



Border services workers meet to launch contract negotiations

Ottawa – More than 90 border services workers from across Canada met on the weekend to prepare its bargaining demands for upcoming contract negotiations with Treasury Board. The conference was organized after the Treasury Board failed to meet any demands brought forward by the union during the expedited process in fall 2010.

Representing over 9,000 enforcement workers employed by the Canada Border Services Agency, the delegates to the conference discussed critical operational issues and health and safety concerns.

“Our members are on the front lines protecting Canadians’ safety,” said Ron Moran, President of the Customs and Immigration Union, a component of the PSAC. “We expect the government to address the demands of border services employees to ensure parity with other unionized enforcement workers in Canada.”

Border services employees achieved their first collective agreement in 2007. While progress was made in the last round of negotiations, there is considerable work to be done in order to ensure that the collective agreement reflects evolving operational realities. These include adequate protections for those officers who are required to carry firearms, fair and transparent shift scheduling processes, and pension reform to ensure parity with other federal enforcement workers.

“The Harper government needs to recognize the contribution to national security by our border services members,” said John Gordon, National President of the PSAC. “We expect the upcoming budget to focus on strengthening public services such as border security, instead of misguided attempts to cut the deficit on the backs of working families.”

The delegates to the conference debated the priority issues that will be brought forward when the Public Service Alliance of Canada serves notice to bargain on February 21. They also discussed mobilization strategies to ensure the employer bargains in good faith and addresses employee concerns.

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