), noted most action items from the previous meetings were completed, with one ongoing. The minutes, agenda, and action item matrix were accepted.

Item 3: Update on the Hybrid Work Model

Supporting Documents: PowerPoint – Update on the Hybrid Work Model

Action Items: Issue Specific Meeting with DGWM, FGDTLC(E), FGDCA & FGDTLC(W), Issue Specific Meeting with DGHRO & PIPSC

Summary:

- Ms. Beth Champoux, Director General Human Resources Strategic Directions (DGHRSD), and Ms. Barbara Williams, Director General Human Resources Operations (DGHRO), presented the Update on the Hybrid Work Model.
- Ms. Champoux noted the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada (TBS) outlined an exception process for employees returning to the office in December 2022, and indicated the present focus is ensuring the workplace is ready for the return of employees. In February 2023, ADM(HR-Civ) will be standing up the Compliance and Coherence Committee (CCC) to review exception requests.

- Ms. Williams provided an overview of the exceptions process, beginning by acknowledging the Department of National Defence (DND) had made excellent progress in returning employees to the office.
- Ms. Williams shared the CCC will be chaired by Ms. Desmartis and will track all exceptions, watch for trends, and ensure consistency. She noted that the exception application form would be available for employees to complete soon.
- Ms. Bordeleau, DGWM, addressed Duty to Accommodate (DTA) and myWorkArrangements (mWA) noting her team had received approximately 118 medical-related DTA requests with Labour Relations and the Office of Disability Management (ODM) working through requests as quickly as possible. Ms. Bordeleau reiterated the necessity for all employees to complete an mWA form, as it will provide much needed data for reporting back to TBS.
- Ms. Champoux concluded by noting that notwithstanding the return to office, many issues in the National Capital Region (NCR) had been resolved including parking at NDHQ Carling. She noted many services are re-opening as employees return, and to ascertain health and safety there will continue to be COVID-19 test kits available and that masking, while not required, is encouraged.
- Mr. Yves Fournier, Federal Government Dockyard and Trades Labour Council (East) (FGDTLC(E)), asked if it would be possible to submit a hard copy bulk request for his members who do not have access to computers. Ms. Bordeleau noted she would connect with Mr. Fournier, Ms. Wanda Boudreau, Federal Government Dockyard Chargehands Association (FGDCA), and Mr. Rogers, FGDTLC(W), to determine a solution for their members.
- Ms. June Winger, Union of National Defence Employees (UNDE), asked if there will continue to be a lottery for parking spaces at NDHQ Carling. Ms. Champoux noted parking permits will be distributed on a first come first serve basis without any spaces being set aside. She noted parking permits were being oversold, mitigating any issues with availability.
- Ms. Winger asked if data collected from the mWA will be shared with the unions. Ms. Bordeleau confirmed the data will be shared, but currently the department only has a response rate of 25%.
- Ms. Winger inquired if there was a recourse mechanism for those employee's whose exception requests are denied whereby Ms. Bordeleau confirmed the grievance process would be the appropriate mechanism. Ms. Williams noted if they created a recourse mechanism aside from the grievances, it would create another layer to the approval process. Ms. Williams reminded members that ADM(HR-Civ) would be reviewing both exceptions as well as the data, and therefore will be able to identify any anomalies. Ms. Desmartis added approximately 50% of employees were already reporting to the workplace prior to the release of this policy, and that DND is very different operationally from other departments.
- Mr. Dany Richard, Association of Canadian Financial Officers (ACFO), asked how the government will measure "value added for Canadians" as his members have been working remotely since the beginning of COVID-19 and want to continue. He noted it is difficult to understand the difference between an employee who moved 125 km away from the workplace who were eligible to now work remotely but someone who stayed in their residence does not get this exception. Ms. Williams responded there were no criteria for these exceptions yet.

- Ms. Vivian Gates, ACFO, inquired about the special ergonomic equipment employees have at home, and whether they can keep their equipment at home as well as be outfitted with the proper equipment in office. Ms. Williams commented it is the Employer's responsibility to ensure employees are equipped in the workplace. She noted Assistant Deputy Minister (Infrastructure and Environment) (ADM(IE)) is working to acquire more ergonomic chairs and sit/stand desks to ensure access department wide. Ms. Gates noted there had been managers who advised their employees they will need to be in the office full-time to access their ergonomic equipment as part of their accommodation measures which could be construed as discriminatory under the Duty to Accommodate. Mr. Tom Zaharopoulos, Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC), echoed Ms. Gates' concern, as he has heard managers have only been letting employees have one set of ergonomic equipment, whereby the employee chooses where it will stay permanently. Ms. Bordeleau clarified that the Employer still has a duty to accommodate for medical reasons. Ms. Desmartis added there is an existing policy in place regarding equipment.
- Mr. Zaharopoulos raised that his members have been told by management they are to return to the office due to operational requirements of their IT environment whereby employees have begun to source job opportunities outside of National Defence. He continued a new job standard has been implemented, and that the reporting structure creates difficulty for employees to be promoted. Ms. Bordeleau stated she would set up a standalone meeting with Mr. Zaharopoulos and Ms. Williams to discuss.
- Mr. Paul Jones, UNDE, raised his concern with managers implementing the use of the ergonomic equipment in the workplace to force employees back into the office, and inquired how this would be resolved. Ms. Bordeleau advised union representatives need to bring these individual scenarios to her team's attention, and employees would need to use the grievance process as recourse. Ms. Williams reiterated the importance for these incidents to be tracked and reported. Ms. Champoux noted there is an intent to routinely review the data received from mWA submissions to ensure implementation is done equitably department wide.
- Ms. Julie Jobin, Canadian Association of Professional Employees (CAPE), asked if managers were aware that when an employee submits an exception request, it is necessary to wait to implement any measures until a decision has been made. Ms. Bordeleau confirmed this is the established process, and messaging will reinforce this to managers.

Item 4: BATUS Update

Supporting Documents: PowerPoint – BATUS Update

- Ms. Williams, DGHRO, began by reiterating the department is acutely aware of the situation occurring at CFB Suffield with British Army Training Unit Suffield (BATUS). She provided an overview of BATUS, noting the unit employs many public service employees. Ms. Williams noted CFB Suffield operates on a shared costing model with the United Kingdom (UK). She indicated that the UK had began pulling back before the pandemic, however, continues to meet their financial responsibilities. Ms. Williams explained the continuity of employment and meaningful work for employees is a key concern, and that ADM(HR-Civ) continues to look at mitigation strategies.
- Mr. Jones, UNDE, shared those employees who are Non-Public Funded (NPF) have been starting WFA trying to find positions on the Canadian side of BATUS. Ms. Williams

explained NPF is a different category which ADM(HR-Civ) does not have oversight on. Ms. Williams requested to meet with Mr. Jones to get more information.

- Ms. Winger, UNDE, requested clarification on the definition of lack of meaningful work. Ms. Williams noted this could involve employees who are trained to do mechanical work on vehicles who are instead performing custodial work.
- Ms. Winger inquired about the increased training opportunities for current employees mentioned in a Town Hall at CFB Suffield. Ms. Williams clarified a plan had not been put in place yet for training, but the plan could involve upskilling employees to be able to take on other positions at BATUS.

Item 5: L2 Reports

Supporting Documents: N/A

Summary:

- Ms. Champoux, DGHRSD, explained her focus is return to the workplace for employees, and ensuring we have the right supports in place. She outlined her team is undertaking a financial review to ensure adequate support for L1s as part of the business planning process.
- Ms. Williams, DGHRD, provided an update on staffing noting there has been a marked increase in support to clients and a decrease in wait times, which has led to an overall reduction of the time to staff process. Ms. Williams shared a list of improvements in her area including the reduction of Second Language Evaluation (SLE) wait times by almost 50%, a forecasted completion of 97% of the 6,600 projected files for this fiscal year, and an increase in student hiring with the department reaching 81% of its goal. She noted DND's Civilian Employment Systems review is in the process of conducting group consultation with various stakeholders and employee groups, including unions. Ms. Williams noted her team continued to work on 17 job content grievances and 22 classification grievances, and noted regular consultations are being held with the union representatives to schedule hearings. She concluded by explaining the collaboration between classification and Labour Relations to develop a new process which will apply to Level 3 (L3) grievances to reduce roadblocks.
- Ms. Bordeleau, DGWM, provided an update for Director General Civilian Compensation and Benefits (DGCCB), noting there was a Phoenix Pay System backlog reduction of 7%, 83% overall timeliness which was a 16% increase since Q2, and approximately 1,600 payments made in compensatory cash out. She noted there had been an increase of 300 acting requests within the Firefighter (FR) group with 92% closed. In the Heat Plant (HP) group, 71 acting requests were submitted with 100% closed. Ms. Bordeleau concluded by noting there have been approximately 1,500 one-on-one consultations with employees with the top three queries relating to maternity/paternity leave, retirement, and overpayments.
- Ms. Bordeleau provided an update for Director General Workforce Development (DGWD), noting the Self-Identification Program will be launched soon, and will be able to provide a more granular analysis of data. She noted the biggest issue with this release is attempting to avoid survey fatigue, ensuring it is properly filled out.
- Ms. Kelly Walsh, Director Labour Relations Operations (DLRO), updated that a grievance reconciliation for Phoenix Pay had begun to address the backlog. She commented on a report which provided an overview of the grievances, and requested feedback on the report to ensure it served the unions' needs.
- Mr. François Bariteau, Director Total Health Management (DTHM), provided an overview on the Bell Let's Talk event held at NDHQ Carling on January 25, 2023, attended in person by approximately 100 attendees and 3,000 viewers via live stream.

- Mr. Bernard Talbot, Canadian Merchant Service Guild (CMSG), commented his appreciation of DND addressing Phoenix issues, as other departments have been completely hands off.
- Ms. Winger, UNDE, sought clarification on how the department was investing in classification. Ms. Williams explained they have increased the SWE for the classification group whereby it is looking to hire people into entry level positions and train them so they can be promoted within the department and retained. Ms. Desmartis, ADM(HR-Civ), noted within Envision 2022 the first pillar is to take care of the ADM(HR-Civ) workforce, including improving morale and keeping a focus on people.

Item 6: Update on the Arbour Report

Supporting Documents: N/A

Summary:

- Colonel (Col) Patrick Kelly, Special Advisor, Commander Chief Military Personnel (Comd CMP) noted 22 of the 48 recommendations contained within the Arbour Report are being led by CMP. He highlighted that addressing those recommendations remain critical to supporting a future foundation in the CAF, including the need for change where necessary.
- Col Kelly noted concurrent to the present-day meeting, the Minister of National Defence (MND) was being briefed on the proposed Terms of Reference and options for empanelment of a board. He indicated CMP recognizes the importance and value of consultation in this process and assured that consultation with affected unions would form part of any analysis irrespective of the final form of the panel and external experts.
- Dr. Sylvain Leblanc, Canadian Military Colleges Faculty Association (CMCFA), expressed his concern with the Town Hall which had taken place at the college in Kingston. He noted the message was not well received by his members, as it mentioned there would be a change to the undergraduate program but not in reference to culture change. Dr. Leblanc also shared his members' frustration that those presenting did not understand the Defence Wide Area Network (DWAN) and Defence 365 (D365) are not the primary systems used by the university. He noted those running the meeting placed the blame on the professors for not ensuring people knew how to use these systems instead of their day-to-day system.
- Col Kelly acknowledged good communication is a key piece to having this roll out smoothly, and that he would relay this message to ensure there was a change going forward.
- Mr. Milton Dyck, Public Service Alliance of Canada (Agricultural Component) (PSAC Agricultural Component) explained he represented a portion of the second language teachers at the college and would like to be updated on the progress to convey messages to his members. Col Kelly assured the committee that he would keep everyone apprised as they moved forward.

Item 7: Round Table

Supporting Documents: N/A

Action Item: Issue Specific Meeting with DGWM & FGDTLC(E), Issue Specific Meeting with DGWM, PSAC (Agricultural Component) & CMCFA

Summary:

- Dr. Leblanc, CMCFA, expressed his appreciation towards Ms. Bordeleau, DGWM, and Ms. Lalonde, DGCCB, and their ability to help with his members' pay issues. Mr. Jones, UNDE,

echoed Dr. Leblanc's appreciation as his members have also had resolutions on issues with pay.

- Mr. Fournier, FGDTLC(E), inquired if there would be an update to the COVID-19 directive with respect to days of sick leave. Ms. Bordeleau responded she would verify with Mr. Jason Park, Director Safety Group (D Safe G) as the guidance was received from the Office of the Chief Human Resources Office (OCHRO). Mr. Fournier also requested if he could have a follow-up meeting with Ms. Bordeleau regarding the Office of Disability Management (ODM) in Halifax.
- Mr. Dyck, PSAC Agricultural Component, asked for clarification on academic freedom for his members regarding second language training and confirmation regarding whether his members have protection against harassment charges. Mr. Dyck also inquired about an update on where and when outsourcing for second language training might occur. Dr. Leblanc offered to update Mr. Dyck regarding academic freedom, and the issues his members might be facing. Ms. Bordeleau also noted she could provide some guidance as there had been discussion in reference a similar situation with Labour Relations Officers within ADM(HR-Civ).

Item 8: Closing Remarks

Supporting Documents: N/A

Summary:

- Ms. Desmartis, ADM(HR-Civ), thanked members for the open and frank discussion and looked forward to attending in-person for the next meeting.
- Mr. Rogers, FGDTLC(W), thanked members for a great meeting.

Record of Discussion Approved By / Compte-rendu des discussions approuvé par:

Isabelle Desmartis
ADM(HR-Civ) / SMA(RH-Civ)
Co-Chair / Coprésidente

Des Rogers
FGDTLC(W) / ACECMGF(O)
Co-Chair / Copräsident