



THE TELEGRAPH

March 08, 2010

Business Manager Update

By
Tim Brower



The Next Round of Bargaining

After the last round of contract negotiations Local 424 initiated a Supreme Court Challenge to the bargaining rules and regulations found in the Alberta Labour Code. The Labour Code forces us into a form of sectoral bargaining that grouped us together with other trades. The Code also allows that when a certain percentage of Trades reach a deal the other trades, still bargaining, are forced to binding arbitration.

In past rounds of bargaining 424 has been shafted by this rule and left without a contract for almost two years. In the last round we were the last Union to reach a deal before the threshold was reached. We missed being out in cold again by the narrowest of margins.

As Business Manager, I have always considered my top priorities to be: representing the membership; getting the work for our members and; getting the best Collective Agreement possible. It is regarding "getting the best contract" that I want to update members on discussions now underway between the Recognized Employers Organizations (REO's) and Building Trades of Alberta (BTA).

The talks concern ways to improve our bargaining procedure and altering the grouping of Unions in such a way that we can better bargain in the next round.

The REO's are willing to make bargaining changes in order to avoid the costly legal battle involved with our Supreme Court Challenge, a challenge that has been joined by three other trades and consolidated through the BTA. The legal challenge is expensive for unionized workers as well and, while an important cause, we would have no control over government actions that would leave us with an expensive moral victory of no practical use.

Simply put, the Provincial Government could open the Labour Code at any time and make our challenge pointless. Many Trades worry that opening the Labour Code could also result in other changes that would hurt unionized labour.



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The real value in the Court Challenge has been to get the Employers to the table. Changes must be made that will limit or prevent the employer's ability to manipulate the bargaining procedure by pitting the Trades against each other. Until that occurs, the Supreme Court Challenge remains in place and talks continue between the BTA and the REO's.

I will update the members on any progress as it occurs but in the meantime I welcome any thoughts you have.

Membership Development Corner

I recently co-chaired the Energy Workforce Strategy meeting in Calgary. This meeting was attended by senior people from Suncor, Syncrude, Shell, Alberta Building Trades, Ledcor, Nexen Energy, Apprenticeship Industry and Training, the Alberta Government Employment and Immigration Department and several private sector interests.

There were two presentations made. The first was by the Construction Owners Association of Alberta. It focused on workforce requirements for major projects and shut downs. The second was by a senior Manager of Nexen about ways that Nexen is addressing skills shortages.

Maintenance requirements and future Oil Sands projects are increasing the demand for skilled labor in Alberta. At the same time, baby boomers are beginning to retire so there is a major emphasis on training and mentoring younger people to take over.

There was discussion of the up-coming work in the Maritimes and Ontario. The consensus of opinion was that this would restrict the ability of employers that were not signatory to the Building Trades to gather un-employed tradesmen from these areas to work on the projects instead of Albertans. That is good news for IBEW Local 424.

One important bit of information that came forward is that Oil Sands owners are looking south to the United States for workers instead of off shore. In addition to the significant cost savings for bringing Americans here instead of offshore Temporary Foreign Workers, there is the advantage of a common language and shared trade knowledge. This suits us at the IBEW very well. I know Business Manager Brower is working hard to cut through the jungle of red tape to get our American Brothers and Sisters up here to work. I can report that we're getting closer to that goal.

Al Brown-Membership Development



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MANPOWER REPORT

This information is for the benefit of our members and is current as of publication.

Contractor	Project	On-site	Status
Chemco/North Pointe	Keephills-PLA-COE	340	Hiring-peak 360-possible nightshift
Chemco	Hardisty-COE	30	May hire-short term
Various Contractors	Scottford-PLA	3100	Hiring-some LOA
Various Contractors	Edmonton-Commercial	200	slow
Jacobs	SERP-Syncrude	125	Some hiring-completion 2011 11 & 3 schedule
Various Contractors	Calgary south-all projects	140	Slow-some small projects coming
Fluor Constructors	Kearl Lake-PLA	20	Just starting

DISPATCH REPORT

DISPATCHED FROM January 25, 2010 TO February 25, 2010

JOURNEYMEN - 634
 4th YEAR APPRENTICES - 58
 3rd YEAR APPRENTICES - 54
 2nd YEAR APPRENTICES - 53
 1st YEAR APPRENTICES - 09
 TRAVELERS - 389
 JOB ENTRIES - 144

REMAINING ON THE OUT OF WORK LIST:

JOURNEYMEN - 1930
 4th YEAR APPRENTICES - 90
 3rd YEAR APPRENTICES - 100
 2nd YEAR APPRENTICES - 130
 1st YEAR APPRENTICES - 90

March 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 <i>Lethbridge Info Meeting</i>	3 <i>Med. Hat Info Meeting</i>	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 <i>Red Deer Info Meeting Retirees Edmonton</i>	11	12 <i>Initiation</i>	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 <i>Initiation</i>	20
21	22	23 <i>Unit 3 Unit 4 Meetings</i>	24 <i>Unit 2 Meeting</i>	25	26	27 <i>Unit 1 Meeting</i>
28	29	30	31			

Monthly Union Meetings

Unit 1-Edmonton(Radisson Hotel 4440 Gateway Blvd. in the Richmond & Victoria room) 9:00 a.m.
 Unit 2-Calgary (3615-23rd Street N.E.) 8:00 p.m.
 Unit 3-Fort McMurray (check job line or website for location) 8:00 p.m.
 Unit 4-B.A. Members-Edmonton (4232-93 Street) 7:30 p.m.

Monthly Information Meetings

Lethbridge (207-13th Street North) 7:00 p.m.
 Medicine Hat (954-7th Street S.W. Callahan Inn) 7:00 p.m.
 Red Deer-Room (Room 101-5116-47th Street) 7:00 p.m.

Initiation Classes

Held in Calgary, Edmonton and Fort McMurray-if you are invited you will receive a letter in the mail with location information and time. You must register to attend, as per the letter as space is limited.

Retirees Meetings

Edmonton-Wednesday March 10th at 1:30 p.m. at the Edmonton Training Centre

April 2010

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

				1	2 <i>Offices closed Good Friday</i>	3
4	5	6 <i>Lethbridge Info Meeting</i>	7 <i>Med. Hat Info Meeting</i>	8	9 <i>Initiation</i>	10
11	12	13	14 <i>Red Deer Info Meeting</i>	15	16	17
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Retirees Meetings

Edmonton-Wednesday January 13th at 1:30 p.m. at the Edmonton Training Centre