

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** All Presidents with members in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs  
All Stewards in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs

**FROM:** Brian Gould, OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

**DATE:** October 3, 2008

**SUBJECT:** **Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs**  
**ERC Minutes – June 23, 2008**

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

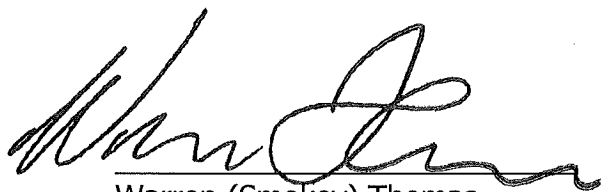
Please post or otherwise make them available to the members in your workplaces.

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.**

AUTHORIZED FOR DISTRIBUTION:

IN SOLIDARITY,



Warren (Smokey) Thomas  
President



Brian Gould  
OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

/gi  
att.

cc: MERC Chairs  
Ministry ERC

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS  
MINISTRY EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE (MERC)**

**June 23, 2008**

**Room 203, 1 Stone Road, Guelph**

For Management:

Karen Chan (Co-Chair)  
Jim Felker

Resources:

Marilyn Everingham  
Bev Rawn

For OPSEU:

Emily Hitchcock (Co-Chair for the Meeting)  
Bob Lowry (Vice-Chair, regrets)  
Andrea Gomirato

Resource:

Stephen George, Job Security Officer

Guests:

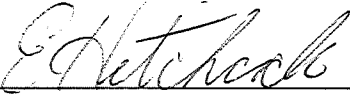
Doug Peebles

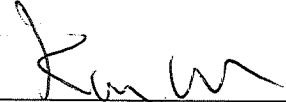
Co-Chair Emily Hitchcock opened the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
<b>Additional Agenda Items</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Personal Security Policy</li> <li>▪ Management noted that a new management representative would be named as Phil Malcolmson, Director of Client Services has moved to a new position.</li> </ul>	
<b><u>STANDING ITEMS:</u></b>		
<b>Ad Hoc Meetings</b>	A list of ad hoc meetings was distributed and reviewed. See attached Appendix. The Union noted that a May 22, 2008 Human Resources Communique regarding HR Transformation had not been distributed to the members. Management agreed to provide copies of the May 22 Communique.	Management to distribute the May 22, 2008 Human Resources Communique.
<b>Surplus Update</b>	Management distributed a report on the status of surplus employees and the amount of remaining notice period for each employee. Currently there are two employees on the surplus list. (both on hiatus)	
<b>Human Resources: A) Transformation</b>	Management provided an update on implementation of the OPS HR Transformation project. Enterprise and Regional Recruitment Centres will be launching June 30, 2008 with the Western Region office located in London and satellite offices in Guelph and St. Catharines. Enterprise Classification Unit; Enterprise Workforce Planning Unit; and Executive Programs and Services are also launching on June 30. Strategic Business Units are expected to be introduced in mid-July as the start of Phase 2 implementation.	

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
<b>B) Vacancy &amp; Unclassified Staff Reports</b>	<p>The Union inquired about the role of existing bargaining unit staff connecting with the new Recruitment Centre. Management replied that OMAFRA's focus for the group is to help managers with the administrative burden of recruitment. Other ministries may take a different approach.</p> <p>The union asked if the change to roles and responsibilities was significant and would they be reflected in the staff job descriptions. Management replied that the nature of any change would be reviewed against the job description.</p> <p>Vacancy and Unclassified Staff Reports were provided at an ad hoc meeting. The Union requested that the reports be shared at least one week prior to each MERC meeting</p>	<p>Management to provide reports at least 1 week in advance of MERC meetings.</p>
<b>Results Based Planning</b>	<p>Management reported that public Provincial Budget documents are available but Results Based Plan documents have yet to be released. More information will be shared when it is available.</p>	<p>Management to provide RbP information when available.</p>
<b>Violence in the Workplace</b>	<p>Management reported that a presentation to senior management regarding implementation of a workplace violence prevention program at OMAFRA had been completed. Further information was required and a subsequent presentation is to be scheduled with senior management.</p> <p>The Union commented that information about Violence in the Workplace programming had come out over a year ago and that some ministries have mandatory training in place. No consistent responses have been received from ministries and this needs to receive a higher profile.</p> <p>Management replied that OMAFRA senior management had requested more information regarding implementation and that work is being conducted.</p>	
<b>Compressed Work Weeks</b>	<p>The Union provided suggested text for a new item in the Compressed Work Week Agreement. Item 9.2 would not have an end date for the agreement allowing either party to terminate the agreement with notice.</p> <p>Management agreed to consult with MGCS regarding the proposed text and its use in other ministries and report back.</p>	<p>Management agreed consult with MGCS re proposed agreement text and report back.</p>

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
<b>Bee Inspector Communcations</b>	Doug Peebles joined the meeting to provide an update on Bee Inspector Communication issues. The meeting held with all Bee Inspection staff in April did not provide sufficient time to resolve issues. A smaller group is to reconvene with a synopsis of issues for discussion. The Union commented that communications issues with management continue to be key to the resolution process.	
<b><u>HEALTH AND SAFETY</u></b>	<p>Management provided of the quarterly incident statistics at an ad hoc meeting.</p> <p>The Union requested a presentation at the next meeting regarding the Meat Inspection health and safety / personal security policy information that was shared during a report back ad hoc meeting.</p>	Health and safety/personal security presentation to be scheduled for the next meeting.
<b><u>NEW ITEMS:</u></b>		
<b>Emergency Preparedness Plan</b>	<p>The Union inquired about the existence of emergency preparedness plans and the degree to which staff are aware of plans, staff roles in plans and any expectations to respond in emergencies.</p> <p>Management replied that OMAFRA has a defined role in provincial emergencies as defined in Order in Council. Staff have provided input into Business Continuity Plans and each Division has lead staff responsible for coordinating training. Emergency plans are updated annually and lists of staff contacts are updated to respond given the type of emergency.</p> <p>The Union asked if the ministry has emergency plans could they be shared. Management agreed to investigate and report back</p>	Management to investigate the availability of emergency plans for sharing and report back.
<b>Next Meeting Dates:</b>	September 19, 2008 Room 203 December 5, 2008 Room 203	

  
 For the Union  
 Sept. 17/08

  
 For the Employer

**APPENDIX**  
**MERC Ad Hoc Meetings – June 23, 2008**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Provided To</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>Information Provided</b>
Mar. 14/08	MERC	Bev Rawn	Template for moving issues forward sent via email
Mar. 17/08	Emily Hitchcock	Marilyn Everingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HR Transformation implementation of Enterprise Business Services</li> <li>▪ Request for Services for meat inspection systems</li> </ul>
Mar. 31/08	Emily Hitchcock	Marilyn Everingham	HR Communique regarding HR Transformation
Apr. 21/08	Emily Hitchcock	Marilyn Everingham	Disclosure regarding reporting relationship changes in the Research and Innovation Branch
May 8/08	Andrea Gomirato	Marilyn Everingham	Disclosure regarding Regulated Marketing Division
May 26/08	Emily Hitchcock	Marilyn Everingham	Cancellation of Request for Services for meat inspection systems
May 27/08	Emily Hitchcock	Marilyn Everingham	Information sent to employees regarding summer attire
May 29/08	Emily Hitchcock	Bev Rawn	Disclosure regarding Meat Inspection Operations
June 16/08	Emily Hitchcock	Bev Rawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Report back on Health and Safety</li> <li>▪ OMAFRA Incident Statistics Report</li> </ul>
June 18/08	Emily Hitchcock	Marilyn Everingham Bev Rawn	Vacancy and Unclassified Staff Reports Report back on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Vacancy reports</li> <li>▪ Results Based Plans</li> <li>▪ Violence in the Workplace</li> <li>▪ Compressed Work Weeks</li> <li>▪ Attendance Support Program</li> <li>▪ T2200 Forms</li> </ul>