



2005 Budget Impact- Job Losses

Based on the CRA briefing the day after the budget and the documents that we have been provided, it is our belief that approximately 1200 – 1300 or more term jobs and 400 permanent jobs will be lost. The main areas of impact will be in the Cash and Counter Service areas and Tax Centres due to technology. This is the first time that we have had such an impact from a Government budget.

At the March 2005 Executive Council and Presidents Conference this was a priority topic of discussion among the 51 Local Presidents, the Council members and observers.

We are developing a campaign designed to save our members' jobs, that will commence April 1st. Each activist at the Conference was able to provide input into this campaign. A strategic **Budget Impact Committee** was formed to oversee the campaign. The committee is composed of the National President, Betty Bannon, Chairs of the following committees: Communications (Bob Campbell), Staffing (Kent MacDonald), Technological Change (Sabri Khayat), Workforce Adjustment (Nick Stein) and the Regional Vice President of the Pacific Region (Pamela Abbott).

The campaign will focus on three fronts: the membership, the public and the politicians. It is imperative that our entire 23,000 membership is engaged in this fight, whether they are directly impacted or not. You will

(Continued on page 2)



JUST DON'T DO IT!

UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS

If the access you are about to make at work does not relate to the duties of your job:
JUST DON'T DO IT!

You may think you are providing service to the public, but it could cost you your job. We continue to have members disciplined for unauthorized accesses, up to and including termination.

- Your computer screen reminds you
- The employer has reminded you
- The Union continues to remind you

Yet it continues.

Please ask yourself one question before you access any account: Does this access relate to the duties of my job?

If the answer is "no" then

JUST DON'T DO IT!

Betty Bannon National President

**SI VOUS PRÉFÉREZ AVOIR CE COMMUNIQUÉ EN FRANÇAIS, VEUILLEZ VOUS
ADRESSER À VOTRE PRÉSIDENT- E DE SECTION LOCALE**



A few words on Convention

Convention will be held July 13 –16, 2005 in Saint John, New Brunswick. Here we will elect our National and Regional Officers, pass a budget, discuss and vote on Policy Papers and resolutions that set the direction of our union.

Resolutions have now been received and are being categorized and assigned to the four pre-convention committees' meeting (Apr 21-24). The resolutions will be debated and recommendations made for the convention floor. The Saint John Host Committee has been busy preparing convention events for delegates and their families.

For further information please see our convention website at

www.ute-sei.org/convention

UTE UPCOMING EVENTS

April 21 - 24
Pre-Convention
Committees (Ottawa)

June 5 - 10
Executive Council
(Ottawa)

July 13 - 16
National Convention
(Saint John N.B.)

September 12 - 18
Executive Council &
Presidents'
Conference (Ottawa)



Darlene Muise, delegate at the March Presidents' Conference, presents her views on the new Budget Impact Campaign.

(Continued from page 1)

receive more information on the campaign from your local executive. You will be asked to participate in various activities to help save the jobs of your brothers and sisters in the affected areas.

Everyone needs to participate in this campaign. We are requesting a meeting as soon as possible with the CRA, to obtain more specific information as to the actual numbers affected, their location and the timing of the affects. As we obtain more information, we will be keeping the membership advised. If you have any questions, contact your local executive members.

Betty Bannon National President

Joint Union Management Term Study

As a result of a Memorandum of Understanding signed in March, 2002, between the PSAC and the CRA, a Joint Union Management Committee was formed to review the use of Term Employees within the CRA. The committee's final report identified 26 recommendations that were agreed upon. The employer has held two meetings with the Union (June 2004 and March 2005) to discuss the recommendations and a suggested action plan for the implementation of said recommendations. The employer is to finalize the Action Plan by March 31, 2005 and will then begin the implementation. The Union will be issuing a copy of the Action Plan to each Local. This plan will also be posted on the Union of Taxation Employees website.

www.ute-sei.org

Kent MacDonald RVP Northern & Eastern Ontario

It's Your Job Protect It

Since becoming an agency we have been in an almost constant state of instability. Reorganizations and technological advances are or will have a negative impact on staff levels in many offices, arguably the impact will be greater in Taxation Centres. Workloads and processes change; work comes and goes, but we remain to deal with this ever-changing environment.

For many of us apprehension and anxiety are becoming the norm and just something else we must endure each working day. Some hear veiled threats of office closures or workloads being sent to other sites. If we don't work harder, work will not come our way. Our employer does not understand that putting offices in competition with each other to attract work will be counter productive as stress takes its toll. The truth of the matter is most of us do a great job. It really does not matter how hard you work; the possible closure of any office will probably be a political decision. In these times of uncertainty do not buy into any veiled threats. Your peace of mind is far more important than anyone's bonus. Fear, intentional or not, is a tool used by some to wring more work out of employees or to silence those who have legitimate concerns in the workplace. That fear may cause some members not to access their union or insist on their rights as union members. In times of uncertainty it is more important to seek union protection.

Most members have a good work ethic. The best thing anyone can do in these uncertain times is go to work and do your job, not someone else's. Some members are working outside of their job description. Jobs evolve with time. Technology and changes to work processes will affect your job. You should ensure that your job description is current and complete.

(Continued on page 4)

UTE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL



ANOTHER BIG WIN FOR THE MEMBERS

The Public Service Staff Relations Board (PSSRB) issued another decision which represents a major win for you, the members. The Kreway Decision (file # 166-34-32055) confirmed the Union of Taxation Employees' (UTE) position. In Workforce Adjustment (WFA) situations, **positions are considered equivalent** when the maximum rate of pay for the higher paid position is no more than six percent (6%) greater than the maximum rate of pay for the lower paid position.

In this case, Brother Kreway was in an AS-04 position that was declared surplus and was not appointed to a vacant PM-04 position. As the difference between the two positions at that time was greater than four percent (4%), the employer viewed this as a promotion. Therefore, the reasonable job offer was a PM-02 position with salary protection.

The WFA Appendix of the Collective Agreement defines a reasonable job offer as **normally at an equivalent level**. Based on this decision, we believe the employer must identify all positions which are at an equivalent level.

It is imperative that all WFA situations be monitored closely. Ensure your UTE WFA committee is kept informed. This should include any situations where duties have been reassigned, etc. With the news from the recent budget showing staff reductions and work realignment in Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), we must be proactive in the workplace to ensure our rights are protected.

Pierre Mulvihill Labour Relations Officer

THE SUBTLE CONSEQUENCES

*if we could get each member to read and understand this simple story,
what a force we could be!*

A rat looked through a crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife opening a package. What food might it contain? He was aghast to discover that it was a rat trap. Retreating to the farmyard the rat proclaimed the warning, "There is a rat trap in the house, a rat trap in the house!" The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, "Excuse me Mr. Rat, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it."

The rat turned to the pig and told him, "There is a rat trap in the house, a rat trap in the house!" "I'm so very sorry Mr. Rat," sympathized the pig, "but there is nothing I can do about it but pray. Be assured that you are in my prayers." The rat turned to the cow. She said "Like wow, Mr. Rat. A rat trap. I am in grave danger. Duh?" So the rat returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer's rat trap alone. That very night, a sound was heard throughout the house; the sound of a rat trap catching its prey.

The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see that it was a venomous snake whose tail the trap had caught. The snake bit the farmer's wife. The farmer rushed her to the hospital. She returned home with a fever. Now everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup, so the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup's main ingredient. His wife's sickness continued so that friends and neighbors came to sit with her around the clock. To feed them, the farmer butchered the pig. The farmer's wife did not get well; she died. So many people came for her funeral that the farmer had the cow slaughtered to provide meat for all of them to eat.

So, the next time you hear that someone is facing a problem and think that it does not concern you, remember that **when there is a rat trap in the house, the whole farmyard is at risk.**

Author Unknown

(Continued from page 3)

The duties you perform determine the grade, level and the rate of pay you receive. Each of us should review our job description. If you do not have a copy, request one. Article 56 of our collective agreement provides that upon request, you shall be provided with a complete and current statement of the duties and responsibilities of your position. If your job description is not current or accurate, request that it be amended to reflect the new duties you perform. Upon completion, ensure that it is sent to classification for review. It is your job, you must protect it. Speak with a union representative if you have questions regarding the duties you are being assigned or require assistance with the process.

The rights that we have only exist if we as union members insist that those rights be respected.

John Kosiba Local 00042

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please note that all address changes should be done via e-mail to Sylvie Bastien (basties@ute-sei.org) at the National Office. If you do not have access to an e-mail, please pass it on (with your PSAC ID) to a local representative or mail it directly to the National Office at 233 Gilmour Street, Suite 602, Ottawa ON K2P 0P2.



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In January 2004, the Canada Revenue Agency established a project team to conduct a comprehensive study and assessment of the Agency's Classification Program and to make recommendations to modernize this program. This team has now completed its study and is in the process of making recommendations to the Agency Management Committee. Some of the initiatives that they will be recommending are the development of a shorter format work description, a reduction in a number of standards and the implementation of a greater number of generic and national jobs.

Once again, however, the Agency has engaged in this classification reform without any meaningful consultation with the Unions. If the Agency is truly interested in classification reform that would meet the approval of the Unions, we suggest that the bargaining agents should have been consulted extensively and meaningfully at the outset of the study and throughout. Perhaps, the bargaining agents could have been invited to nominate representatives to participate on the project team. We recognize that classification, pursuant to legislation, is the relatively unfettered right of the employer. We maintain that if the Unions and the employees whom we represent, are to have any confidence in any subsequent classification standard and system, it is imperative that Unions have meaningful input into the substantial components of any new system.

Currently, our jobs are still classified under an antiquated and gender biased Treasury Board system. Over the years, we have seen many attempts at Classification Reform, including but not limited to, the Universal Job Evaluation Plan, Universal Classification Standard, Agency Classification Standard for the Management Group (ACS-MG) and Agency Classification Standard for the SP Group (ACS-SP). Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately), all attempts but the ACS-MG were abandoned.

The Agency's classification reform is not scheduled for completion until the year 2014. It is the Union of Taxation Employees' position that this delay is particularly offensive in light of the fact that the Employer unilaterally and expeditiously implemented the ACS-MG standard for its Management Group and that currently a new Frontier Border Standard is being developed for our Brothers and Sisters in CEUDA and other parts of the Public Service. Representatives of the Union of Taxation Employees' had worked diligently on the establishment of the ACS-SP standard for our members, but this again was unilaterally and arbitrarily tabled by the Employer. We maintain that this standard is still workable and should be given the priority it deserves.

The Agency is considering an occupational group structure that includes only seven distinct groups and we agree that this is a step in the right direction. However, until such time as one, gender neutral standard is established against which all jobs will be classified, we suggest that any other standard will result in inequities, inconsistencies and unfairness.

Shane O'Brien Labour Relations Officer

**Member Package
For
Union Of Taxation Employees – PSAC**

For the past four years **Scotiabank** has been rated #1 among Canadian Banks for Customer Service (according to an independent survey completed by Market Facts).

At **Scotiabank** we take pride in this accomplishment and would like to pass this service on to the members and families of the Union of Taxation Employees.

Along with our superior customer service,
we are pleased to offer you the following unique benefits:

One year free service charges on personal bank accounts.

One year free rental of a safety deposit box.

A free confidential financial plan from our Investment Specialists tailored to
your financial needs.

A minimum 1% discount on any new or existing mortgage with no appraisal fees (3 year term or greater). In many switch cases, we are able to absorb discharge penalties and offer a better rate than the existing one. Let us show you how we can save you money.

Excellent rates on Guaranteed Investment Certificates.

Trusted advice on Mutual Funds, with no front or back end fees.

Free consultation to demonstrate how you can lower your borrowing costs
and improve cash flow by consolidating existing loan & credit card balances.

Please contact your local Branch.

If further assistance is required, Marc Salahor, Senior Manager, would be pleased to arrange an introduction to a conveniently located Scotiabank Branch in your area (613) 564-7687



MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

Limits for Pensionable Leave Without Pay

Hello. You probably don't know about this, but taking leave without pay may impact your retirement date. In January 1996, the *Income Tax Act* and the *Public Service Superannuation Regulations* were amended as follows:

Prior to 1996, regardless of how much leave without pay you took, it did not impact your pension, provided that you commuted that time. In 1996, the *Act* was amended to limit leave without pay to five years and parental leave without pay to three years that you could take without it affecting your pension.

How is it that we were not worried before by an amendment to the *Act* in 1996? For the simple reason that nobody had been concerned by these five-year and three-year limits. Over the years, and with all the new types of leave without pay (one-year parental, income averaging, self-funded, pre-retirement, etc.) some people (including union representatives) were given a warning that they were approaching the limit.

Being a union representative myself who regularly takes union leave without pay, I therefore became interested in this to find out if I should be concerned or not.

I'll give you a summary of my research. I won't go into all the calculation details here, but I will give you the highlights:

1. All leave without pay is included in the calculation, except sick leave and other related leave (disability and rehabilitation) and secondment leave.
2. A year is defined as 365 days. It's strange, but you need 365 days of leave without pay to make a year (so you have to add up all the days here and there to reach this total).
3. Leave of less than two hours is not counted, leave between two and six hours is considered half a day, and leave between six and eight hours is considered one day. For variable hours with nine hours per day, a special calculation is done.

The calculation takes weekends into account if the leave is longer than a week (e.g. a five-week leave with income averaging is equivalent to 35 days without pay).

What happens if someone reaches the five-year limit? Two things. First, there will be recovery of contributions for supplemental death benefit plans, disability insurance plans and long-term disability insurance plans. Second, all days over five years are added on to the retirement date.

That being said, you shouldn't be afraid because, if we look at how the calculation is done, it takes an enormous amount of time to accumulate one year. But all the same, with all the current possibilities, it's good to think about (or find out about) what can delay your retirement. So to close, if you think you have taken a lot of leave without pay and want to know how many years you have accumulated, you can contact your paymaster and request your calculation.



MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

This letter was sent to the CBC following a News program about Wal-Mart

I watched your story on Wal-Mart in Windsor. After the piece had finished I wondered about the employment of the young fellow in the report. I cannot imagine his life at Wal-Mart would be bright with promotion possibilities.

Unfortunately it is true that unions are on the decline in the workforce. Unions have forced employers to face up to unsafe working conditions, undemocratic labour practices, unfair wages and unequal wages for women. Many of the changes in workplaces are the result of battles fought by union members. Now the competition for a job forces people to work in environments where their concerns are consistently ignored by management. The one particular item from your news story regarding the cameras installed by Wal-Mart for monitoring the parking lot comes to mind. Why did it take your being on the site to have the cameras installed? And on the other hand, being a pessimist in the case of Wal-Mart, is anyone actually monitoring the camera(s)?

Unions have forced employers to pay decent wages, to pay attention to worker safety, to begin paying women a decent working wage (although there is still disparity between men and women), and to look at child care on the worksite. These are just a few but others would include paid sick leave, paid holiday leave, and marriage leave. Unions have a proactive place in the workforce.

Now prospective employees are in a work market where jobs have been out-sourced to underpaid, overseas workers. Employees are trying to pay for mortgages, schooling and healthcare with wages which reflect neither their work experience nor their living expenses. These expenses are being handed off to the general population to finance through untaxed Child Tax Benefits, GST rebates, and tax breaks for almost everything except being financially responsible for oneself.

These expenses will also have a long term effect on the under-funding of *Canada Pension Plan*, *Old Age Security*, health care, and education. Employees should be paid fair wages for the work they do. Employees should not have to worry about losing their jobs to offshore employers. I should be able to buy goods made in Canada.

The government is creating a welfare state funded by the middle class while allowing corporations to take jobs elsewhere. It is still a battle between the very rich, and those trying to make a living.

Florence E. Hawker, Vancouver, B.C.