



National Defence

Land Force Western
Area Headquarters

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T5E 2S2

Défense nationale

Quartier général du Secteur de l'Ouest
de la Force terrestre

10305 – 152 Avenue
Edmonton (Alberta)
T5E 2S2

6007-20 (AHRBM)

03 April 2006

Distribution List

**MINUTES OF THE LAND FORCE WESTERN AREA (LFWA)
LABOUR MANAGEMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE
MEETING - COMMANDER'S CONFERENCE ROOM –
EDMONTON GARRISON – 0900 HOURS – 21 NOVEMBER 2005**

Chairpersons

Col P.F. Wynnyk – Commander 1 ASG
Mr. Brian Molsberry - Regional Vice-President UNDE MB & SK

Members

Mrs. Marie Kennedy - Regional Vice-President UNDE AB & the North
LCdr Cook - Dispute Resolution Centre Edmonton and Region
Maj D. Gosselin – G4
WO S. Perrault – G8 Comptroller Rep
Mrs. Colleen McCubbing - Area Human Resource Business Manager

Ex-officio

Mrs. Lou Anne Astra – Manager HR Services (Land)

Executive Secretary

Mrs. Carolyn Jones - Assistant Area Human Resource Business Manager

Canada 

DISCUSSION

ACTION

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

1. Col Wynnyk and Mr. Molsberry opened the meeting at 0900 hours, welcoming all members. Col Wynnyk said that he was pleased to once again be the management co-chair and that the experience he had acquired during his tenure as COS LFWA in 2000 will be beneficial.
2. Col Wynnyk addressed the issue of the change in management co-chair from the COS LFWA to the Comd 1 ASG. He explained that BGen Grant's decision was based on the fact that the Comd 1 ASG is responsible for the majority of the civilian component in LFWA. Col Wynnyk pointed out that he has direct access to the Comd LFWA and will keep him apprised of labour-management relations in the Area. He added that BGen Grant will address the ALMRC later in the morning.
3. Mr. Molsberry said that he feels there is an effective labour-management relationship in LFWA, however expressed concern regarding the cancellation of the June 05 meeting. In response Col Wynnyk advised that he intends to hold semi-annual meetings.
4. The co-chairs proceeded with round table introductions, noting the absence of representatives from PIPSC and IBEW.

OLD BUSINESS

Review of Previous Minutes

Terms of Reference (TOR)

5. A brief discussion was held regarding the signing of the TOR. The outstanding signatory at this time is PIPSC. (Secretarial Note – the TOR will be forwarded by the AHRBM to PIPSC for signature).

AHRBM

Staffing of Environmental Positions

6. Mrs. McCubbing advised that a discussion with the Area Environmental Officer, Mr. Neil Thompson, revealed that 15 of 29 (not 32 as reported in the 10 Nov 04 minutes) environmental positions had been staffing nationally. The

AHRBM

AHRBM will follow up regarding the discrepancy in the total numbers.

Conversion of O & M Funding

7. Further to the info provided at the previous meeting, Col Wynnyk and WO Perrault advised that conversion requires national level approval. WO Perrault further stated that, to date, no conversion has occurred within LFWA. No further action is required on this issue.

Base Services Index (BSI)

8. Col Wynnyk advised that the lack of dedicated funding, coupled with the operational tempo at Edmonton, has resulted in BSI being put on hold. He further noted that the VCDS directed groups and commands take a strategic pause.

9. Mr. Molsberry said that he felt there should be dedicated funding for projects such as BSI.

LAV III Live Firing Range

10. The co-chairs delayed discussion on this issue until later in the meeting (New Business refers).

FR Fitness Testing

11. Col Wynnyk advised that, as per information received from the Area Engineer, there is nothing new to report on the issue.

NEW BUSINESS

Personnel Numbers

12. The AHRBM confirmed that the personnel numbers had been e-mailed on 16 Nov 05 to the meeting participants.

13. Mr. Molsberry said that UNDE felt there had been a decrease in the number of civilian positions and that he would be comparing this data with that previously provided during 1995 – 1996.

14. The co-chairs agreed to continue with the provision of the personnel numbers on a semi-annual basis, the second

listing subsequent to the posting season.

Standing Agenda Updates

Health & Safety

15. The co-chairs noted that the attached General Safety Annual Report 2004/2005 had been e-mailed to attendees prior to the meeting.

16. Mr. Holland advised that the operational tempo within the Area is presenting a challenge, however staffing of positions at Wainwright and Shilo and work associated with SPDETS is ongoing.

17. Mr. Molsberry advised that UNDE is concerned about violence in the workplace, bullying, and harassment and asked if the issues fall under the purview of the safety world. Mr. Holland replied that, although in the incubation stage, national level discussion on these issues is occurring.

18. Mrs. Kennedy requested an update regarding the cessation of the safety footwear allowance, specifically the lack of information on the new policy and the delay that could financially impact the employees. Mr. Holland acknowledged that there are indeed changes to the policy but that information has not yet been received from Ottawa. Col Wynnyk requested Mr. Holland follow up on the issue. (Secretarial Note – Mr. Holland disseminated information and direction to the Area formations in February 2006).

Budget

19. WO Perrault provided a budget update (copy attached). Mr. Molsberry inquired as to whether 100% of the SWE is spent each year and, if not, where does it go. WO Perrault advised that she would follow-up on his inquiry.

G8
Compt

Grievances and Appeals

20. Mrs. Astra addressed the issue of grievances and appeals as per the attached reports. She explained that two of the three staffing appeals had been withdrawn. With regard to grievances, she noted that the statistics are high, and in part attributable to the number of grievances submitted by the firefighters. In addition, she advised that there are a significant number of outstanding third level grievances.

21. The co-chairs commented on the costs associated with grievance activity and agreed that labour and management should work together in an effort to reduce the numbers.

22. Mr. Molsberry inquired about the possibility of acquiring location-specific grievance statistics to be used for comparison purposes. Mrs. Astra advised that she would follow up.

HR
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Army Support Review (ASR)

23. Major Gosselin commented on the operational tempo in LFWA and acknowledged the support of the civilian component. He noted that the merger of the CS and GS Svc Bns is progressing well and effective 3 April 1 Svc Bn will stand up under the command of 1 ASG.

24. He noted that there could be an increase in the civilian component at 7 CFSD when the Equipment Fielding and Coordination Centre stands up. Mr. Molsberry added that this may have a residual effect on the LFWA civilian personnel.

Material Acquisition Support Optimization Project (MASOP)

25. Maj Gosselin advised that MASOP will end effective 1 April 2006. He pointed out that ammunition stock reductions had contributed to the savings in the amount of \$32M vice the predicted \$47M. Maj Gosselin advised that 3 PYs may be affected but will be offset by ASR activity.

Dundurn/CFB Saskatchewan

26. The G4 advised that discussions are ongoing between LFWA and 17 Wing regarding infrastructure and ranges and training areas. Col Wynnyk added that the stand-up of CMTC will result in a more prominent role for Dundurn. Mr. Molsberry said that he would share the information with the civilian employees at Dundurn.

Alternate Dispute Resolution

27. LCdr Cook advised that a national reorganization of the Dispute Resolution Centres (DRC) had occurred effective 1 November 2005. The regionalization will result in the Winnipeg and Cold Lake offices falling under the purview of

Edmonton will maximize existing resources and align with the Canada Command structure. LCdr Cook provided a copy of the Conflict Management Program Annual Report 2004 – 2005 available at http://hr.ottawa-hull.mil.ca/adr-marc/engraph/coverpage_e.asp?docid=5

28. He stated that awareness training is a significant component of the DRC responsibilities and aids in raising stakeholder awareness of the services available. He added that awareness of alternative dispute resolution will occur through the training of military members at recruiting schools.

29. Mrs. Kennedy inquired as to the mandate of the DRC regarding follow-up on mediation cases. LCdr Cook advised that follow-up must be initiated by the employee/member unless a follow-up provision is built into the mediation agreement.

30. Mrs. Kennedy noted the requirement for union notification in the event of mediation action and inquired as to what role the Union would play. LCdr Cook advised that this change was very recent and national clarification had not yet been received.

31. Mr. Molsberry stated that he is concerned with the credibility of some mediators abilities, and suggested a review of the successful mediations may be useful. He added that UNDE is concerned with the use of reservists vice civilian employees as mediators.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

32. The Assistant AHRBM advised that three new referral agents (RAs) had been trained on the Basic Course in 2005. The other training and development opportunity that occurred in 2005 is the Referral Agent Development Days. The session was held in Edmonton and afforded twenty-two RAs from LFWA and 1 CAD to network and receive development training.

33. Mr. Molsberry spoke briefly about the history of EAP. He noted that the initial focus was on alcohol-related problems, but had expanded to include various other personal and work-related issues. Mr. Molsberry said that, in light of the increased parameters of the Program that he intended to pursue through the national OPI (Doug Pike) the establishment of fulltime regional EAP coordinators similar to Halifax and Esquimalt. Mrs. Kennedy agreed with this action.

34. Col Wynnyk expressed his support for the joint union/management Program and said he will, if warranted, consider suggestions for improvement.

Area Commander's Comments

35. BGen Grant addressed the ALMRC attendees to provide his views on labour-management relations within LFWA. He acknowledges that he is removed from the coalface but has a number of staff officers to keep him informed. He emphasized the importance of the civilian component as part of the Defence Team and the requirement to support them through open and honest communication.

36. BGen Grant explained that the change in management co-chair responsibilities should not be perceived as his lack of interest in labour-management relations, but rather placement of the task with the individual responsible for the majority of the civilian component in the Area.

37. The Comd advised that he is looking at the future of CFB Suffield, vis-à-vis the Area, and will render a decision prior to 1 April 06 regarding the change from Base status to a unit within 1 ASG.

38. BGen Grant stated that the deployment of 1500 soldiers to TF Afghanistan 1-06 and the stand-up of Joint Task Force West (JTFW) are two of the major challenges presently impacting LFWA. He noted the valuable contribution of the civilian component in supporting the military and enlisted the assistance of the ALMRC members in passing on his thanks. He said that he wishes to be kept informed of events or forums during which he can personally pass on his thanks.

39. Mr. Molsberry stated that he would make the civilian component aware of the Commander's comments and suggested that a communication plan be developed to inform employees of the changes associated with JTFW.

40. In closing, BGen Grant noted the importance of effective labour-management relations that can occur through open and honest communication.

LAV III Live Fire Range

41. Further to the information provided in the previous minutes, Col Wynnyk confirmed that Wainwright is the intended location for the range.

Canada Command Update

42. The Comd 1 ASG explained that effective 1 February 2006 regional JTF Headquarters, responsive to Canada Command, will stand up across Canada. The initial focus will be on operations vice support and it appears that JTFW will be located in Edmonton. He pointed out that the inclusion of three elements under one command is a major change for DND.

43. Mr. Molsberry inquired as to the impact of this change on the labour-management relations committee structure. Col Wynnyk advised that a future review may be required, however no immediate change is anticipated.

Zone Rates of Pay – Table 2

44. Mr. Molsberry advised that UNDE is working to abolish zone rates of pay for the General Labour and Trades and General Services groups. A national information campaign will commence 1 February 2006 and through various means, including the wearing of buttons in the workplace and the airing of television advertisements, the issue will be brought to the forefront.

PSMA Update

45. Mrs. Astra advised that the new Public Service Employment Act (PSEA) will be implemented on 30 vice 31 December 2005 and will result in major changes.

46. Formal training for managers and employees will commence in January 2006. As per decisions made at the October meeting of the Prairie Civilian Human Resource Planning and Coordination Committee, UNDE Presidents and Vice-Presidents will be invited to the supervisor training. It is anticipated that the take-up rate for supervisor training will be high and Base Commanders will prioritize the requirements, i.e. managers actively involved in the staffing process.

47. Mr. Molsberry noted that PSMA discussion had occurred during strike action and UNDE had not been involved. He said that the changes associated with the Veterans Act and the change allowing military members to apply on closed competition is contentious. He advised that ongoing discussion on the issue is occurring at the national level. He stressed that UNDE historically supported “broken soldiers”, however the change may limit career advancement for existing public servants. Mr. Molsberry indicated that UNDE will be taking a keen interest in monitoring various staffing processes. Col Wynnyk added that a similar concern had been expressed by the national UNDE representative at the Base Commanders’ Forum.

48. Col Wynnyk, in response to Mr. Molsberry’s concern over the possibility of abuse, advised that management would not condone such action.

49. Mrs. Kennedy inquired as to whether the new PSEA would affect delegation. In response, Mrs. Astra replied that on coming into force delegation will not change, i.e. the HRO will retain authority, and that she did not foresee any change for at least the next year.

Essential Services Agreement (ESA) Update

50. Mr. Molsberry explained that the ESA was a product of co-development and was related to the designation process. He advised that the next round of negotiations will commence during the fall of 2006, and that UNDE will meet with DND representatives in December 2005 to determine the way ahead.

Classification Update (including General Labour and Trade (GL&T) Study)

51. Mrs. Astra advised Mr. Molsberry that she had not yet obtained the currency data that he had requested but would follow-up on the issue.

HR
Svcs
(Land)

52. Mrs. Astra advised that the Director Civilian Classification and Organization had determined the requirement to establish a working group to address a number of GL journeyman positions. She noted that the working group will be comprised of participants identified by the chain of command.

53. Discussion ensued regarding the classification associated with one versus two journeyman tickets and whether the work descriptions should be reviewed on an individual versus collective basis. The issue of currency was raised by Mrs. Kennedy, and in response Mrs. Astra advised that there may be a requirement to rewrite some work descriptions. Mrs. Astra added that classification will be a two part process consisting of the classification officer reviewing the work description and subsequently liaising with the manager to ensure currency.

Level 1 Union Management
Consultation Committee (UMCC)

54. Mr. Molsberry noted his intent to continue lobbying the CLS to establish an army-specific UMCC. He said that he understands UNDE cannot question decisions made by the Comd LFWA, but feels that labour-management consultation at the strategic level is required.

55. Col Wynnyk stated that the affect of CF Transformation on labour-management relations remains unclear and that we may wish to await the outcome. In the interim, however, issues that cannot be resolved at Level 2 will be elevated to Level 1.

Retirement Eligibility Statistics

56. Mrs. Astra advised Mr. Molsberry that she was aware of his request for a breakdown of retirement statistics but had not yet received confirmation as to whether the information can be released. She agreed to follow up-on the issue.

HR
Svcs
Land

Apprenticeship Training Program Update

57. Mrs. Astra provided statistical information regarding the apprentices presently employed in LFWA (see attached slides). She noted that retention is a concern, and pointed out that four of the CFB Suffield apprentices had departed shortly after completion of their training.

58. She advised that funding requirements have been identified by Wainwright, Suffield and Edmonton in their Human Resource Plans.

59. Mr. Molsberry said he felt that existing employees should be offered the opportunity to participate in the Program.

Management Consulting Services (MCS) – Mandate

60. In response to Mr. Molsberry's request for information on MCS, Col Wynnyk explained that MCS is responsive to the Comd LFWA, and their mandate is to "review" various issues and subsequently generate a report.

61. Mr. Molsberry said that he would be interested in being apprised of any "reviews" that affect the civilian component and potential labour-management issues. Col Wynnyk explained that he would seek guidance from the Comd LFWA regarding Mr. Molsberry's request.

Mgt
Co-Chair

Closing Remarks

62. Mrs. Kennedy advised that UNDE elections at the Alberta units was complete.

63. Mr. Molsberry thanked everyone for attending the meeting, noted his approval with the delegation of management co-chair responsibilities to Col Wynnyk, and said that he sees LFWA as the "poster child" for labour-management relations.

64. In closing, Col Wynnyk thanked everyone for attending the meeting and requested BGen Grant's words of appreciation be passed on to the civilian employees. He noted his support for effective labour-management relations within the Department, the need to resolve issues at the appropriate level and his commitment to work with Mrs. Kennedy and Mr. Molsberry in their capacity as regional vice-presidents.

Next Meeting

65. The next meeting is scheduled for 10 April 2006.

Approved

- original signed by -

P.F. Wynnyk
Colonel
Co-Chairperson
Commander 1 ASG

Approved

- original signed by -

Brian Molsberry
Co-chairperson
Regional Vice-President UNDE MB & SK

Enclosures: 6

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