

PRESIDENT'S REPORT
TO THE CONVENTION
2011

This is the fourth time that I have had the honour of presenting a President's Report to our National Triennial Convention. This report will cover the Stewardship of the Office of President for the last three years.

Under the By-laws of UTE, specifically By-law 8, the duties outlined for the Office of President are as follows:

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1- President

The President shall:

- (1) represent UTE on the National Board of Directors of the PSAC as required by the Constitution;
- (2)
 - (a) uphold the Constitution of the PSAC and the By-Laws of UTE;
 - (b) preside at all meetings and Conventions;
 - (c) be an ex-officio member of all Committees;
 - (d) perform all duties that are incidental to the office of President;
- (3) be responsible to the Executive Committee, to the Executive Council and to the Convention;
- (4) make written reports on the administration of the office and on the affairs of UTE to each regular meeting of the Executive Council and to each Convention;
- (5) be responsible for the administrative management, control and allocation of staff in the National Office;
- (6) be responsible for the receipt and keeping of all monies of UTE along with their disbursement under the direction of the Executive Council;
- (7) ensure that notices and agendas of each Executive Council, Executive Committee meeting, Presidents' Conference and Convention are prepared and circulated in advance;

- (8) be responsible for the minutes of all meetings of the Executive Council, Executive Committee and Presidents' Conferences and will countersign them along with the first Vice-President;
- (9) be responsible for the preparation of a complete record of any Convention;
- (10) ensure that copies of minutes of the Executive Council or Executive Committee meetings are sent to each Local within four (4) weeks and ensure that the record of any Convention is sent to each Local within four (4) months;
- (11) ensure that the National Office provides services in both official languages;
- (12) ensure that UTE directives, policies and procedures are updated and subsequently forwarded to Locals; and
- (13) discharge all duties and obligations imposed upon them by Convention and/or the Executive Council.

Although the Office of the President is directed by the specific duties listed in our By-laws, direction and/or guidance is also received from the Supreme Governing Body of our Organization, our Triennial Convention, the Executive Council, Executive Committee, Presidents' Conference, Locals and UTE members.

I have tabled written reports at each of the scheduled Executive Council meetings since the last convention, which were published with the minutes of the meetings.

Once again I can say that it has been a busy three years. This goes for the membership, local executives and stewards, as well as, the national executives. Much of the work of our national officers and local executives is keeping them occupied almost full time. Our employer has kept us busy and active and our membership demands the excellent representation that they expect from their Union, the Union of Taxation Employees.

I would like to formally thank the membership for their support of their Union, the Union of Taxation Employees. It must be stated clearly that without the membership, we could not accomplish anything. Our membership has shown repeatedly their commitment to achieving what is important to them. Their support in our endeavors does directly affect the outcome of our efforts. This is true whether it is while we are at the negotiating table, during our consultations with the CRA management at all levels or just attending our meetings. We must always make sure that our membership is engaged in their Union.

The local executives and stewards also deserve recognition as you are the front line of the Union for the membership. You are the ones who listen to members, represent them at the initial stages, deliver the Union message and conduct the votes and campaigns. Your work is invaluable to the organization. The cause for a great deal of the local activism of the membership can be attributed to the local executives and stewards. I know that at times it feels like a thankless job, but something always keeps us going. I call it dedication, drive, perseverance and maybe a real need to do the right thing. Whatever it is, it works. The CRA recognizes that we are not a Union to be taken for granted.

I would also like to thank the members of the Executive Council. They are all opinionated, passionate on issues and very vocal to say the least. However, for the last three years I can say that we have worked together as a unit regardless of the differences of opinions. We also experienced a change in the personnel on the National Executive which has brought a different dynamics to the table. However, for the last three years, once a decision has been made, there is a commitment to move forward and to get the job done.

Finally, I would also like to thank the Staff for their contribution to the Union of Taxation Employees. Their daily work and their work with the National Committees are exemplary and we have made a conscious effort to reduce the grievances on hand. I also welcome the Burnaby Fraser Call Centre local to their first UTE Convention.

I would now like to look back on some of the major issues that have faced us since our last Convention.

Negotiations:

During the press conference on November 1, 1999, I said, “the only good thing about going into Agency status was that we would finally be able to “bargain” directly with our employer and not the nameless, faceless people at Treasury Board. Our bosses all over the country could finally be held accountable for the state of negotiations”. We would also be able to pursue issues that were of specific concern to our members instead of having to share time with the diverse groups represented at the Treasury Board Tables. After five rounds of bargaining, I believe that all of our members are now paid higher than their counterparts in Treasury Board and we have clauses in our Collective Agreement that are specific to us. In each and every round we have had breakthrough demands for our members.

During the last round of bargaining we also had a **signed** agreement prior to the old one expiring and made history in doing so. This was no small feat and I give my full congratulations to the Negotiating Team for this achievement. This was also our second Collective Agreement that was finalized at the bargaining table and not in the boardroom of the Commissioner. I thank the PSAC-CRA Team for a job well done: from UTE, Denis Lalancette, Chris Aylward, Nick Stein, Shawn Bergeron, Pamela

Abbott, Jean-Pierre Fraser, Dawn Hardy and from the PSAC Gaby Levesque and Seth Sazant.

Finances:

I continue to fully support the changes that have been introduced over the last three years to tighten the spending and manage our assets. We need to continue to watch our funds, control our spending, account for our expenses and look ahead to see what we want to continue to spend our money on or what new endeavors we want to pursue. We should always be looking 4 or 5 years ahead.

The state of the PSAC's finances is also very important to UTE members. Effective financial control and monitoring within the PSAC was one of the things that UTE delegates demanded at every PSAC Convention. It is necessary if UTE members are to get value for their dues. That's why I stood for re-election to the PSAC National Board of Director's Standing Finance Committee and why I have been actively involved in its work over the last three years. I can report to this Convention that the finances of the PSAC have continued to improve over the last three years. I do attribute some of it to the activities of the PSAC Standing Finance Committee.

In 2007 I was also elected to sit on the PSAC Holdings Board of Directors. PSAC Holdings is a separate operating entity that owns and/or operates the largest PSAC asset, the building at 233 Gilmour and it's Regional Offices. The Alliance Headquarters building has been going through major renovations to bring it from a "C" class building to a "B" class building. These renovations continue as we meet.

Communication:

I know that we have continued to improve our communications with the membership over the last three years. The following are **some** of our activities:

- The invaluable work of our Communications Committee
- The UTE Newsletter
- The "Subscribe" system on our website
- The timely updating of our website
- The continued updating and distribution of our publications
- The continued training aspect of our Presidents' Conferences
- The UTE training courses and sessions on specific issues that are conducted either nationally or regionally
- The updating of our computer and technology needs
- The reporting of the work of all of our Committees
- Our Regional and National Conferences

Also under the heading of communication, I want to address the e-mail system. At the last convention I quoted how many e-mails that I had dealt with over a period of about a year. So this time, I kept track of how many e-mails that I have sent since July 16th, 2008, the opening day of our last convention. I chose how many that I have sent

instead of how many I received because like everyone else in the world, I receive spam and the count would not be accurate. Since our last convention to the date of writing of this report (June 15, 2011) I have SENT 16,091 e-mails. With e-mail people also expect immediate answers to their e-mails and that is not always possible. Sometimes they send another one to follow up on their first one. Well guess what, that doesn't speed things up, in fact, it slows things down. E-mail is a wonderful tool but we need to remember that it is only a tool. The telephone is also another wonderful tool that we should not forget about in the event that an immediate answer is required.

CRA Staffing Regime:

Staffing within the CRA is protected by the legislation that enacted the Agency. Currently the only thing the Agency has to do is submit a report to Parliament, which I believe no one will even read. This has been an area where our gains have been slow in coming. However, even using the rules that the CRA has put in place, we have had few failures to date in our challenges using the Independent Third Party Review (ITPR) process. As you are aware, the UTE LROs are conducting the representation for all ITPRs and will continue to do so. We also submitted a very detailed report to the Auditor General in answer to her audit report on CRA Staffing. This report was also shared with all of our Locals and the CRA Officials.

We should also continue to table staffing demands at the bargaining table and educate the members as to their importance. It would be wonderful if the members were willing to strike over good staffing language.

PSAC National Board of Directors:

As National President of the Union of Taxation Employees, I am a member of the National Board of Directors of the Alliance where I represent the interests of our members. I serve on two of the Alliance's NBOD Standing Committees, the Finance and the Collective Bargaining Committee. I am also a member of the interim Political Action Committee and the Special Structure/Roles and Responsibilities Committee. The work on the latter committee has been tediously slow over the last three years.

The Board meets three times a year and I have presented resolutions on behalf of our Executive Council and our members. Most have been adopted. On issues that came from other Components, Committees, or the Alliance Executive Committee, I have voted in accordance with UTE policies and in the best interest of our members. Brother Bob Campbell is always present at the Board to provide me with advice, whether requested or not.

However, there are times that I feel that UTE and maybe a few others are the lone voices at the Board. There are times that I don't understand why the majority of Board members are voting the way they are particularly when it comes to upholding the PSAC Constitution. However, I always voted with the UTE membership in mind.

UTE Committees:

The committees have been extremely active in pursuing their mandates and reporting to the membership through their minutes or Executive Council Reports. Some have also issued Bulletins or Memoranda for the locals to circulate to the membership. There continues to be a need for improvement in the completion of requested surveys or information to the locals. The Committees that seek information from the locals in order to conduct their work require this information or they would not be asking for it. Most of the committees are autonomous with the Chairs keeping the National President informed of their progress. There are times however when the National President is requested to intervene or meet with the CRA or the PSAC on behalf of a committee. However, happily this is rare.

Executive Council Activities:

The following is a list of **some** of the items that the Council has dealt with over the last three years:

- Numerous donations and sponsorships
- Increased the list of approved Non UTE Events
- Dealt with the unfinished business from the last Convention
- Adopted the Committee assignments
- Continued to support the International Children's Awareness organization both financially and by sending volunteers to work with Captain Smith each year (one fully funded student and one subsidized member) and also decided that if in a given year UTE does not receive a qualified applicant for a student and/or member, the monies that would have been spent be donated to ICA directly.
- Updated the UTE Resolutions of record
- Developed rules around the spending of discretionary funds from the Regional budgets
- Looked at the feasibility of having a UTE Blog or Chat forum
- Approved an Action Plan against our negotiated economic increases being rolled back by the government
- Standardized the raises for the two elected officers to be commensurate to what the membership (SP-05) receive
- Established an interim Membership Appreciation Fund until the 2011 Convention
- Created one new local: Burnaby Fraser Call Centre
- Reallocated and/or approved overspending on budget line items, as required
- Created the UTE Community Service Award
- Adopted several recommendations from the Honours and Awards Committee to present various Awards
- Adopted proposed changes to the By-laws and Regulations to submit to this Convention
- Met with the CRA Management at the Regional and National levels on a variety of topics

Health and Safety:

I continue to co-chair the National Occupational Safety and Health Policy Committee. This committee is mandated by legislation to meet four times a year. Our work consists of issues that are of a national nature and those specific issues that cannot be resolved by a local Occupational Safety and Health committee.

The UTE Standing Committee on Safety and Health also held Regional and a National Conference since our last convention.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP):

The UTE Standing EAP Committee held a National Conference since our last convention and the members of this committee were also approved to attend various symposiums that were addressing EAP. They have also met with the CRA Management on a scheduled basis regarding matters relating to the CRA EAP.

Equity:

Since the last convention, there have been Regional Equal Opportunity Conferences and one National Conference. A wide variety of issues were discussed and presented at these conferences. I attended all Regional Conferences and the National Conference and in my opinion, all of them were extremely well received by the participants. The organizers should be very proud. To my knowledge, the UTE is one of the first Components that provided such conferences for their membership. Every member is welcome and there is no one who does not learn, teach, or share something at these conferences. We are an inclusive union that attempts to educate the membership on all issues. The Union is a part of equity and equity is a part of our Union.

A Rule of Life:

In life, you only need two tools: WD-40 and Duct Tape. If it doesn't move and should, use the WD-40. If it shouldn't move and does, use the duct tape.

In conclusion, the UTE has always functioned as an "organization", not single individuals. The Executive Council must work together, as well as in harmony with all of the locals. The initial membership contact is at the local level so it is extremely important for most of the activity to take place at that level. This is where local development, guidance and experience can be shared by the Regional Vice-Presidents and National Officers. But first and foremost the locals must have vitality, be visible to the membership, have the expertise needed to do the job and operate as a single unit as UTE when required (i.e.: during bargaining or separate campaigns taken on by the UTE etc). We have made progress over the last three years but there is still work to be done.

However, I continue to see local executives spending a lot of time and energy fighting among themselves. This is neither productive nor healthy for the membership of a local. The only ones that this hurts is the membership and it certainly does nothing for the credibility of the organization with the employer. Hours and hours are expended by local, regional and national officers dealing with this issue and it has to stop. We do not have to be best friends and like everyone to work effectively with them. This was something that I addressed at the first Presidents' Conference after I was elected twelve years ago and it seems that no matter how many times I try to address it, it still doesn't go away and frankly I am at my wits end on this issue. If you are involved because it is all about "you" then you are not here for the right reasons. There is no "ME" in UNION! But all I have been hearing for awhile is me, me, me....what is in it for me? That attitude is not THE UTE WAY! Our members should be the first and last thought on everything that we do and in the decisions that we make. Our membership should be the reason and motivation for everything we do, including why we are involved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "BBannon". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Betty Bannon
National President