

**MINISTRY OF TRAINING, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES  
 MINISTRY EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE (MERC)  
 900 Bay Street, Toronto  
 September 11, 2014**

**For Management:**

\*Pat Macdonald-Rea, Manager, Strategic Business Unit, Strategic Human Resources Branch, Corporate Management and Services Division (Management Co-chair)  
 Michelle Crawford, Manager, Student Financial Assistance Branch, Postsecondary Education Division  
 David Fulford, Assistant Deputy Minister, Employment and Training Division

Jared Friesen, Employee Relations Advisor, Centre for Employee Relations, Employee Relations Division (TBS)

**Guests:**

Shelley Unterlander, Director, Central Region, Employment and Training Division

**For OPSEU:**

Mickey Riccardi, Employment and Training Consultant, Western Region, Employment and Training Division (OPSEU Co-chair)  
 Sophia Ambrose, Communications Officer, Business Services – Thunder Bay, Student Financial Assistance Branch, Postsecondary Education Division  
 Oliver Obagi, Employment and Training Consultant, Eastern Region, Employment and Training Division

Judith Marion, OPSEU Job Security Officer

**Regrets:**

Todd Kilpatrick, Director, Finance, Analysis and Systems Support Branch, Employment and Training Division  
 Noah Morris, Director, Student Financial Assistance Branch, Postsecondary Education Division

**\*Chair of the Meeting**

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
<b>1. Approval of Agenda</b>	Union added two agenda items. (1) Employment Program and Service Modernization Update. (2) Employment and Training Division – Pathfinders of Innovation. Agenda approved.	
<b>NEW BUSINESS</b>		
<b>1. Travel Approval Process</b>	The Union raised concerns that some regions have not	

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	<p>implemented the agreed travel expense pre-approval process.</p> <p>Management confirmed that the agreed process has been implemented in all regions.</p>	<p>Management to ensure with Regional Directors that the process has been disseminated to all managers and respond to the Union no later than the next MERC meeting.</p>
<p><b>2. Research and Innovation Transferred to TCU</b></p>	<p>The Union asked for more information regarding the relationship between MTCU and Research and Innovation.</p> <p>Management responded that the MTCU Minister is the same for the Research and Innovation.</p> <p>Will Research and Innovation ministry issues be dealt with at the MTCU MERC?</p> <p>There are no anticipated changes to MTCU regarding the Minister having responsibilities to both at this time.</p>	<p>Remove from agenda.</p>
<p><b>3. Employment and Training Consultant (ETC) Job Cross-Training</b></p>	<p>The Union raised concerns about the lack of consistent cross-training regarding program knowledge across ETD.</p> <p>The Union noted that it is managers' responsibility to ensure employees are cross-trained on programs as well as competencies and work in those programs in a timely manner.</p> <p>Management responded that ETCs should identify cross program training interests as part of their learning plan. Subject to other operational considerations, these interests will be considered when opportunities to work in other programs arise. To be successful, ETCs must have the opportunity to integrate new program learning while actually working in that program area. As such, training ETCs</p>	<p>The Union will take Managements response under advisement and respond no later than the next MERC meeting.</p>

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	<p>on other programs will occur when they are assigned to those programs. Nevertheless, to foster learning and information sharing, ETCs seeking to work in new program areas may be included on communications regarding programs they may not be working on at the time.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the above, the ETC competency project was completed in 2011 and ETCs are expected to have completed their self-assessment and discussed with their manager what learning is required with respect to the ETC competency model. It is management's expectation that all ETCs meet the full competencies of the ETC job which will facilitate their movement across programs. With competencies in place, only technical program training at the time ETCs take on different programs will be required. ETCs having fully met these competencies, there should be no concern that ETCs are unable to work to the full scope of their job description.</p> <p>The Union inquired what the Job Security impacts are of this approach.</p>	<p>Management to respond by the end of October.</p>
<p><b>4. Modernization Update</b></p>	<p>The Union and Management discussed the ETD modernization.</p>	<p>Move to Standing Item.</p>
<p><b>5. Employment and Training Division – Pathfinders of Innovation</b></p>	<p>The Union asked if there was an application process and what the current status is.</p> <p>Management responded that there is an application form to join the Pathfinders group. The current status is that the training is still being rolled out, but some ideas have been submitted.</p> <p>The Union asked whether this was an info-share.</p> <p>Management indicated that this was not an info-share, but was shared on Compass. Employees should ask their respective managers about questions regarding information on Compass or</p>	

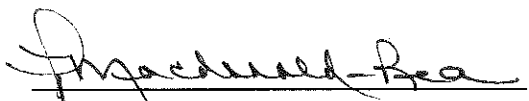
AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	<p>shared in any other format regarding employment and operational issues.</p> <p>The Union requested a presentation at the next MERC meeting.</p>	<p>Management will schedule a presentation for the next MERC meeting.</p>
<b>BUSINESS ARISING FROM NEW BUSINESS (LAST MEETING)</b>		
<b>1. MERC Terms of Reference</b>	<p>Management emailed the draft terms of reference to the Union on August 21, 2014.</p>	<p>The Parties will respond and finalize the Terms of Reference between MERC meetings.</p>
<b>2. Regional/Local Employee Relations Committees (RERCs/LERCs)</b>	<p>Management confirmed that the joint memo has now been sent to staff in the East region.</p> <p>The North region's RERC can be established once the Union confirms the OPSEU representatives.</p> <p>The parties agree that the Peel Service Delivery &amp; Mississauga Apprenticeship offices will be merged for their LERC.</p> <p>The Union has concerns that Kitchener and Hamilton are combined and Windsor and London are combined for LERCs given their geographic distance and the number of staff in each office. There would be more labour relations success if each of these offices has its own LERC.</p> <p>Management continues to consider the LERC composition in the West region.</p>	<p>Management to respond by September 24, 2014.</p>
<b>3. Health and Wellness Initiative</b>	<p>Management has confirmed that the Mental Health Initiative Lead will be scheduling the training with the Union stewards following management and employee training.</p>	<p>Once the schedule and locations have been confirmed, Management will provide that</p>

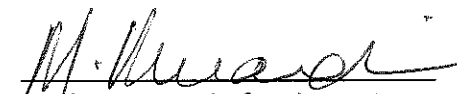
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	<p>The Union asked whether Joint Health and Safety reps can attend.</p> <p>Management responded that these reps will be part of the training given to employees.</p>	<p>information to the Union.</p>
<p><b>4. ETCs' Backups for Absences</b></p>	<p>Regarding the language in the CWW agreements indicating employees need to identify their own backups, ETD agreed that it is the manager's responsibility to identify and confirm backups for alternate work arrangements.</p> <p>The Union requested that each agreement be amended to stroke out this responsibility and that the manager and employee would initial this change in each agreement.</p> <p>Management agreed to the Union's proposal.</p> <p>The Union also raised concerns that it is not the employee's responsibility to find and confirm a backup for any planned absence.</p> <p>Management confirmed that it is the manager's responsibility to ensure a backup is in place. Managers and staff are encouraged to have a discussion about an appropriate backup in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Remove from agenda.</p>
<p><b>5. Reference Questionnaire</b></p>	<p>The Union is unable to provide any further information.</p> <p>Management notified the Union that HR will ensure proper use of the reference questionnaire template.</p>	<p>Remove from agenda.</p>
<p><b>6. Compressed Work Week (CWW) for ETOs</b></p>	<p>The Union raised concerns that some ETOs were being denied CWWs.</p> <p>Management confirmed that CWW agreements can be entered into annually, for each calendar year. Management will consider a CWW</p>	<p>Management will review later this Fall 2014 and confirm for 2015.</p>

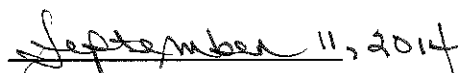
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	schedule for ETOs for 2015.	
<b>STANDING ITEMS</b>		
<b>1. Redeployment</b>	No update.	
<b>2. Seniority, Seasonal, and Fixed-Term Lists</b>	<p>Management provided these lists by email on September 2, 2014.</p> <p>The Union raised concerns that not all Seasonal employees are listed and some are on the Fixed-term list. The Union also requested that their total hours (i.e. seniority) be identified on the Seniority list.</p> <p>The Union also asked whether Seasonal employees have fixed-term contracts and, if so, if it is the same work. If that is the case, the Union asked why would the Seasonal contract not just be extended.</p>	Management to review and respond no later than the next MERC meeting.
<b>3. Ministry Diversity Initiative</b>	<p>The Ministry has a three-year plan, developed over the last four months, in consultation with the three Ministry divisions. A governance has been developed with representation from all levels and divisions of the organization. There are one- and two-year terms. Proportional representation will be by division and geographic region.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the working group to report to the lead regarding the implementation of the three-year plan. Some of the membership will be retained for the following year while new employees replace others.</p> <p>A 'bias awareness' training was provided for Ministry ADMs and directors and will be rolled out to all managers.</p> <p>In 2014, a specific focus was for aboriginal awareness in ETD. As such, aboriginal awareness sessions will be held for ETD staff. An</p>	

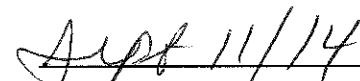
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	invitation has been provided to other Ministry ADMs to send staff who may find this session relevant to their work.	
<b>4. Employee Engagement Survey Discussion</b>	<p>The results are currently not available.</p> <p>The Union requested a copy of the results when available.</p>	Management to provide the results when they become available and schedule a meeting prior to the next MERC meeting.
<b>5. TCU Organizational Review</b>	<p>The Union asked if there were results available from the survey.</p> <p>Management responded that it is not available at this time.</p> <p>The Union requested a copy of the results when available.</p>	Management to provide the results when they become available.
<b>6. Employment Ontario (EO) Integration</b>	<p>Refer to June 6, 2013, MERC minutes.</p> <p>Management responded that the Western Region Implementation Team (WRIT) has disbanded.</p>	Remove from agenda.
<b>7. Delivery of Employment Services</b>	<p>a) Labour Market Agreement</p> <p>Agreement has been completed. ETD is moving forward with the Canada-Ontario Job Grant.</p>	Remove from agenda.
<b>8. Second Career Program Review</b>	The review has been completed but decisions have not been made yet.	
<b>9. SEG Management Consultant's Review of the Employment and Training Division (ETD)</b>	Management provided an update on the head-office review. The head-office review is complete. The report for the regional review has been completed. Decisions have not yet been made regarding the regional review.	Reword Standing Item to "ETD Regional Review."
<b>10. Training and Development</b>	The Ministry is conducting a 'needs assessment' with each ADM to review the training and learning opportunities the Ministry may	

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	offer, separate from the Centre for Leadership and Learning (CFL) courses.	
<b>11. Positions Being Filled on a Temporary Basis</b>	This issue is now the subject matter of a grievance and cannot be discussed at MERC.	Remove from agenda.
<b>12. Workload Issues</b>	a) Hamilton Office  The Union provided more specifics.	Management will respond by October 10, 2014.
<b>13. Channel Strategy Project</b>	Management provided a disclosure of the Channel Management Strategy. There are three channels: (1) in person; (2) by phone; (3) on-line. As an example, the Ministry is working towards a chat feature to facilitate communication with clients.  The Union asked what the impacts are to internal OPS stakeholders.  Management responded that the strategy is focused on the existing Employment Ontario (EO) network.	Remove from agenda.

  
Pat Macdonald-Rea, for Management

  
Mickey Riccardi, for the Union

  
Date

  
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