

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** All Presidents with members in the Ministry of Northern Development & Mines  
All Stewards in the Ministry of Northern Development & Mines

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

**DATE:** 20 July 2007

**SUBJECT:** **Ministry of Northern Development & Mines  
ERC Minutes – May 3, 2007**

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

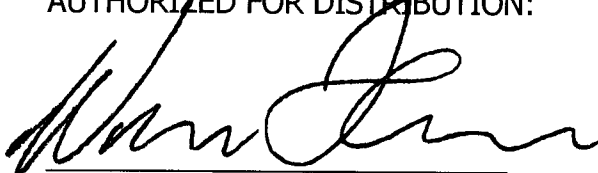
Please post or otherwise make them available to the members in your workplaces.

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.

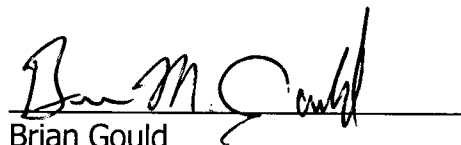
**PLEASE NOTE: THESE MINISTRY MINUTES WERE PREPARED BY THE EMPLOYER.**

AUTHORIZED FOR DISTRIBUTION:

IN SOLIDARITY,



Warren (Smokey) Thomas  
President



Brian Gould  
OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

/gi  
att.

cc: MERC Chairs  
Ministry ERC

**Ministry of Northern Development & Mines  
Ministry Employee Relations Committee**

**Thursday, May 3, 2007  
159 Cedar St., 7<sup>th</sup> Fl., Deputy Minister's Boardroom  
Sudbury**

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**IN ATTENDANCE:**

For the Union:  
Norm Trowell  
Michel Lavoie  
Fred Richardson  
Sherri Pirkl  
Robert Sandgren (t/c)

For the Ministry:  
Cleo Degagne  
Jonathan Barrett  
Lisa Zanetti  
Ross Kelly

**REGRETS:**  
Stephen George

Recording Secretary:  
Donna Fillier

Management chaired the meeting that was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

**1. Adoption of Agenda**

The Union requested the following be added under other business:

- Rebuilding Public Services
- Meal Allowance
- Car Insurance
- Attendance Threshold
- Backfill Policy
- ORC Notification

**2. Business Arising from Previous Minutes**

***Labour Relations Training*** – Management advised they had an opportunity to view MCSS's training package which is quite detailed. MCSS went to this level because they have 34 ERCs across the province. Union indicated they were not sure this level was needed for NDM. Some training sessions are being rolled out now and it is hoped one will come to Sudbury soon that the committee can opt into.

- 3. *MOL Order*** – The Union advised that many of the issues that came out of the MOL Order for the Timmins GIC were issues that they had already brought forward. The Union asked if there was any thought to going to the other GICs to address these same issues. Management replied that the inspector made it very clear that this order was specific to the Timmins location only.

The Union advised that absorption of MOT licencing functions at the Sioux Lookout GIC is creating similar challenges faced last year with GIC taking over front office MNR licencing functions; namely programs being turned over without adequate staffing, training or office setup. This creates stressful situations for staff until proper resources are put in place. Such resources should be in place at the beginning of program turnover.

On another note, the Union reported that the safety alarms have been installed but there has not been any specific training provided on when to use them or what happens when they are used. Management asked if it had been discussed with the manager. The Union replied, not at this point as they have not been installed for very long. Management stated that it should be discussed with the Manager, as there are likely some parameters for their usage.

**Postmeeting Note: MGS, in consultation with MNDM, is preparing guidelines on procedures and use of the buzzers. MNDM will consult with MGS on developing an appropriate training package, possibly using the security expertise of the Ontario Registrar General. A communication tree will be part of the guidelines. Each office has a communications tree in place to deal with an alarm that is triggered after working hours. The guidelines will also cover protocols to follow. Testing of the system will be part of guidelines. The guidelines will be shared with Service Ontario Centre staff and discussed once approved at a monthly teleconference.**

The Union brought up a few points that are still outstanding; signage is still in the planning stages, yet we are delivering the services; we still have staff bringing money to the bank on their own; some offices are still not adequately set-up to provide all the new services, although it is realized that budget is an issue. The Union stated that we really need to move forward, especially on the issue of bringing large amounts of money to the bank. The Union reported that training has improved now that there are two dedicated positions for this and the procedure for backup has much improved.

**Postmeeting Note: MGS, in consultation with MNDM, is finalizing the implementation of secure cash pickup at Service Ontario Centres. They are awaiting word from the OFA on approvals to make changes to the current deposit cycle. Moving to secure pickup will result in not meeting the required frequency of deposits and OFA approval is required. MNDM has and will continue to be involved in the implementation. The Financial Officer for this area will continue to work on this as a priority in conjunction with MGS. Further communications with partners, such as MTO and MNR, is required to ensure that the secure pickup transition occurs smoothly.**

**A summer student (Designer Level 1) for the north is being hired by MNDM to work with MGS to complete the field work needed to gather data on the requirements for each northern Service Ontario Centre. Salary, ODOE etc. are being paid by MGS. Once this work is complete, an implementation plan will be actioned that will see new signs installed through a phased approach. The expected completion date is April 2008. This information was shared at the most recent Staff teleconference (Northwest was Tue, May 1, and Northeast on May 9). As this develops, information will be shared. Staff may address questions to their manager.**

4. **Health and Safety Training for Joint Health and Safety Committed (JHSC)** – The Union reported that the MOL Inspector in the Timmins matter did not feel that people on this committee fully understood their role. The Union thought that perhaps this could be addressed at the next GIC Conference. Management replied that they had already checked with the Health & Safety Coordinator and were told there has been some training delivered but it wouldn't hurt to see if something could be done at the upcoming conference.

**Action: Management will look into the possibility of including something on this subject at the GIC Conference.**

5. **Classification System** – The Union would like a better understanding of how the system works as they are frustrated with the lack of movement in the Geoscience level especially when you see other ministries classifying jobs higher than the same job in our Ministry. The union asked if there had

been any progress in the GS 2-3 procedure and if any thought had been given on how to adequately classify/compensate unofficial team leader positions with reference to the GS4 classification. Management explained that we classify according to the standards as do all other ministries. Other ministries look at the standards and identify the one that best matches the job in question. The geoscience classification was built around NDM and they expressly define our jobs. With the new classification project, this will eventually be taken over corporately and will be more controlled across ministries.

## 6. Other Business

**Rebuilding Public Service** – The Union would like this topic to be a standing item. They reiterated that the government's promise has not been kept and, in fact, the opposite is happening.

**Meal Allowance** – The Union stated there are still issues within our Ministry with some managers approving receipts over the meal allowance where others refuse to. There should be consistency across the Ministry. Management replied that as noted in the past, anything approved over the allowance would have to be extenuating circumstances. However, if there are instances where it is felt that the manager is being totally unreasonable, Management Co-Chair committed to speaking with the manager about the circumstances.

**Car Insurance** – Controllership recently sent out a communication explaining how to rent a vehicle so it will fall under the government's insurance. At first, the car rental offices were not aware of this procedure, but have since been informed.

**Attendance Threshold** – This issue is still not resolved; namely, that employees from different Ministries are working side by side in the same offices yet they have different attendance thresholds only because they work for different Ministries. The Union asked if Management had heard anything from the Centre on this topic. Management replied they had not heard anything further. The Union stated that at one time we were allowed to accumulate days and its unfortunate that was taken away.

**Back-fill Policy** – The Union asked if there is a policy in place on filling back-fills (eg. Maternity, short-term sick leave). Management replied there are recruitment policies in place monitored through our Human Resource Management Committee (HRMC). Any vacant position over six months goes to HRMC for approval and, subject to Collective Agreement rules and OPS policy, are posted.

**ORC Notification** – There has been an elevator down at the Willet Green Miller for awhile, but there is no signage put up stating that it is down and when it will fixed. Management replied that in fairness to the contractor the deal made with them was that they would put up signage for any renovations that are going to take place. However, Management will see if they can contact ORC to get some information.

**Action: Management to contact ORC.**


**Postmeeting Note: Management made inquiries and was told the motor was being worked on.**

**Dates of Upcoming MERC Meetings:** The Union asked if there could be a common calendar set-up so that managers can be made aware of the upcoming MERC meetings and other Ministry events, such as staff days, so there are no conflicting meetings scheduled. Management agreed it would be a good idea to have a shared calendar for all MNM events, but weren't sure who would be responsible for its maintenance or if it would be possible.

**Action:** *Management will make some inquiries on setting-up a shared calendar for the Ministry.*

7. **Next Meetings** – Sept. 20, 2007  
Nov. 29, 2007

  
Norm Trowell, Union Co-Chair

  
Cleo Degagne, Management Co-Chair