

TEAM-MTS 2013 Negotiations

President's Remarks

January 18th, 2013

Over the last three years we have asked our members through the survey, direct questioning, committees and focus groups, to tell us what's important to them. The proposals that we will be presenting are the result of our members' solicited and unsolicited feedback.

Through the Bargaining Committee, approximately 1,300 employees represented by our scope have directed TEAM-IFPTE Local 161 to negotiate improvements in the following broad categories:

- Compensation
- Benefits
- Working Conditions
- Other Problems and Issues

During the last round of negotiations the Company asked us to take a two-year pay freeze to assist it through a difficult period. We responded, ratifying an agreement that has had long term consequences to our pensions, disposable income and MTS' competitiveness in the labour market.

The pay freeze has resulted in TEAM wages falling far behind the rate of inflation. The Manitoba CPI for 2010 was 0.8%, and 3% in 2011, federally it was 1.8% and 2.9% respectively. The Manitoba CPI increased 1.6% in the first eleven months of 2012 and is forecast to be 2% for 2013.

The pay freeze has also reduced the salary differential between managers and their direct reports in other bargaining units. It has reduced the salaries for some of our members to less than those earned by clerical employees.

To illustrate, our records indicate that almost half of our 89 members on the C301 to C303 salary schedules earn less than a top rated CEP Clerk 9. Seventeen members on the C303 pay schedule earn less than a top rated Clerk 9, of which six earn less than the top rate for a Clerk 8, and three earn less than a top rated CEP Clerk 7. For our members on the University/College graduate C pay schedule, **every step** falls below that of a top rated Clerk 7.

A further example of the pay differential issue is a TEAM supervisory manager on step 1 of the B304 pay schedule earns less than a top rated Clerk 7 who works just three hours of overtime in a week.

The compensation differential between TEAM and the other bargaining units is further exacerbated by the reduced overtime rate for TEAM members who are allowed to book it.

Our members report that pressures on them to work additional hours without compensation is affecting their commitment to the Company, productivity, health and sick-time. Acknowledging and appreciating the unpaid work preformed by our members is not enough.

For all of us, but particularly for the duty managers and those assigned to be on call, the workplace is changing. Our Collective Agreement needs to reflect the technological advances in communications and remote working. Our members need clarity that work done outside the traditional work environment is indeed still work.

We are required to spend most of our working day using a computer screen. Good eye health and corrected vision are necessary to avoiding Computer Vision Syndrome, reducing errors, and maintaining good productivity.

In addition to compensation and benefits, working conditions play a major role in attracting and retaining employees. We have a highly skilled workforce with an increasing number of younger workers. Their valuable skills, abilities and qualifications in new and emerging technologies are in demand outside MTS, and they are actively being recruited by our competitors.

We are seeking a just benefits and compensation package that acknowledges the sacrifice we made in 2010 and the need for work-life balance, and creative and flexible ways to manage our responsibilities and commitments to our work, family and community.

Misty Hughes-Newman
President, TEAM-IFPTE Local 161