

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** All Presidents with members in the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities  
All Stewards in the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

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

**DATE:** November 13, 2007

**SUBJECT:** **Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities  
ERC Minutes – June 12, 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:

IN SOLIDARITY,



Warren (Smokey) Thomas  
President



Brian Gould  
OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

/fs  
att.

cc: MERC Chairs  
Ministry ERC

**MINISTRY EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE  
MINISTRY OF TRAINING, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

**MINUTES**

**Tuesday, June 12, 2007  
Frontenac Room, MacDonald Block  
9:00 a.m. - noon**

**For the Employer:**

Lisa Sherin (Co-chair)\*  
Peter Armstrong  
Richard Jackson  
Jamie Bruno

**For the Union:**

Mickey Riccardi (Co-chair)  
Maurice Blais  
Sophia Ambrose  
Stephen George

**Guests:**

Victoria Evans  
Bill Craig  
Yolanta Stachow

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**

The agenda was reviewed, amended and approved.

**PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

The Union is to review the February 16<sup>th</sup> MERC minutes and bring forward any further acronyms requiring clarification.

**BUSINESS ARISING:**

**1. Local Apprenticeship Committees and OYAP and COOP Teachers performing Bargaining Unit Work**

Both parties agreed to remove this item from the agenda.

**2. Meal Policy**

Management will amend the previous minutes to include language that reminds staff to reference the 'Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses FAQ' document for further assistance.

Both parties agreed to remove this item from the agenda.

**3. New Auto Insurance Act**

Management indicated that David Fulford sent an email to all TCU and EDU employees on March 27, 2007 providing instructions on renting vehicles for government business.

Both parties agreed to remove this item from the agenda.

**4. Tax Forms for Use of Personal Vehicles**

The Union informed management that this item is being forwarded to the Central Employee Relations Committee (CERC).

**5. Walk-in Service for Trade Exams**

Management confirmed that the Regional Director met with eight OPSEU staff at 625 Church St. on May 24, 2007 to discuss workplace concerns. Central Region is considering securing a second exam location at 33 Bloor St. with possible trial-runs during the summer. The region is also considering off-site locations for group exam sessions and is preparing to hire an extra exam invigilator for the Church St. office. Management also noted that the region is nearing the end of a competition for an unclassified Administrative Clerk (ITO1) for a six-month term.

Concerns raised by staff regarding system use and data entry are also being addressed. This includes school scheduling, class validation and printing class lists on Crystal reports.

The Union requested confirmation that the extra exam invigilator will be part of the OPSEU bargaining unit and inquired into whether this would be a part-time or permanent position.

Both parties agreed to move this issue to Standing Items.

**Commitment:** Management will respond to both of the union's inquiries.

**6. OSAP Staffing Issues**

Management agreed to re-send to the Union the section of the OPS Staffing Policy related to competition panels.

Both parties agreed to remove this item from the agenda.

**7. AMAPCEO doing bargaining unit work**

Management indicated that over the past 12 months, the ministry has witnessed nearly a 40% decline in the number of letters directed to the Minister and Director compared to the previous year.

Management has also been logging all incoming letters since April 18, 2007, and all but two of these letters were properly assigned. As of June 5<sup>th</sup>, 71 responses had been prepared as follows: 35 by Policy Unit, 31 by Thunder Bay; 1 by Verification and Compliance Unit; 1 joint Policy Unit/Thunder Bay; 1 joint Policy Unit/Colleges Branch/Universities Branch; 1 by the Senior Operations Manager; and 1 by Communications Branch. Management will continue to monitor the situation.

Both parties agreed to remove this item from the agenda at this time.

#### **8. New Forms (TQAA and ACA)**

The Union raised concerns at the previous MERC that these forms were not being signed by the Training Consultants, as is required. The new forms do not include space for the TCs signature. The Union reiterated that these contracts are legal and binding. The Union alluded to the Client Service Manual which specifies that Training Consultants must sign any Contract of Apprenticeship. The Union indicated that some offices have purchased rubber stamps with the Training Consultant's name in lieu of having the employee sign the required forms. The Union requested that these forms be amended to include a block for the Training Consultant's personal signature and that stamps are not used in place of signatures.

**Commitment:** Management will make the necessary contact to determine how the forms can be amended to include TC signatures.

#### **STANDING ITEMS:**

##### **1. Orientation Package (Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Prevention)**

Management discussed the orientation material created for the new staff from the federal government and noted that some of it was becoming dated, so that there were no plans to reproduce the CD for further distribution. Instead, the overall orientation material for the learning ministries is being updated. The Union expressed concern that current material on the disc distributed to transferring staff mentions AMAPCEO and not OPSEU.

Management noted the concern.

##### **2. Redeployment**

Management reported that no surplussing is being contemplated at this time.

##### **3. Seniority, True Vacancy Report and Unclassified Contracts Report**

These reports were distributed prior to the meeting.

**Commitment:** Management will provide the Union with an alphabetical list of employees who transferred as part of the Labour Market Development Agreement.

#### 4. OAG Learning and Development Initiative Update

Management invited Victoria Evans to discuss this item. She reported that focus groups with both OAG managers and OAG staff were recently held to review the 6 formal Learning Modules developed as a part of the DRAFT OAG pilot program. Four of the six modules have been mapped-out. The expected launch date is in mid-to-late September.

The Career Planning Series, offered as part of the EDU/TCU OAG Lunch 'n Learn series, will be offered in partnership with the Northern Interministerial Council, as a pilot project, to administrative staff of all Ministries in the Northern Region of the OPS. The ministry is hoping to have administrative staff act as volunteers to deliver the training as part of the pilot project in the North. 'Train the Trainer' sessions are scheduled for early fall and the series itself should be launched around Thanksgiving.

Management also reported that there are 198 OAG staff registered for the Kingston REACH (OAG) conference, being held on June 19th. We are working in partnership with the EASTERN Interministerial Council to provide an Eastern region conference for our EDU/TCU OAG Staff. The partnership agreement includes EDU/TCU sponsoring the two keynote speakers and a workshop at the conference. Approximately 15 TCU/EDU staff have applied to attend the conference (out of 40 eligible Eastern region staff in EDU/TCU OAG staff).

**Commitment:** Management will email the Union the modules once finalized, which is expected to take between 2 – 3 weeks.

#### 5. Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA)

The Union raised the issue of transferred bilingual employees who have competed for OPS positions and have been required to participate in bilingual testing as part of the process. The Union questioned how an employee does not meet the language requirements for a bilingual position in which he/she competes when he/she is currently working in a bilingual position.

Management indicated that the standards for French-language testing are more challenging in the OPS compared to the federal government. Management also mentioned that past practice in the ministry has included French-language testing where bilingual candidates may not be performing bilingual duties on a regular basis.

**Commitment:** Management will look into the specific situation of an employee's temporary assignment being extended after failing to meet the language requirements for a separate bilingual position with the same language standard.

**6. OSAP IT Renewal Project**

Management reported that the OSAP IT Steering Committee met in the Thunder Bay office of the Student Support Branch (SSB) in early May and had an opportunity to meet with SSB staff. Feedback provided by staff indicated the importance of ensuring program stakeholders were actively engaged in the project. Management also noted that as part of the preliminary organizational design work associated with the IT Renewal Project that all staff would have an opportunity to participate in a branch cultural focus groups to identify both the current culture and the desired future culture organization. As part of this process, the SSB management team has already taken part in a cultural focus group.

**7. Apprenticeship Support Application (ASA) Project**

Management reported that Production Release 4 of the ASA was successfully launched on May 28<sup>th</sup>. The ASA Implementation website now contains all new/updated reference materials for staff. This service is for current Certificate of Qualification (COQ) holders and will allow clients to request the renewal and replacement of their COQ from a home or public computer at any time of the day.

The Union asked whether an individual could access information regarding outstanding balances and if fees could be paid through the site. The Union also indicated that new employees have waited as many as four weeks to receive PKI access.

**Commitment:** Management will provide a response to the Union's inquiries and committed to have an ASA Project member attend the next MERC.

**8. Workload and Staffing**

The Union informed management that this issue is being forwarded to CERC as workload concerns persist across Apprenticeship offices.

**Commitment:** Management is willing to provide an update on these workload issues if the Union can provide specific work units/locations.

**9. Reaching Higher/Postsecondary Education Division (PSED)**

Management suggested that this item could be appropriately discussed as part of the update on overall ministry review.

Both parties agreed to move this item under "Transforming TCU".

## 10. Regional Employee Relations Committee (RERC)

The Union and Management discussed a proposal for a regional employee relations committee to ensure that all employees have a chance to raise issues at the local level throughout the province. The Union suggested that the RERCs represent all divisions, not just the Employment and Training Division (ETD). Management's intention is to implement RERCs as a better mechanism to resolve regional ETD issues, but supported the Union's idea where a regional presence exists in other divisions. Both parties agreed to consider RERCs as something other than a new layer to the union-management committee structure.

**Commitment:** Management will draft the Terms of Reference and forward to OPSEU for review. Both parties will assess the organizational structure of the division to better determine where a RERC is the more strategic option to discuss divisional issues.

### NEW BUSINESS:

*Item 2 (ITO1 Reclassification/Admin/OAG Reclassification), Item 3 (Averaging of Hours vs. Schedule 6 for Training Consultant), and Item 6 (Org Charts for New Organization) of the Agenda were consolidated under Transforming TCU.*

#### 1. LERC Training

Both parties agreed to coordinate a joint LERC Training session in September with Leslie MacLeod. The parties will discuss LERC Training following this session.

#### 2. Transforming TCU

##### Classification Review

Management indicated that this is being treated as a separate project from the ITO-2/CDO-3 integration. For the ITO-2/CDO-3 integration, management will be seeking membership participation and will be engaging the bargaining unit to determine effective representation. For the overall TCU classification review, management has not yet decided how to engage staff. Management is in the process of procuring an external consultant for the classification review.

Management also indicated that discussions regarding ITO-1 classification are included as part of this overall review, and that further discussions between the parties will help to determine how this process reconciles with the joint-evaluation process.

**Commitment:** Management is currently working on more detailed organizational charts and is aiming to provide the Union with this information by early July.

### **TCU Transformation**

Management explained that the transformation is proceeding with the creation of a new Policy Division. Some work units will be moving to the new structure as is, while others will need to be disentangled. The disentanglement component is being developed and will involve most of Postsecondary Education Division. All staff will receive a letter explaining the impact of the transformation on their position.

### **ITO-2/CDO-3 Integration**

The Union discussed the issue of Averaging of Hours v. Schedule 6, and the impact of these changes on Training Consultants. The Union inquired into the process for approving overtime for staff once the integration is finalized and how excess overtime and/or lieu time would be compensated at the time the positions are integrated.

**Commitment:** Management will provide a response to both of the Union's inquiries.

### **3. Extension of Compressed Work Week (CWW) schedule for EBSM staff**

The Union communicated that TCU staff that did not transfer from the federal government are also interested in this type of schedule. The Union also explained that current CWW agreements in place need to be forwarded to the Union for formal approval.

Management indicated that transferred federal employees were initially provided a continuance of their CWW schedule until the end of March. That was extended a second time until the end of April to allow management sufficient time to make decisions on individual CWW requests. At that time, management decided that for all approved CWW requests, agreements would be put in place with an end date in and around October 2007.

Management explained that employees who wish to express an interest in a compressed work week should contact their manager. The HR Branch provides assistance to managers who receive such requests.

**Commitment:** Management will finalize formal agreements as soon as possible and forward to the Union for approval.

### **4. Asbestos Abatement Worker and Supervisor Programs**

Prior to the MERC, management reported that these programs are designed to provide training for tradespeople and other construction/demolition workers who may come into contact with Type 3 asbestos. This modular training has no certificate for qualification and involves an in-

school component with an exam administered at the conclusion to ensure training has been satisfied. These are viewed as exemption tests which can be administered by the colleges.

The Union expressed disapproval over the current administration of these exams, stating that this is a modular exam that should be administered by the ministry. The Union identified that Technical Safety and Standards Authority exams are administered by OPSEU staff and this Asbestos exam is no different. The Union also pointed to a recent job advertisement for an Examination/Administrative Clerk (OAG09) which requires "...support in the administration/invigilation of trade and modular examinations."

The Union requested a definition of "test" v. "exam" and indicated that it sees this as an exercise in semantics.

**Commitment:** Management will respond to the Union's inquiry.

**5. Joint MERC Effectiveness Survey**

The survey was distributed to MERC members at the conclusion the meeting.

**6. MERC Training De-brief**

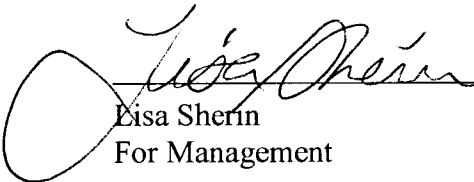
Leslie MacLeod provided a summary of her comments and observations to help improve the effectiveness of the committee.

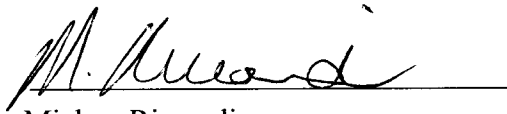
**Next Meeting**

It was previously agreed to that the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 12, 2007 in the Ottawa Room, MacDonald Block, 900 Bay Street, Toronto.

The meeting was adjourned:

Minutes Signed: Nov 7/07

  
Lisa Sherin  
For Management

  
Mickey Riccardi  
For the Union