

Special Update to Transport Canada and TSB Members - 9 June 2003:

Our webmaster has recently been subjected to several derogatory and stinging emails. Sending nasty emails to a fellow union member volunteer does nothing to improve information flow or solidarity within the group, it just makes people want to quit trying to help out. Keep in mind the union is not some remote body or group of representatives. The union is you, the membership.

We are not a large group; 450 or so in a group of 175,000 public service employees. The CFPA's resources are not huge, but we are doing OK. The CFPA has only two paid staff, the National Chairperson, and the National Office Manager. The rest of the union representatives across the country are members like yourself who have made a commitment to assist their fellow pilots. If you notice that your union representative(s) are getting swamped then we encourage you to volunteer your services to help out, or to stand for election to any of the vacant regional executive positions that exist. Take pride in the progress we have made thus far and when we run into struggles, it should bring us together, not prompt us to criticize each other.

Sometimes with the limited staff and relying on voluntary executives and supportive members means that in a period of high activity we have to pull together to get the info out to people. If information isn't on the website, then we encourage you to use the Contact page and please call someone in the union executive or negotiating team and ask. If they don't know, ask them to find out and get back to you. We are happy to tell any member whatever we know. Please be patient with each other and with your representatives we are all working diligently in this very frustrating time dealing with the employer.

It is rather unfortunate that at this juncture, after two and one-half years of negotiations, we now find ourselves in dispute over the award of an arbitrator tasked with settling this labour dispute. The current circumstances originated from an interpretation of the arbitral award that was implemented unilaterally by Treasury Board without any discussion or notice to the union.

It was not until a copy of a Treasury Board document, directing departments to implement the Treasury Board version of the pay increases, was sent to the union office by a member, that the union became aware that Treasury Board had chosen this course of action. After reviewing Treasury Board's direction for implementation of the award, the union expressed a number of concerns to Treasury Board and the departments in writing. A number of meetings and discussions have resulted in the resolution of most items.

The remaining issue in dispute is the application of the restructuring expressed in paragraphs 1(a) and 1(b) of the award by "adding a step at the top and removing a step at the bottom" of the pay scales. More specifically, the dispute centers around Treasury Board's interpretation of paragraphs 1(a) and 1(b) as expressed in the structure of the pay table and paragraphs 2 through 5 of the pay notes that they published. Unable to resolve the issue with the employer, we requested the assistance of Mr. Adams to determine the application of his award.

The Treasury Board methodology is reflected by the horizontal shifting of the pay table and a complex pay notes navigation formula that results in employees in Step 1 of the

scale being amalgamated with those in Step 2 and employees in the maximum step being split up. Those with more than 12 months at the maximum step get the increase and the rest don't. For example: in a pay scale with 6 steps, employees in Steps 2 to 5 stay at their current rates until their next annual increment is due thereby receiving no benefit on the effective date specified in the award. Over the long term, which extends beyond the life of this contract, employees will eventually be able to achieve the maximum rates in the wage scale; however, they will do so only after serving the additional years of service. This will have a significant detrimental effect on CFPA members and will fundamentally alter the relativity and seniority system within our pay structure.

We are now in the process of submitting written submissions to Mr. Adams for a decision regarding Treasury Board's interpretation of his award. Ours is due 30 May, TB is due 9 June and our response 12 June. Mr. Adams will then issue his decision within a few days. Please read our submission of 30 May 2003 for a more detailed explanation of the problem with the employer's version of the pay notes.

We are still awaiting a draft copy of the collective agreement from Treasury Board for review. Once we receive it, we will need to get the document finalized and signed off. While it takes more time to conduct a detailed review of the documents, we feel that given the history with the employer thus far, it is vitally important. We don't want to make a mistake that will result in a flawed contract being printed and then we will have an even more difficult fight to correct it. We would rather do the work to make sure it is right before we sign it.

You may also know that the membership at Nav Canada recently ratified an agreement with their employer and we are in the final stages of reviewing the new Nav Canada contract and anticipate that we will also be signing a new agreement with that employer in the near future.

As stated in the latest NOTAM page on the public side of our website, the CFPA and the Treasury Board have yet to finalize the text of the collective agreement, but we have made representations at senior levels of Treasury Board and the Departments and have obtained agreement that items that will be determined in the final arbitration award will be implemented without any further delay.

Once we get the decision from Mr. Adams we will be onto Treasury Board to issue their directive to the Departments, and we already have commitments from the departmental staff that they process the pay increases as quickly as possible. We will be discussing implementation details with the departments and a joint communiqué detailing process and timelines will be issued by the employer and the union shortly after the award decision is received.

We are all very frustrated. Impatience and overt action can only hurt us at this point. Patience, diligence, and tenacity are going to be the keys to resolving these issues. We ask you to support your group and your representatives as we try to bring this contract to a conclusion.

Greg Holbrook
National Chairman