

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: 28 June 2007

SUBJECT: **Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs
ERC Minutes – March 9, 2007**

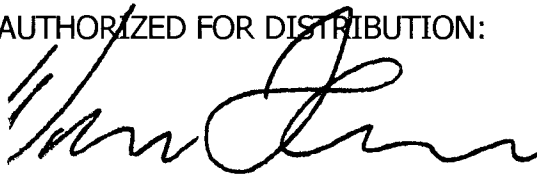
Attached, for your information, are the minutes of the above captioned meeting.

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:



Warren (Smokey) Thomas
President

IN SOLIDARITY,



Brian Gould
OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

/rw
att.

cc: MERC Chairs
Ministry ERC

Meeting Minutes 2007

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

March 9, 2007

Room 303, 1 Stone Road, Guelph

For Management:

Dave Antle (Co-Chair for the meeting)
Mike Toombs
Jim Felker

For OPSEU:

Emily Hitchcock (Co-Chair)
Bob Lowry
Andrea Gomirato

Resources:

Marilyn Everingham
Bev Rawn

Resource:

Stephen George
Doug Peebles

Co-Chair Dave Antle opened the meeting at 9 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
Additional Agenda Items	<p>Employee Engagement Survey Weather and Office Closures</p> <p>The Union requested that meeting minutes be prepared in a timely fashion and include more detail of discussions than in the past.</p>	
<u>STANDING ITEMS:</u>		
Ad Hoc Meetings	<p>December 15, 2006 Emily Hitchcock – update on CWW</p> <p>December 20, 2006 Emily Hitchcock – job description disclosure</p> <p>December 20, 2006 Emily Hitchcock – disclosure re upcoming surplus notice</p> <p>January 8, 2007 Emily Hitchcock – pre-notice letter to employee</p> <p>February 6, 2007 Emily Hitchcock – information regarding federal-provincial analysis of delivery options for meat inspection systems</p> <p>February 8, 2007 Emily Hitchcock – memo to Grenville staff regarding possible GO Transit strike</p> <p>February 13, 2007 Emily Hitchcock – Strategic Priorities Project</p>	


AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	<p>February 13, 2007 Emily Hitchcock – report backs: Merit increases for unclassified staff Insurance Act amendments Branch Conference Interest Based Problem Solving Training I&IE Bill 69 CWW agreement Article UN13 Holiday Payment</p> <p>March 5, 2007 Emily Hitchcock – email to staff regarding ministry Attendance Support Program threshold</p> <p>March 8, 2007 Emily Hitchcock – disclosure of unclassified staffing reports and vacancy report</p>	
Surplus Update	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)	
Human Resources: A) Transformation	<p>Management provided an update on the HR Transformation project. The Implementation Phase is continuing. The first step is to establish an Eastern Recruitment Centre based in Kingston. Next steps include business process reviews, staffing strategies and logistics for accommodations. The next quarterly communication to the HR Community is scheduled for late March or early April.</p> <p>The Union inquired as to whether the Eastern Recruitment Centre is a pilot project.</p> <p>Management replied that the project is in the implementation phase beginning with the Eastern Recruitment Center. Next will be the Western Recruitment Center followed by Recruitment Centres in the GTA. The recruitment centres will be based on the existing Northern Recruitment Centre pilot project.</p> <p>Management also reported that an Enterprise Health and Wellness pilot project is being initiated. The Ministry of Transportation is leading the pilot in conjunction with the HR Service Delivery Transformation Implementation Team. The pilot is scheduled to run for 12 months.</p>	

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	<p>Organizational health and wellness are key elements of the OPS Human Resources Plan. The pilot responds to issues raised by clients about access to occupational health and safety specialists and will enhance the current level of health and safety support for OPS managers and employees in the specific areas.</p> <p>Information is to be distributed to OMAFRA managers March 9, 2007. Managers will be asked to forward information about the service to their staff.</p>	
<p>Meat Inspection: A) Conversion</p> <p>MIERC Disclosure</p>	<p>The Union reported that representatives had not been able to meet to review the information provided by management regarding conversion of unclassified Meat Hygiene Officers. It was agreed that resolution of representatives' time to meet would be discussed between management and the union.</p> <p>The Union commented on the difference in messaging between the November 28, 2006 meeting with Minister Dombrowski, the January 22, 2007, comments by Secretary of Cabinet Tony Dean and the disclosure material provided by the ministry regarding meat inspection. Ministry disclosure advised that a consultant would be hired to provide an analysis of delivery options for meat inspection services. The Union asked if the consultant had been hired yet. Management responded that they would check and report back.</p> <p>The Union inquired about the availability of a 2005 audit of results of the Justice Haines Report.</p> <p>Management replied that the audit report has not been released as a public document.</p> <p>The Union requested clarification on the disclosure to the MIERC regarding the work of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and OMAFRA committee regarding the oversight of seamless integration of meat inspection operations.</p>	<p>Management and the Union will discuss representative's time to meet.</p> <p>Management to report back prior to the next meeting.</p> <p>Management to investigate and report back prior to the next MERC meeting.</p>
<p>Terms of Reference</p>	<p>The Union reported that the Terms of Reference document is under review. The signed document is to be returned as soon as possible.</p>	<p>The Union is to provide management with the signed document as soon as available.</p>

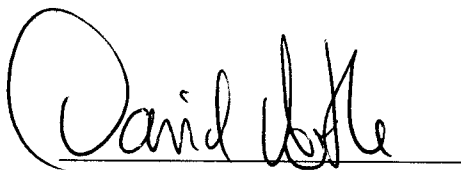
AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
Results Based Planning	<p>The Union inquired on the availability of 2007-08 Results Based Planning information.</p> <p>Management responded that the ministry is awaiting approval of the 2007/08 plan. A copy will be provided when available.</p>	<p>Management to provide a copy of approved plan when available.</p>
Strategic Priorities Project	<p>The Union inquired as to the status of the Strategic Priorities Project.</p> <p>Management replied that announcements of the results of the project were made to staff on February 14, 2007. Recruitment is underway for new Director positions. A Transition Director will be put in place to oversee the implementation of the ministry realignment.</p> <p>The Union raised an issue regarding the timing of the ministry realignment relative to other corporate initiatives and the need for timely communications to staff.</p> <p>Management replied that the current disclosure process will be followed to provide consistent and accurate information when it can be made available.</p> <p>The Union inquired about the review process for the distribution of support staff following the implementation of the Strategic Priorities Project.</p> <p>Management replied that a similar process to the last administrative review would be used which included staff position preferences and seniority. The first step is to have all Branch Directors in place before a review could begin.</p>	<p>Management agreed to meet with staff identified.</p>
Insurance Act Amendments	<p>The Union inquired about the implications for staff operating rental vehicles on ministry business resulting from recent changes to the Insurance Act.</p> <p>Management reported back at an ad hoc meeting that this issue is being discussed at CERC.</p>	
Interest Based Problem Solving	<p>The Union inquired about training for MERC members regarding Interest Based Problem Solving.</p> <p>Management reported back at an ad hoc meeting that no dates have been scheduled for</p>	<p>Management to investigate</p>

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	training. On a related issue, Management reported that MERC training is being scheduled in London.	training dates for Interest Based Problem Solving.
Travel Status	<p>The Union raised the issue of inconsistent ministry practices regarding time and expense reporting while on travel status.</p> <p>Management responded that they were waiting for specific information from the Union.</p> <p>The Union also inquired about Schedule 6 treatment of Holiday time.</p> <p>Management reported back at an ad hoc meeting regarding Article UN13 and how this article is applied to Schedule 6 classified and unclassified employees. This item is closed.</p>	Union to provide further information
<u>HEALTH AND SAFETY</u>	<p>Management provided an update of incident statistics at an ad hoc meeting.</p> <p>There was discussion regarding unclassified contracts and the timeliness of disclosure of MERC Unclassified Staff Reports.</p>	Management to provide Unclassified Staff Reports via email at least one week prior to each MERC meeting.
<u>NEW ITEMS:</u>		
I & IE Bill 69	<p>The Union inquired about the status of Bill 69.</p> <p>Management reported back at an ad hoc meeting that the Bill is waiting for Royal Assent. Questions regarding this Bill have been discussed at CERC. Training for impacted staff is expected prior to implementation of the Bill; however, timing for training is not yet known.</p>	Move to Standing Item for next MERC Agenda.
Hospitality Services /Cafeteria	<p>The Union raised an issue regarding staff comments about the quality and safety of the food served at the 1 Stone Road cafeteria.</p> <p>Management asked if staff were also directing concerns to the cafeteria management as well as ProFac and ORC. The Union responded that they were unsure if staff concerns were being raised with ProFac and ORC. Management encouraged staff to report their concerns to the cafeteria management. The Union asked management to speak to ORC</p>	Management to relay concerns to building operator via Service Management Branch

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	on their behalf.	
Employee Engagement Survey	Management reported that the OPS Employee Engagement Survey has been sent to all OPS staff for completion. A reminder for staff to participate from the Deputy Minister is to be sent March 9, 2007.	
Weather and Office Closures	Management asked the Union if they would like notification of office closures due to inclement weather. The Union confirmed they would like to be notified.	Management to advise Union of office closures
Next Meeting Dates:	June 8, 2007 Room 205 September 14, 2007 Room 205 December 7, 2007 Room 205	



 For the Union



 For the Employer