

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: Ruth Hamilton, A/OPS Supervisor

DATE: March 18, 2011

SUBJECT: **Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs
ERC Minutes – March 9, 2011**

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



Ruth Hamilton
A/OPS Supervisor

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att.

cc: MERC Chairs
Ministry ERC

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

March 9, 2011

Room 206, 1 Stone Road, Guelph

For Management:

Karen Chan (Co-Chair) via video-conference
Jim Felker
Brent Kennedy

For OPSEU:

Mavis Vet (Co-Chair, for the meeting)
Emily Hitchcock
Earl Yantzi (Vice-Chair)

Resources:

Marilyn Everingham
Bev Rawn

Resource:

Stephen George

Mavis Vet opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
Welcome and Introductions		
Additional Agenda Items / Changes to the Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,4,5-T Herbicide issue 	
<u>STANDING ITEMS:</u>		
Ad Hoc Meetings	A list of ad hoc meetings was provided prior to the meeting. See attached Appendix.	
Surplus List	Management distributed a report on the status of surplus employees. Currently there is one employee on the surplus list (on hiatus).	
Temp Agencies / Staff	The Union requested information about temporary agency staff in the ministry. Management reported that there are currently 3 temporary agency staff working in the ministry.	

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
Fixed Term Staff Reports	<p>Management provided Fixed Term staffing reports prior to the meeting. The Union inquired about staff on the fixed term report and the timing of data on the reports.</p>	<p>Management agreed to report back on the status of two employees on the list.</p> <p>Management agreed to provide reports at least two weeks prior to the meeting date.</p>
Bill 168 The Occupational Health & Safety Act (Violence & Harassment in the Workplace)	<p>The Union inquired about training completion for three modules for Bill 168.</p> <p>Management reported on 100% completion.</p> <p>The Union inquired about the status of threat risk assessments.</p>	<p>Management to report back to MERC at the next meeting when completed.</p>
Orientation sessions for new employees	<p>The Union inquired about the status of the orientation material and linkage to OPSEU orientation information.</p> <p>Management reported that the staff orientation site on the OMAFRA Intranet site is to be announced to staff this week. The site links to the OPSEU web site via a MyOPS link.</p>	
Diversity	<p>The Union inquired about an update on Diversity.</p> <p>Management reported that the mentorship program is working well. The next initiative is to plan for a Quiet Room which will be opened soon. Work is ongoing on the Diversity Lens.</p>	
Conversion Reports	<p>There were no Fixed Term Unclassified staff conversions to report since the last meeting.</p>	

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
Results Based Planning	<p>The Union inquired about update on Results based Planning.</p> <p>Management had no new information to report.</p>	
Health And Safety	<p>The Union inquired about sharing threat risk assessments.</p> <p>The Union reported that the last meeting of the 1 Stone Road Health and Safety Committee was cancelled and will be rescheduled.</p>	<p>Management will share reports with the 1 Stone Road Joint Health and Safety Committee when complete.</p>
<u>PREVIOUS BUSINESS:</u>		
Compressed Work Weeks (CWW)	<p>The Union reported that the issue of Compressed Work Weeks would be referred to the 1 Stone Road LERC.</p>	
HR Communications	<p>The Union inquired about further HR Communications.</p> <p>Management reported that information about who does what in HR including HR Ontario and the ministry with managers at a Manager's Forum on March 11, 2011.</p> <p>The Union suggested producing a tip sheet for staff.</p>	<p>Management will review and work with MGS on information tools and avenues for staff.</p>
Conflict of Interest – Update on Training	<p>The Union inquired about an update on Conflict of Interest training.</p> <p>Management reported that 26 sessions have been completed to date in conjunction with Legal Services. Meat Inspection staff will be trained at upcoming Area Meetings. Conflict of Interest declarations are also being included in the ministry's recruitment process.</p>	

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
Wellness Week Update	The Union inquired about an update. Management had no new information to report.	Agreed to remove this item from the next agenda.
Attendance Management Program Update	The Union inquired about an update. Management had no new information to report.	
<u>NEW ITEMS:</u>		
Article 7.2.2: reclassifications	Item has been referred from Central Employee Relations Committee (CERC) regarding tracking information relative to entitlements in the Article. Management reported that this activity has not occurred in the ministry and that should it be required the ministry would implement a tracking mechanism.	
Merit Pay For Fixed Term – Article 31A.2.3	Item has been referred from CERC regarding merit progression for fixed term staff that do not work full time hours. An agreement between the Union and MGS regarding merit progression was referenced. Management reported that the current practice for merit progression for fixed term staff that do not work full time hours is awarded merits upon meeting the hours threshold described in the Collective Agreement.	
Telework/Work at Home Agreements	Item has been referred from CERC regarding a lack of a framework for health and safety entitlements for employees with telework agreements. The Union asked if formal or informal regular work at home arrangements exist in the ministry. Management reported that informal occasional work at home arrangements exist.	Management agreed to investigate and report back.
Training And Development	Item has been referred from CERC regarding training. The Union requested information and statistics on staff use of the Centre for Leadership & Learning site and is training offered on an equal basis.	

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	Management reported that training opportunities are identified between managers and employees during discussions about learning plans.	
2,4,5-T Herbicide Issue	<p>The union inquired about the status of the 2,4,5-T herbicide issue.</p> <p>Management reported on activities of a working group across ministries to review historical actions with potential use of the herbicide.</p>	
Dates for 2011 MERC meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 16, 2011 – OPSEU Regional Office • September 15, 2011 • December 2011 date to be determined 	

[Signature]
For the Union

March 9, 2011
Date

Jim Falke
For the Employer

March 9/11
Date

**Ad Hoc Meetings for MERC
March 9, 2011**

Date	Provided To	From	Information Provided
January 11, 2011	Earl Yantzi	Bev Rawn	Question re temporary assignment time limits
January 12, 2011	Earl Yantzi	Bev Rawn	Question re timeliness of travel time payments by OSS
January 17, 2011	Mavis Vet	Bev Rawn	Question re travel card process re late payment & notification
January 28, 2011	Mavis Vet	Jim Felker	Potential threat by individual – Security at Grenville and Stone Road
February 1, 2011	Mavis Vet	Bev Rawn	Weather advisory, travel/parking survey
February 2, 2011	Mavis Vet	Bev Rawn	Office closures due to weather
February 4, 2011	Mavis Vet	Bev Rawn	Post-MERC follow up meeting re <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill 168 The Occupational Health & Safety Act (Violence & Harassment in the Workplace) • Diversity • HR Communications • Travel, Meal & Hospitality Policy – process to refer item to MIERC
February 4, 2011	Mavis Vet	Bev Rawn	Meat Inspection – Federal Pilot Program Ontario selections
February 22, 2011	Emily Hitchcock	Pam Martell	New Job Description disclosure OPSEU Program Delivery Officer FSED OAG 10
February 28, 2011	Mavis Vet	Pam Martell	Deputy Minister memo to all staff regarding herbicide issue
March 2, 2011	Mavis Vet	Bev Rawn	Review March 9 Agenda items
March 4, 2011	Mavis Vet	Pam Martell	Deputy Minister memo to all staff regarding herbicide issue and record checking
March 4, 2011	Mavis Vet	Bev Rawn	Shared MERC Fixed Term Reports