

We have a tentative collective agreement

Dear sisters and brothers:

Last night, your OPSEU bargaining team reached a tentative agreement in contract talks with MPAC. We are unanimously recommending that you vote to ratify this new contract.

This three-year contract includes improvements to job security, and better wages. These were the top two priorities set by members at our demand-setting meeting held Nov. 16, 2002.

When negotiations began, MPAC was preparing to surplus 158 people from the bargaining unit under the Futures program. The new contract maximizes the use of attrition, bumping, and the posting of vacancies. As a result, only about 30 people will ultimately be out of a job under Futures.

Employees declared surplus will receive a surplus notice on or about the tenth working day after ratification, and can then exercise their collective agreement rights. Through a letter of understanding, we've negotiated a softer landing for those who are laid off at the end of the process.

- Any employee who is laid off under Futures will receive severance pay equal to four months' pay (this does not apply to people who take the Factor 80 early retirement option – see below).
- Employees surplused under Futures may be reimbursed for up to \$2,000 to pay for educational courses or transition support

Ratification meetings/votes will be held Feb. 6 – watch for meeting details.

Download the full text of the tentative agreement at <http://www.opseu.org/bps/opac/main.htm>.

services to help them find a job elsewhere.

Other highlights of the agreement include:

- Wage increases of 3 per cent in each year of the contract, effective Jan. 1, 2003;
- A new top step in the pay grid for the PA2 (property inspector) classification, effective Jan. 1, 2004. The additional step will add 3.08 per cent to the wages of those at the top of the range.
- The wages of any employee who bumps into a lower-paying classification as a result of Futures will be “red-circled” at his or her Jan. 1, 2003 rate of pay for 12 months.
- Any employee wishing to take the Factor 80 early retirement option may elect to

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receive a surplus notice and retire. **You must tell the employer that you want to do this within 10 calendar days of the surplus notices going out.**

- The Voluntary Exit Option (VEO) remains in effect only until the date of ratification. There are fewer than 50 spots available. **If you want to take the VEO, you must do so now.**
- There are no benefit takeaways or improvements in the tentative agreement.

As part of the normal give-and-take of bargaining, your team agreed to drop certain policy grievances against MPAC. This does not affect any individual grievance. Those remain in effect and will proceed.

MPAC has dropped its lawsuit against OPSEU regarding the web site at www.mpacrestructuring.ca. In return, OPSEU will remove MPAC documents (under the heading, "What MPAC is saying about Futures") from the site. The union also agreed not to use the MPAC logo (it was dropped from the site in September).

Full details of the tentative agreement are available in .pdf form on the web at <http://www.opseu.org/bps/opac/main.htm>.

Of course, this contract is not binding until the MPAC Board and you, the members, ratify it.

OPSEU ratification meetings and votes will be held on Thursday, Feb. 6, 2003. Details of the meetings will be available as soon as they are set up. Bargaining team members will travel to as many locations as possible to explain the deal and the rationale behind the decisions made.

There can be no doubt whatsoever that this collective agreement is a result of the excellent bargaining campaign run by the union, and union members, over the last six months. The bargaining team would like to say a big thank you to all members who participated in the municipal lobby campaign. Combined with things like our web site at www.mpacrestructuring.ca, the article by Ed Faulknor and Bill Henry in *Municipal World* magazine, and your support in the workplace, these efforts made all the difference. Thank you very much for your support.

In solidarity,

Your bargaining team:

Jennifer Reid (chair)
Tina Faibish (vice-chair)
Ivan Herrington
Jamie Stata
Peter Thompson

Keep in touch!

To keep in touch with your OPSEU bargaining team, contact the member responsible for communication with your office (note changes). For confidentiality, please use our home e-mail addresses, listed below:

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