

Action Memo

To: Systems Officers, Ontario Public Service
From: Leah Casselman, President
CC: OPSEU CERC members: Marg Simmons, Steve Nield,
Kathleen Demareski, Sandra Noad
OPSEU Executive Board
Date: April 25, 2003
Re: Better Jobs in the OPS: protecting Systems Officers' work

Your union is fighting to get your employer to bring information technology positions that are filled by fee-for-service contractors and consultants back into the bargaining unit.

You know the story better than anyone. The employer hives off key information technology projects to fee-for-service consultants. The employer may claim it's a time-limited project, but it is really your work that is going out the door. The employer routinely contracts out your work to private-sector information technology firms. In many of these cases the employer ignores Appendix 18 – the language in your collective agreement that governs the transfer of your jobs to the private sector.

Even the Provincial Auditor agreed that this practice is a cause for concern. In November 2002, the Auditor reported that the province spent \$662 million for fee-for-service consultants, a huge jump from \$271 million in 1998.

It's a mess. Some locals have filed grievances about these abusive practices by the employer. Given the importance of stopping these abuses and bringing these jobs into the OPS where they belong, OPSEU has filed a major policy grievance. Hearings start at the Grievance Settlement Board on April 29 and will continue throughout May 2003.

You may have heard about the **Better Jobs** campaign from your local president or steward. The objective of this campaign is to convert these consultant and temporary agency positions into full-time permanent positions and to have these positions posted. It simply isn't fair that your work is going out the door to consultants and you don't have access to these positions or this work. The Better Jobs campaign is to support the OPSEU policy grievance by finding examples from every OPS workplace where the employer is violating the collective agreement.

This is where you come in. We need more proof than we already have. You can play a critical role in gathering the evidence we will use at the Grievance Settlement Board. Every

local president and steward is being asked to scan the workplaces in their local to identify jobs that are being done by fee-for-service consultants. **Please contact your steward and/or your local president. Provide them with your examples.**

For further information check out the OPS bulletin *FRONTlines* on the OPSEU website at www.opseu.org/ops/frontlines2apr0303.htm. The April 3 issue has all of the details and the report back form. While the April 3, 2003 edition says there is a deadline of April 25 for locals to get information into OPSEU head office, the examples will continue to be collected throughout May.

We need your examples now! If you have already provided examples to your local president or stewards, thank you for your assistance and your hard work.

This campaign is to get what we bargained for – permanent jobs in the OPS. Enforcing your collective agreement requires determination, action and perseverance. If we don't demand our rights to these full-time permanent positions, the employer will simply assume everything is just fine, continue to violate your contract, and your jobs will continue to disappear.

Keep an eye out for future issues of *FRONTlines*. This is where you will find regular up-dates about the grievance.

In addition to contacting your local president or steward or your OPSEU staff rep, you can get answers to specific questions from Laurie Chapman at OPSEU 1-800-268-7376 ext. 704.

In solidarity,



Leah Casselman, President

**Better
JOBS
in the OPS**

A Campaign to Get What We Bargained for