



SEFPO

FRONT *lines*

Information for OPSEU members in the Ontario Public Service • October 12, 2006

Mediator's report on classification grievances expected by year end

Committee tackles 6,000 grievances

A mediator's report on the classification grievances of OPSEU members in the OPS should be ready by the end of 2006, union members on the Joint System Subcommittee (JSSC) say.

In the last round of contract talks, the union and the employer agreed to give a mediator one year to work with the parties to help clear up close to 6,000 classification grievances, most of them from several years ago. The JSSC got to work on the backlog last November.

"We are on a tight timeline, but we are confident that we can have all the work done by the end of the year," says Moira Cowan, one of two OPSEU members working full-time on the backlog project. "At that time all OPSEU members should know the outcome of their grievance."

The mediator has imposed a blackout on all communication regarding individual grievances until the final report is ready.

"We can't comment or

provide any details at all on individual grievances," said Cowan. "All I can say is that the union members on the JSSC have been making presentations outlining the merits of grievances to the employer for close to a year."

Mediation is not arbitration, Cowan stressed.

"Mediation is a huge step up from no mediation, but it is not the same as having an arbitrator who is empowered to make a legal ruling," she said. "Under the *Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act*, it is still against

the law for any OPS classification grievance to go to arbitration.

"When this phase is over, it is possible that we will have grievances that will be referred to the Job Evaluation Project."

(The Job Evaluation Project is a joint union-employer process to overhaul the entire job classification system before the next round of contract bargaining starts in 2008. For more information, see <http://www.opseu.org/ops/jobevaluation.htm>.)

Survey sets stage for OPS Divisionals

Don't delete that e-mail!

The OPS Divisional meetings are coming soon. On Nov. 25-26, some 500 delegates, observers, alternates and Executive Board Members will meet in Toronto. On the agenda:

- What's happening to work in the OPS, and how the union is responding;

- The election of Ministry Enforcement and Renewal Committees (MERC) for the next two years; and
- Laying the groundwork for the next round of OPS bargaining in 2008.

To help kickstart the

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Survey

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conversation about bargaining, the Central Enforcement and Renewal Committee is asking OPSEU leaders in the OPS to conduct a short online survey. The secure, confidential survey will be e-mailed to:

- all local presidents with members in the OPS;
- all MERC members;
- all members of the 2004-05 bargaining teams;

- all 2004-05 member mobilizers;
- all OPSEU Executive Board Members; and
- all OPSEU staff involved in the 2004-05 round of negotiations.

E-mail notification, with a link to the survey, will be coming from OPSEU Communications in the next day or two.

If you are on the list above, but do not receive an e-mail, please contact Cindy Forsyth, OPSEU Job Security Unit, at 1-800-268-7376 ext. 8762.
