

**Ministry of Finance**  
**Minutes of Ministry Employee Relations Committee (MERC) Meeting**  
**April 28, 2020**

**For the Union**

Tracey Cribbs (Co-Chair)  
 Shanika Duncan (Member)  
 Kathleen Demareski (OPS negotiator,  
 OPSEU)

**For the Ministry**

Heather Bowie (Co-Chair)\*\*  
 Michelle Johnson (Member)  
 Michelle Gall (Member)  
 Nadia Williams (Member)  
 Antonia Lostoridis (Member)  
 Emily Zver (Member)  
 Katherine Gee for Denise O’Boyle (Employee  
 Relations – Resource)

Regrets:

Dave Bissoon (Vice-Co-Chair)

Guests:

Jason Stanley, Director, Business Services  
 Branch  
 Craig Blackwood, Senior Manager, Audit &  
 Inspections

(\*\*indicates meeting chair)

Date Tabled		Referred To	Action
Standing Item	<p><b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b></p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on February 25, 2020 were signed following the meeting and have subsequently been posted on the <a href="#">Human Resources intranet site</a> and OPSEU website.</p>		
<b>Standing items:</b>			
Standing Item	<p><b>1. Notifications</b></p> <p>Zero (0) Ministry disclosures have taken place since the last meeting of February 25, 2020.</p>		
<p>Standing Item</p> <p>2019/02/26</p> <p>2019/05/28</p>	<p><b>2. Health and Safety: Status of Divisional Workplace Violence Risk Assessments (WVRA’s)</b></p> <p>Annual WVRA report is expected in April 2019. WVRA Status Reports to be provided on a quarterly basis to JHSC. Management provided an update on potential process improvements.</p> <p>Management provided an update. Management provided WVRA quarterly status report on May 23, 2019.</p>		

2019/07/30	Management provided WVRA quarterly status report on July 16, 2019 and provided additional context and background at the meeting. Management to reconfirm that JHSCs have received reports. Site leads are responsible for doing the employee count and sharing the reports.	Management	Reports to be shared with JHSCs within 30 days. Management to follow-up on outstanding items and report back.
2019/11/26	Management waiting on the next quarterly report.		
2020/02/25	Report was shared on February 24, 2020. Union requesting information regarding the status of several items. Management to follow up with Business Services Branch to invite them to attend the next MERC meeting to provide an update.		
2020/04/28	Management provided answers to questions on April 27, 2020. The Union has additional questions regarding several items.  An update was provided, and the committee would like to thank Jason Stanley for attending.	Union	Union to provide additional questions
Standing Item	<b>3. Appendix 15 – Fixed Term Report</b>  The parties agreed to continue to review the Fixed Term Report to ensure compliance with the OPSEU collective agreement.	Union / Management	Management to continue to provide quarterly, in advance of MERC meetings. Management to investigate and report back.
2020/04/28	Report provided via email on April 15, 2020.		
Standing Item	<b>4. New and Reclassified Job Descriptions – Article 1.4</b>  The parties agreed to reflect this item as <b>New and Reclassified Job Descriptions – Article 1.4</b> for future meetings.		
2020/04/28	Of the four (4) position descriptions that were disclosed since February 25, 2020 to OPSEU with a copy to the Union MERC Co-Chair, four (4) were outside of the OPSEU bargaining unit.	Management	Management to continue to provide monthly, in advance of MERC meetings.

2019/07/30	<p><b>5. Transition Exit Initiative (TEI)</b></p> <p>The union requested information with respect to the number of OPSEU TEI applicants and approvals and to have this as a Standing Item on the agenda.</p> <p>When received, a TEI application is shared with OPSEU at disclosures@opseu.org. TEI applications that are approved or not approved at that time are also shared with OPSEU at disclosures@opseu.org. An application that is not approved at this time remains active for consideration until it is approved, or the employee withdraws it or retires.</p> <p>In terms of the more recent process of determining which request was approved and which was deferred, each application was reviewed on the basis of the position or function, not the person. Decisions were made based on the position's exit impact on the ministry's ability to continue to meet core priorities and direct services to the public.</p>		
2019/11/26	Ministry continues to review TEI applications and refer to the Employer on a case by case basis. Information continues to be shared at the corporate level.		
2020/02/25	No updates at this time.		
2020/04/28	No updates at this time.	Management	Updates to be provided as they become available.

**Previous Business:**

<p>2018/12/19</p> <p>2019/02/26</p> <p>2019/05/28</p> <p>2019/07/30</p> <p>2019/11/26</p> <p>2020/02/25</p> <p>2020/04/28</p>	<p><b>1. Loner Mobile</b></p> <p>The Union raised concerns regarding the loner mobile application used by inspectors.</p> <p>Management provided an update and sought clarification from the Union on the issue. Management to follow up.</p> <p>Management provided an update on the proposed procurement solution. <a href="https://www.blacklinesafety.com/wireless-gas-detection-lone-worker-solutions">https://www.blacklinesafety.com/wireless-gas-detection-lone-worker-solutions</a></p> <p>Management had no updates at this time.</p> <p>Management provided an update.</p> <p>Management provided an update that procurement is underway.</p> <p>Management provided an update that procurement has been completed. Next steps to be determined.</p>	<p>Management</p>	<p>Management to provide update as it becomes available.</p>
<p>2019/07/30</p> <p>2020/04/28</p>	<p><b>2. Toronto Transfer from Leased Space into Frost Complex</b></p> <p>Management provided an update on the relocation of some Toronto staff to the Frost complex, expected to occur in 2020. Management is in the planned information gathering phase, and will continue to provide updates to MERC as more information becomes available.</p> <p>MERC would like to recognize and thank Stephen Boyd and Emma Baker for attending MERC.</p> <p>A Deputy Minister memo was distributed on April 20, 2020 to provide an update on the Frost Complex Accommodations Project. In an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to protect the health of the people of Ontario, the physical construction within the Frost Complex will be temporarily postponed until further notice.</p>	<p>Management</p>	<p>Information to be shared when available.</p>

2019/07/30	<p><b>3. Mental Health in the Workplace</b></p> <p>The Mental Health Champions Committee was established in 2014 and is comprised of senior executives across the OPS. On July 25, the Mental Health Champions Committee introduced a new resource for Managers; titled "Meeting in a Box: A Mental Health Resource for Managers". This product has been created to support managers when engaging employees in open discussions about mental health in the workplace and is now available on the <a href="#">OPS Wellness site</a>.</p> <p><a href="#">Mental Health First Aid Basic</a> – This Mental Health First Aid Canada program aims to improve mental health literacy, and provide the skills and knowledge to help people better manage potential or developing mental health problems in themselves, a family member, a friend or a colleague.</p>		
2019/11/26	<p>Jason Stanley, Director Business Services Branch attended and the committee had a discussion regarding issues surrounding mental health in the workplace.</p> <p>The Union provided several printed resources with respect to a mental health survey and assessment.</p> <p>The committee would like to thank Jason Stanley for attending.</p>		
2020/02/25	<p>Union raised some questions/concerns regarding the launch of the Mental Health Allies Program.</p> <p>Management to follow up with Business Services Branch to invite them to attend the next MERC meeting.</p>		
2020/04/28	<p>An update was provided, and the committee would like to thank Jason Stanley for attending. The Union has additional questions that management will report back on.</p>	Management / Union	Updates to be provided.


2019/07/30	<b>4. First Aid Certification Training</b>  The union requested information on the status of First Aid Certification (procurement) and why it has been put on hold. The union has proposed a joint effort to ensure that there are current 'land-based' managers and staff at each Ministry of Finance location.		
2019/11/26	Jason Stanley provided an update that the ministry will be moving forward with coordinating first aid training for staff and management at the Frost Complex, 33 King St. W. and the regional offices.  The committee would like to thank Jason Stanley for providing an update.		
2020/02/25	Item deferred to the next MERC meeting.		
2020/04/28	An update was provided, and the committee would like to thank Jason Stanley for attending.	Management	Updates will be provided when available.
2019/11/26	<b>5. Workload Issues</b>  The Union raised concerns identified by the LERC's and Local Presidents regarding workload issues and work environment.  MERC committed to reaching out to their respective LERC counterparts to discuss this agenda item.		
2020/02/25	Hamilton LERC put forward suggestions and recommendations for the parties consideration to address workload issues.  The Union will follow up with the other LERC's who originally raised this concern to MERC.		
2020/04/28	Item deferred until the next MERC meeting.	Union / Management	To discuss further at the next meeting.
2019/11/26	<b>6. Student Hiring</b>  The Union has requested the number of 2020 summer employment opportunities (SEO) placements for Ministry of Finance.		
2020/02/25	Local 340 Union President, Rob Cox attended to discuss roles and responsibilities		

2020/04/28	<p>of summer students.</p> <p>The committee would like to thank Rob for attending.</p> <p>SEO program has not been cancelled. Further information to be provided as it becomes available.</p>	Union	The Union will advise the committee if any specific questions arise.
2020/02/25	<p><b>7. MOF LERCS – Regional or Amalgamation</b></p> <p>Union would like to discuss a plan to assist satellite offices without a LERC to create one representing them all.</p> <p>The parties will be investigating options and will report back at the next MERC meeting.</p>		
2020/04/28	<p>Item deferred until the next MERC meeting.</p>	Union/ Management	Parties to report back at the next MERC meeting.
2020/02/25	<p><b>8. Health &amp; Safety Steering Committee and Working Group</b></p> <p>Union would like to request an update on the status of the Health and Safety Steering Committee and Working group (see minutes October 3, 2018).</p> <p>Management continues to recognize the importance of the work of the committee and working group. They continue to meet regularly. Although this is a management led committee, they consult with staff as needed.</p> <p>Union requested an update on the MFTT Fuel Inspectors (see minutes March 21, 2018) which is currently under review by the Health &amp; Safety Steering Committee and Working Group.</p> <p>Management advised that road side stops have not been re-established to date.</p>		
2020/04/28	<p>An update was provided, and the committee would like to thank Craig Blackwood for attending.</p>	Union	The Union will provide additional questions for management review.
2020/02/25	<p><b>9. Ministry of Finance Information</b></p> <p>The parties discussed the webpage "<a href="#">Building Smarter Government that works for you</a>" and</p>		

2020/04/28	<p>management is committed to following the disclosure directive. Employees can visit the webpage for more information about the Ontario government's mandate.</p> <p>The Union will have more specific questions at the next MERC meeting.</p> <p>Item to be deferred until the next MERC meeting.</p>		Review again at the next meeting.
2020/02/25	<p><b>10. 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)</b></p> <p><a href="#">Q &amp; As</a> are available for anyone with concerns.</p>		
2020/04/28	<p>Announcements to All OPS Staff from the Secretary of Cabinet can be found on the <a href="#">TBS 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)</a> intranet page.</p> <p>The Deputy Minister of Finance distributed messaging to all MOF staff on March 24 regarding the delivery of critical services. Subsequently, management responded on March 30, 2020 to questions raised by the Union.</p>	Union / Management	Review again at the next meeting.

<b>New Business</b>			
2020/04/28	<p><b>1. Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)</b></p> <p>The Union requested a copy of the COOP in particular seeking sections 3 (COOP activities), 4 (Human Resources and Labour Relations) and 5 (Communications).</p>	Management	Management will review and report back.
2020/04/28	<p><b>2. Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA)</b></p> <p>Guidance material was shared with enforcement staff on April 16, 2020.</p> <p>Any new information will be shared when it becomes available.</p>	Management	Updates will be provided if necessary.
2020/04/28	<p><b>3. Article 25 (paid compassionate leaves)</b></p> <p>Management continues to review each request on a case by case basis. Managers are exercising flexibility with alternate work arrangements where operationally feasible.</p>		Remove from agenda.



	<b>Next Meeting</b> July 21, 2020, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm; 33 King Street West, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Oshawa		
	<b><i>Original signed by:</i></b>  _____ Tracey Cribbs  Dated: April 28, 2020	 _____ Heather Bowie	