



Rights ON!

NEWS FOR MEMBERS AT THE ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

ISSUE 2

OPSEU takes on Attorney General over OHRC cuts

On May 28, 2008 an OPSEU delegation had a meeting with Attorney General Chris Bentley and took the opportunity to restate the union's deep concerns with the OHRC's new "direct access system" that takes effect July 1, 2008.

President Smokey Thomas initiated the meeting and immediately raised job security issues with Bentley. Thomas also pointed out OPSEU's ongoing resistance to the government's under funding of human rights protections.

Job Security Officer Judith Marion challenged the Minister with the large number of surpluses the employer has created at the Commission in the wake of Bill 107. Bentley was confronted

Surplus Factor 80 – in advance of December 31, 2008

The Union and the Employer have agreed that any impacted members eligible to access their Surplus Factor 80 by December 31, 2008 will be given their surplus notice in advance of that date.

Surplus Factor 80 ends on December 31, 2008 with the expiry of the current collective agreement, and both parties want to insure members have access to that provision of the collective agreement should they wish to.

with the unacceptable prospect of over **75 full time and unclassified** skilled and committed staff losing their jobs. He appeared unaware of the number of frontline staff about to be pushed out of their positions in administrative, investigative, mediation and litigation services.

At the meeting Bentley briefly tried to defend the Liberal scheme now unfolding at the OHRC. But he did seem genuinely concerned about the scope of the surplus and the related loss of expertise that would clearly result.

Union files two Policy Grievances

OPSEU has filed two policy grievances against the Ministry of the Attorney General with regards to the implementation of Bill 107.

The Union is disputing the improper surplus of Human Rights mediators and investigators because their work is not being discontinued. The work is being improperly transferred to non-bargaining members in the Ontario Public Service.

Also being grieved is the improper surplus of Inquiries Service Reps. The Union believes their work is continuing under the new job title of Case Processing Officer.

The Stage 2 meetings are scheduled for August 5, 2008.

OPSEU and employer sign OPS Transformation agreement

The union and MGCS have negotiated a central agreement to facilitate the successful transition of OPSEU members who are impacted by transformations and transfers occurring with the OPS.

This agreement is good news for members at the OHRC and here's why:

Impacted members who have not yet received their official surplus notice can be deemed to have received their notice ("deemed surplus") for the purpose of direct assignment (Redeployment – Art . 20 B.3 or Art 62.1). This permits the member to be considered for redeployment opportunities in advance of receiving their official surplus notice.

If a new assignment is not found within that period, the member will still be entitled to all the provisions of the collective agreement once their surplus notice has been received. If an impacted member declines an assignment under this

agreement, they will not be considered for any other assignments until they receive their official surplus notice.

This agreement also extends the life of a conditional assignment. Once a member has received their surplus notice, they may be placed into a conditional assignment (Art 20B.12). The parties have agreed the retaining period of the conditional assignment may be extended to a total of five months; this is an additional two months to the current language.

Other provisions in the agreement include recruitment supports, career supports and a dispute mechanism. You can see the agreement here: <http://www.opseu.org/ops/cerc/cercindex.htm>

Your OHRC Transition Committee

The union members on the OHRC Transition Committee are Cheryl Gaster, Jessica Reynolds, Dennis Giesbrecht, Geanine Sibblies and Judith Marion, OPSEU Job Security.

The committee meets with the employer representatives on a bi-weekly basis to discuss transition issues. It is anticipated that the committee will continue to meet throughout the transition period.