

MEMORANDUM

OPSEU



SEFPO

Syndicat des Employé-e-s  
de la Fonction Publique  
de l'Ontario

**TO:** All Presidents with members in the Ministry of Consumer and Business Services  
All Stewards in the Ministry of Consumer and Business Services

**FROM:** Roy Storey, OPS Sector Supervisor

**DATE:** December 2, 2003

**SUBJECT:** **Ministry of Consumer and Business Services  
ERC Minutes – September 12, 2003**

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Attached, for your information, are the minutes of the above captioned meeting.

Please post or otherwise make them available to the members in your workplaces.

Also attached is a MERC referral form which should be used when referring unresolved local issues to the ministry level. The referral should be sent care of the Job Security Unit with all the supporting documentation, (e.g. minutes, correspondence, etc.), with any referrals.

**PLEASE NOTE: THESE MINISTRY MINUTES WERE PREPARED BY THE EMPLOYER.**

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AUTHORIZED FOR DISTRIBUTION:

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/cf  
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**MINUTES**

Ministry of Consumer and Business Services

**MINISTRY EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING (MERC) – OPSEU**

Date: September 12, 2003  
 Time: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
 Location: 34<sup>th</sup> Floor, FASB Boardroom  
 250 Yonge Street

**UNION**

L. Ferguson (Co-chair)  
 A. Gildea  
 J. Catroppa  
 P. Schillemore

**MANAGEMENT**

J. Lee (Co-chair)  
 P. Moore  
 B. Kaya

**HR/LR REPRESENTATIVES**

J. Price (LR Consultant)  
 E. Denike (LR Analyst; Recorder)

**GUESTS**

John Dalglish (RPR)  
 Doug Holder (IFIS)  
 Cassandra Lang (ODA)  
 Richard Steele (ONVIP)

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>DISCUSSION DETAILS</b>	<b>TABLED DATE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
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	The meeting was chaired by Management		
	<p>The agenda was adopted with eleven new items, tabled by the Union.            The Union tabled the following items in advance of the meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. MERC Labour Relations</li> <li>2. ORG Services in the LROs/Private service-providers</li> <li>3. Ontarians with Disabilities Act</li> <li>4. Critical Service Delivery (blackout)</li> <li>5. Teranet (government sale of shares)</li> <li>6. Compressed Work Week</li> </ol>		

	<p>The Union tabled the following (additional) items, at the commencement of the meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Move MERC LR to the first item of discussion</li> <li>2. Org. Chart for MCBS</li> <li>3. RPR policies/procedures re: fraud</li> <li>4. Libraries/GIC pilot project</li> <li>5. Hiring Freeze</li> </ol> <p>The minutes of the February, 2003 meeting were signed by Management and the Union. The Union provided revisions to the May, 2003 minutes.</p>		
<b>FOLLOW-UP ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:</b>			
<b>Ministry Alignment</b>	Ongoing project. The Ministry is beginning to examine the next phase and the possibility of merging the technical support units of the PSSR/Companies branches.	Feb. 20, 2001	Management to provide updates as received.
<b>Unclassified Listing and Position Inventory</b>	The Union requested disclosure of an updated list of unclassified positions. Management noted that individual conversion issues should first be raised at the local level. Management noted that gathering this type of information was difficult due to limited resources. The Union responded that the Employer has a responsibility to convert. Management and the union agreed to continue discussion on how to meet OPSEU's informational needs.	May, 2002	Management and Union to consult prior to next MERC meeting.
<b>Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal</b>	<p>Co-location of functions (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MAH) employees in selected GICs) is proceeding. Offices currently offering the housing function include Whitby, Peterborough, Kingston, Thunder Bay and Kitchener (with Kitchener currently under construction). Windsor is slated to proceed after the start of the 2004 fiscal year.</p> <p>The Union inquired whether GIC employees are covering for MAH employees' lunch periods.</p>	Sept., 2001	<p>Management to provide updates as received.</p> <p>Management will make inquiries on whether MAH</p>

			staff will provide coverage for GIC staff.
<b>Repetitive Strain Injuries</b>	<p>Management reported that the Office Ergonomics Handbook (OHCOW) will be electronically distributed to Managers for posting in each workplace on Sept. 15/03.</p> <p>The parties signed a joint communiqué, which will be distributed to Managers, asking that the Handbook be posted in the workplace and providing the link to <a href="http://www.opseu.org">www.opseu.org</a></p> <p>Both Management and the Union consider this a positive step in promoting health and safety within the Ministry.</p>	May 2002	Remove from Agenda.
<b>SARS</b>	<p>At the May/03 MERC, the Union had indicated that an employee from one of the Ministry's offices was quarantined. Management responded that they had no knowledge of the situation and would look into it. Upon follow-up by Management, it was disclosed to the Union that the employee in question was in the management group, and was not quarantined.</p> <p><b>Protective Measures</b></p> <p>The Union questioned the unavailability of protective materials such as masks and hand sanitizer. Management responded that neither was required during the SARS outbreak.</p> <p>Management advised that the Ministry would continue to follow the advice of the medical community on protective measures/equipment</p> <p>Management reported that there was no increase in the number of employees who had accessed the Employee Assistance Program during the outbreak.</p> <p>The Union requested that employees be reminded of their Employee Assistance Program in the event of future health crises.</p>	May 2003	Nothing to action/off the agenda.

	Management reported that all program areas are required to develop a Business Continuity Plan (under the Emergency Measures Act).		
<b>Job Competition</b>	The Union had previously reported that those candidates who were not successful in obtaining the (OAG 8) Team Rep. Positions in Thunder Bay had not been given adequate and/or timely feedback. Feedback to these candidates has now been confirmed.	May 2003	Nothing to action/off the agenda.
<b>STANDING ITEMS:</b>			
<b>Injury and Illness Management (IIMS)</b>	<p>Management reported that there are no employees currently in Step 3 of the Attendance Program.</p> <p>Management also noted that the revised threshold had been communicated at the Feb/03 MERC.</p> <p>Union expressed concern that the ASP is not implemented consistently, and raised the issue of employees being asked to improve on past calendar years, and that the threshold has been over-extended in this respect.</p> <p>Management replied that monitoring extends for a period of six months following the initial meeting, and stressed the importance of holding this meeting as soon as possible after exceeding the threshold.</p> <p>Management advised that if timelines in the ASP were not adhered to employees could not progress to further stages, and would likely be placed back in Level 1 of the Program.</p> <p>Management reported that 120-130 people were over the threshold.</p>		Management commits to improving ASP reporting in WIN. The Union will report any specific cases to Management for follow-up.
<b>Corporate Projects</b>	<p>Integrated Financial Information System (IFIS)</p> <p>At the May 2003 meeting the Union requested that someone from the IFIS team come and speak about the project. Doug Holder was in attendance at the Sept. 12/03 meeting, and outlined the scope of the</p>		Go-live date of Oct. 1/03. IFIS newsletter distributed to all staff on

	<p>project.</p> <p>IFIS is scheduled to go live on Oct. 1/03 and will replace the current GEAC system for financial processing and management reporting. Some staff will have authority to enter and receive goods into the system. Requisitioning will be conducted online, with invoices going directly to SSB. This will facilitate the movement from a cash-based to an accrual-based accounting system; and will allow for more flexible reporting/recon and more frequent posting. Staff who will be using IFIS are undergoing training, which commenced Sept. 3/03 and which will complete by Oct. 1/03 (approximately 175 staff).</p> <p>Management indicated there would be a three-pronged support system (through the IFIS team, SSB and the Controller).</p> <p>Whitby Integrated Service Counter:</p> <p>At the May/02 meeting, Management reported that the project was cancelled. However the project has since been resumed, and the business case has gone to MMC for the planning phase. (Sept. 11/03). The Union inquired as to what was being integrated. Management responded that the scope of the project has not been fully defined, but funding for the pilot has been approved and Management is now proceeding to the planning phase.</p> <p>Land Registry Office Computers</p> <p>John Dalgliesh, Director (RPR) joined the meeting and spoke to the Teranet/furniture issue, as well as the government sale of Teranet shares (see new items).</p> <p>With regards to Teranet/Furniture issue, and the agreement re: computer replacement with Teranet: the Union noted that some of these computers are still packaged, but not set up (in the Milton LRO).</p>	<p>Sept. 5/03. Management to provide updates as received.</p> <p>Management to invite Melanie Goldhar (Project Director) to attend next MERC.</p> <p>Management will follow-up to determine why the equipment has not been</p>
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	<p>The issue of limited workspace was again raised by the Union. Management indicated that employees' uncomfortable working in the small pods should identify themselves to their Managers. The Union inquired as to what to do if the manager does not address the complaint. Management indicated that if these issues are not resolved at the local level, or through HR, they should be brought to MERC.</p> <p>The Union also inquired about ergonomic issues (i.e. where two people with different heights are sharing one desk). Management also indicated that those issues not resolved at the local level should be brought up to HR, and if still not resolved, then MERC.</p> <p>The Union inquired as to whether the 18 inches has been added to the small pods in Land Registry Offices as already suggested. Management indicated that this was a local issue.</p> <p>The Union inquired about the possibility of obtaining province-wide ergonomic assessments for the LROs and for greater staff involvement in the procurement of furniture and office design.</p> <p>Management responded that it will not commit to a province-wide assessment, but that employees are free to raise these issues with (their) managers, and that the input of staff (regarding issues such as furniture procurement and office design) is requested. Furthermore, Management noted that office designers must do so according to specific job functions, and are governed by government space standards. These standards are developed by the Ontario Realty Corporation and approved by Cabinet. These standards have, in recent years, been reduced, as the government attempts to reduce the amount of space it uses.</p>	<p>set up.</p> <p>Management committed to ensuring some degree of consultation on furniture procurement, etc. with Health and Safety Committees and staff members.</p> <p>Management suggested that the facilities team include the items raised as concerns as 'check-off' items in the future.</p> <p>With reference to the request for ergonomic assessments: Employees with ergonomic issues should raise these issues with their local/ managers.</p>
<p><b>Redeployment</b></p>	<p>Management reported that there is no one on the redeployment list</p>	<p>Management to</p>

	<p>except one employee who is still on LTIP.</p> <p>Management also reported that all Publications Ontario employees who were on the redeployment list have now been placed.</p>		<p>follow-up (with HR) on one additional employee and will report back to the Union accordingly.</p>
<p><b>Ontario Vital Information Project (ONVIP)</b></p>	<p>Guest Speaker: Richard Steele, Project Director, provided a status update on ONVIP. Implementation of Phase I of the project, previously scheduled for Sept/03 has been delayed. A rescheduled date to be announced in a few weeks, with implementation expected later this fall. Reasons for the delay included: software issues, and the effects of the power outage.</p> <p>Phase I of ONVIP is not about reducing staff at the ORG, but aims to ensure integrity and security. Beyond Phase I, Management is not making any commitments re: staffing; as the second phase of the project is still in the conceptual design phase.</p> <p>Training labs have been set up in Thunder Bay (permanent) and Toronto. Feedback from the core service-delivery pilot (July /03) was positive, and allowed for a dry run of implementation training material.</p> <p>The Union noted that staff (particularly those at the ORG) are concerned about the staffing impacts of the process, and inquired about the possibility of a training manual, and increased staff input. The Union also stressed the importance, during the planning/implementation phase of addressing those changes suggested by staff in a timely fashion, in order to avoid the stale dating of such changes.</p> <p>Management indicated that a process manual will be provided to staff for Phase 1.</p>		<p>Management to provide updates as received.</p> <p>Management took the suggestion under advisement.</p>

<p><b>RPR Branch Training Plan</b></p>	<p>Management reported that since the May MERC meeting, 32 additional (full-time) staff had been trained: 5 in the North, 11 in the East and 16 in the West. Management also noted that training is ongoing, as the rollout continues.</p> <p>The Union indicated that the current E-reg training provided by Management, is too short and too soon (i.e. the length of time between training and implementation is too long). Management explained that from the time first regulation is introduced, there are documents coming in and employees have the opportunity to use the training.</p> <p>Management also noted that the training is generally done "just-in-time" for the majority of (affected) offices. For those offices engaged in remote training, the intent is to train staff in remote E-reg signing, so that they may support those LROs providing electronic registration.</p> <p>The Union also raised the issue of retraining (i.e. refresher courses) and inquired as to whether the "blitzing" periods at LROs would be spent doing other offices' E-reg work? If this were the case, would Management consider paying those (affected) employees overtime?</p> <p>Management indicated that in light of expenditure reductions overtime was unlikely.</p>		<p>Management to follow up and provide updates as received.</p>
<p><b>WIN</b></p>	<p>Management reported that a plan is being worked out for conversion to the 8.3 version. This will be a full web based version, and should be faster for those with dial up systems. It will differ slightly in appearance, but there will not be differences in the processes or procedures. Those using Manager's Suite or HR Full Function Modules will only be required to sign in once. The PKI password will provide access to all modules.</p> <p>The rollout was scheduled for the third week of September, but has been delayed indefinitely. The delay is due to the blackout and a need to address technical issues.</p> <p>The Union indicated their concern over members being asked to provide primary/secondary identification, given the interim award on the security measures policy grievance.</p>		<p>Gary Williams to speak at next MERC. Management will disclose new time lines, as they are confirmed.</p>

	<p>Management responded that the identity check was part of the PKI registration, specifically for ORG, and had nothing to do with WIN (contrary to the memo for ORG dated: May 22/03)</p> <p>The Union also raised the issue of WIN/CORPAY system conflicts, and cited deductions for STSP as an example. Union provided information that an employee was on STSP receiving 75% of salary. The salary reduction was not equally applied to each paycheque, and resulted in a number of paycheques at full pay and a paycheque with a considerable deduction.</p>		<p>Management will follow up re: CORPAY issues and will provide updates as received.</p>
<b>Electronic Registration Update</b>	<p>Management reported that to date in 2003, the following LROs have implemented electronic registration:</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> regulation: Russell, Perth, Lanark, Huron and Renfrew.</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> regulation: Niagara South (Welland), Niagara North (St-Catherines) and Windsor.</p> <p>Going forward in 2003, Windsor and Toronto are scheduled to go into the 2<sup>nd</sup> regulation and Kitchener is scheduled to begin 1<sup>st</sup> regulation.</p>		<p>Management to provide updates as received.</p>
<b>NEW ITEMS:</b>			
<b>MERC Labour Relations</b>	<p>The Union indicated that those issues brought to the MERC are not being dealt with in a timely fashion, and cited their frustration over the lack of effective labour-relations at MERC meetings. Members are frustrated with the delay in obtaining results (re: actionable issues), and Union MERC members are frustrated over the delay in obtaining sign-off of minutes.</p>	Sept. 2003	<p>Both Management and the Union commit to improving the practice of labour-relations</p>

