

RSMC Negotiations

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ARBITRATION PROCESS COMPLETED

The lengthy negotiations for the final re-opener of the RSMC collective agreement, which began in October 2009, ended on September 17, 2011 with the Union and the employer making their final arguments to the interest arbitrator. The negotiations period was unnecessarily long primarily because of the unreasonable and intransigent positions taken by the employer.

In its final argument the employer reverted to the unreasonable positions it had initially proposed in October 2009. It did so even on issues where the parties had reached agreement or had been close to reaching agreement during the mediation and arbitration processes. These reversions included arguing for regionally based wage increases, a unsatisfactory sick leave plan, unnecessary restrictions on access to a drug plan (excluding members who work less than 12 hours per week), no language providing protections against the introduction of technological changes, rejection of a maternity and adoption leave allowance and rejection of an increase in vacation leave entitlements.

Conversely, the Union argued for the proposals made in its global offer of June 23, 2011, which included a number of modifications of its initial presentation to the employer.

ARBITRATION DECISION PENDING

The parties are now awaiting the decision of the arbitrator. While deciding how the \$23.8

million and \$15 million available in 2010 and 2011 respectively will be allocated the arbitrator will also rule on whether the non-monetary demands made by the Union, such as improved transfer rights, should be included in the collective agreement.

At the end of the hearing the arbitrator indicated that he could not provide a specific date on which his award would be completed however the Union hopes to receive it in four to six weeks.

MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT OUTSTANDING

During the lengthy negotiation/arbitration processes the spirit of the Union's Negotiating Committee was continuously buoyed by the messages of support it received and by the collective actions taken by RSMC members to show their support for their demands and their opposition to those employer demands that were unreasonable. On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank the membership for their continued support.

I would also like to thank the Negotiating Committee, Sisters Rose Johnson, Bonnie Pollard, Suzanne Simard and Kathy Zimmer, for their hard work and dedication and the many hours they had to spend in Ottawa away from their friends and family. I would also like to thank Brothers Geoff Bickerton, Director of Research and Ken Bird for the assistance they provided to the Committee.

UPCOMING NEGOTIATIONS

Due to the length of time taken to complete these negotiations/arbitration the Union will begin negotiating with the employer for a new collective agreement in the very near future.

As with these present negotiations the support of the membership for their demands and their Negotiation Committee will be

crucial in order for the Union to achieve collective agreement changes in the next round of bargaining that meet the needs of the membership.

Members should continue to read Union bulletins, access additional information on the Union's website and participate in local activities.

**SHOP STEWARDS:
BRING THIS INFORMATION TO THE ATTENTION OF THE MEMBERS
DURING REGULAR WEEKLY SHOP FLOOR MEETINGS.**

Solidarity,



Donald Lafleur
4th National Vice-President & Chief Negotiator

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