

**MINISTRY OF TRAINING, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
 MINISTRY EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE (MERC)
 31 Wellesley Street East, Toronto
 May 22, 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
 Todd Kilpatrick, Director, Finance, Analysis and Systems Support Branch, Employment and Training Division
 Jared Friesen, Employee Relations Advisor, Centre for Employee Relations, Employee Relations Division (MGS)

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
 Stephen George, OPSEU Job Security Officer

Guests:

David Fulford, Assistant Deputy Minister, Employment and Training Division
 Jan Hughes, Divisional Lead, Organizational Design, Assistant Deputy Minister's Office, Employment and Training Division
 Kevin Wilson, A/Team Lead, Centre for Employee Relations, Employee Relations Division (MGS)

Regrets:

Noah Morris, Director, Student Financial Assistance Branch, Postsecondary Education Division

***Chair of the Meeting**

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
1. Approval of Agenda	Approved	
NEW BUSINESS		
1. Channel Strategy Project	The Union requested an update on the Channel Strategy Project. Management provided a presentation on the project. The focus is on the client experience through service providers and that the service providers are meeting client needs more effectively and efficiently while improving accountability for outcomes.	Move to Standing Item

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	<p>The Union requested clarity on the impacts from a March 21, 2014 memo to service providers by the Employment and Training Division (ETD) regional directors. The Union has also requested formal disclosure on this initiative.</p> <p>The Union has expressed concern that this initiative was not disclosed to the bargaining agent even though the initiative was launched in 2013.</p>	<p>Management to provide formal disclosure by Friday, May 30, 2014.</p>
<p>2. Post-Retirement Benefits</p>	<p>The Union expressed concerns about the changes the OPS is implementing regarding post-retirement benefits and the process taken to implement these changes. The Union has concerns about fair treatment and sufficient recruitment and retention of employees.</p>	<p>Remove from agenda</p>
<p>3. Mississauga Office Local Employee Relations Committee (LERC)</p>	<p>The Union raise concerns that management at the Mississauga Office was not establishing a LERC upon the request of the Union.</p>	<p>Management will follow-up with the Mississauga office to ensure a LERC is established.</p>
<p>4. Transition Exit Initiative (TEI)</p>	<p>The Union asked if TCU is still approving TEI applications and if there is a quota.</p> <p>Management responded that the process has not changed and there are no quotas Applications are considered on a case-by-case basis as they are received.</p>	<p>Remove from agenda.</p>
<p>5. Compressed Work Week (CWW) for ETOs</p>	<p>The Union raised concerns that some ETOs were being denied CWWs.</p>	<p>Management will discuss allowing ETO's a CWW with ETD management and respond.</p>
<p>6. Ontario College of Trades (OCOT) Apprenticeship Packages</p>	<p>The Union raised concerns that Employment and Training Consultants (ETCs) are being directed to hand out apprenticeship packages on OCOTs behalf.</p> <p>As this matter is the subject of a grievance, the parties are unable to</p>	<p>Remove from agenda</p>

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	discuss this issue.	
7. OCOT Registering Apprentices	<p>The Union inquired whether OCOT will be registering apprentices.</p> <p>As this matter is the subject of a grievance, the parties are unable to discuss this issue.</p>	Remove from agenda
BUSINESS ARISING FROM NEW BUSINESS (LAST MEETING)		
1. MERC Terms of Reference	Management emailed draft terms of reference to the Union on May 14, 2014.	The Union will send their most recent version to Management by end of July 2014.
2. Regional/Local Employee Relations Committees (RERCs/LERCs)	Management will ensure the Northern RERC is established and in the other regions where LERCs have been requested that they are established. Management will also confirm whether the joint memo was sent in the East region and, if not, will ensure the memo is sent.	<p>The Union is forwarding this issue to CERC.</p> <p>Management to respond by June 15, 2014.</p>
3. Health and Wellness Initiative	Management has confirmed that the Mental Health Initiative Lead will be scheduling the training with the Union stewards following management and employee training.	Once the schedule and locations have been confirmed, Management will provide that information to the Union.
4. Travel Approval Process	Management confirmed that all ETD regions will provide pre-approval on a monthly basis allowing for some deviation. Should estimated expenses change beyond allowable variances, employees will require a new pre-approval for that time period. This process will start June 2, 2014.	Remove from agenda
5. Job Cross-Training	Management confirmed that its response at the last MERC meeting was its current position. If the Union has specific concerns regarding individual employees, that information can be provided to Management for review.	Remove from the agenda
6. Ministry Orientation Package	Recognizing that new employees receive information about which bargaining agent represents them in their offer letter, Management has also now included in the orientation package (under the section	Remove from the agenda

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	<p>“what you need to know”) a link to the bargaining agents’ respective websites.</p> <p>The Union inquired if there were general in-person orientation sessions for new hires.</p> <p>Management responded that there was no broad in-person orientation, but that employees meeting with their managers and each program area is responsible for its specific orientation and ensuring employees are aware of the Ministry orientation web site.</p>	
7. CWW Template	Management notified the Union that the rationale for the changes made to the CWW agreements in ETD will be reviewed for the following calendar year and attempts to minimize the changes and more closely follow the template will be made.	Remove from agenda
8. ETCs Backups for Absences	<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>	Management to take into consideration the Union’s proposal and will respond by June 30, 2014.
9. Workload Issues	Management has investigated the Hamilton office and determined that it is following standard staffing processes and that there has been no significant change to the number of positions. If there are specific concerns regarding individual employees' workloads, employees should speak with their manager.	The Union will take this under advisement and will respond as soon as possible.
10. Reference Questionnaire	The reference questionnaire provided was a customizable document from HROntario. OPS guidelines and procedures for reference checks are in accordance with the Human Rights Code. In	The Union will respond by the next MERC.

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	order to provide a response on the specific document received, Management would need to know who customized this document.	
STANDING ITEMS		
1. Redeployment	No update.	
2. Seniority, Seasonal, and Fixed-Term Lists	Management provided these lists by email on May 14, 2014.	
3. Ministry Diversity Initiative	<p>The Ministry has a three-year plan, developed over the last four months, in consultation with the three Ministry divisions. A governance structure is being 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>The diversity partnership program is in its mid-program review. The Union raised concerns that outcomes have not been measured and is hopeful that this mid-program review will measure and recognize the outcomes and benefits.</p>	
4. Employee Engagement Survey Discussion	<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.
5. TCU Organizational Review	<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.
6. Apprenticeship Modernization	As the Apprenticeship Modernization is the subject matter of a	Remove from agenda

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	grievance, the Parties are unable to discuss this item.	
7. Employment Ontario (EO) Integration	Refer to June 6, 2013, MERC minutes.	Management to respond regarding the Western Region Implementation Team (WRIT) by June 30, 2014.
8. Delivery of Employment Services	<p>a) Labour Market Agreement</p> <p>An agreement has been signed. There is no further update at this time.</p>	
9. Second Career Program Review	The review is currently on-going.	
10. SEG Management Consultant's Review of the Employment and Training Division (ETD)	Management provided an update on the head-office review. There is a greater emphasis on strategic planning and analytics. The head-office structure is now in place. There was no net change in FTEs.	
11. Training and Development	<p>The upcoming module training dates are below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Thinking – Tuesday, June 3, 2014 • How the Ontario Government Works – Tuesday, June 10, 2014 • Building Effective Work Relationships – Tuesday, June 17, 2014 	
12. Positions Being Filled on a Temporary Basis	<p>The Union raised concerns about the impact of the level of fixed-term hiring compared to permanent positions.</p> <p>Management responded that as of April 2014, fixed-term employees comprise approximately 8.33% of ETD staff. This is below the TCU rate of approximately 11.62%.</p> <p>There is no freeze on permanent hires, but are reviewed in the context of current environmental uncertainties and fiscal restraints.</p>	

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	The Union's position as that these positions should be filled permanently.	

Pat Macdonald-Rea
Pat Macdonald-Rea, for Management

Mickey Riccardi
Mickey Riccardi, for the Union

May 22-14
Date

May 27/14
Date