

## Agreement improves access to temporary positions



The issue of whether a member could apply for other jobs while in a posted temporary position was the subject of a grievance between the Board and the CEU. The following Board positions were in dispute:

- Temporary employees in posted temporary positions were told they were “not available” for other assignments, and therefore could not apply for any other job for the duration of the posted temporary position. But, they were allowing any temporary employee who wanted to apply for a permanent job to do so.
- Permanent employees were told that the restriction period under Article 17.06 (i.e., the minimum period an employee is precluded from applying for posted positions) was in effect while they were in temporary posted positions. So these members could not post for any other job, while in the restriction period.

### The Settlement

The terms of the settlement to the grievance are explained below:

#### If you are in a temporary position and want to apply for other temporary positions

- The Article 17.06 restriction period applies to you regardless of whether or not you are a temporary or permanent employee. Pay groups 1 to 10 are precluded from applying for other temporary positions for a period of six months from the date of accepting the position; pay groups 11 to 25 are precluded for a period of 15 months.
- All employees can ask for a waiver from the director of their current department.

#### If you want to apply for permanent positions

- As a temporary employee, you are eligible to apply on posted permanent positions at any time.
- As a permanent employee, you are eligible to apply

on posted promotional permanent positions at any time, with an approved waiver.

- The following conditions apply if you are applying for a promotional opportunity from your substantive (permanent) position:
  - o You will not be denied a waiver unless operational requirements deem it necessary for you to remain in your current position.
  - o The parties will meet to see if a creative solution can be worked out when a director is considering denying a permanent employee a waiver.
  - o If the parties cannot agree on a solution, the Board retains the right to deny the waiver, and the CEU retains the right to grieve the denial.

### The benefits of this settlement

The CEU is satisfied with this agreement because it:

- Provides all employees equal access to temporary postings following the completion of the restriction period
- Confirms that temporary employees are able to secure permanent work
- Ensures that permanent employees will not be unduly restricted from accessing promotional opportunities

Your shop steward has a copy of this new Letter of Understanding. It has also been posted on the CEU web site, [www.ceu.bc.ca](http://www.ceu.bc.ca)

### If Microsoft built cars

*-John Jacobs/IBLW Local 435 Newsletter*

You'd crash twice a day.  
 You'd have to press the start button to turn the thing off.  
 You'd have to close any open windows before backing up.  
 New windows would pop up and block your view—unless you used the Microsoft Firewall, in which case you'd be asked if you really want to trust content from traffic lights and stop signs.  
 Every time you replaced a tail-light, you'd have to change drivers.



# Impact

NOVEMBER 2006  
 COMPENSATION EMPLOYEES' UNION

## Unionized Canadian compensation employees “compare notes”

The CEU “compared notes” on the state of workers’ compensation across Canada at the Conference of Canadian Compensation Unions (3CU), held in Barrie, Ontario, from October 26 – 28. Conference participants are the unions for workers’ compensation board employees across Canada and are affiliates or locals of the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) or the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE).

The purpose of the bi-annual conference is to share information on what’s going on in each board. The participants started meeting about twelve years ago. The 3CU forum allows the unions to identify trends across Canada and to learn about strategies used by other unions.

Topics on the agenda included:

- Technological and organizational change
- Collective bargaining
- Workload strategies and stress
- Pay equity and job evaluation

B.C.’s Claims Management Solutions (CMS) project, which includes the partnership with Ontario and Cúram to build the common core workers’ compensation “green box”, was a major item of discussion. All boards have seen significant technological change over the last few years, but B.C. and Ontario lead the pack with CMS and ICAM (Integrated Case and Account Management) – Ontario’s equivalent to B.C.’s “blue box” (WorkSafeBC Cúram Asset).

Conference participants expressed concern about:

- The potential auto-adjudication systems such as CMS have to lead to further privatization of workers’ compensation or the introduction of employer pay systems
- The narrowing of workers’ rights and entitlements
- The de-skilling of jobs and job loss for employees

CEU President Sandra Wright spoke about the CEU’s campaign on public workers’ compensation (see the April 2006 *Impact* for more information). The campaign’s philosophy is expressed in, “Principles of a Fair and Comprehensive Workers’ Compensation System”, a document developed at previous 3CU meetings. It is often referred to as “The Stanhope Manifesto” as the concept of developing the principles was first discussed when the unions met in Stanhope, PEI. (This document is posted on the CEU web site under “The Stanhope Manifesto”.) Ontario also has begun a campaign on these principles.

In endorsing the principles, participants agreed that each province would launch a campaign similar to the CEU’s. The other jurisdictions have also seen rights and benefits and pensions for injured workers eroded in ways similar to B.C.’s changes. Collectively, each province’s initiative will constitute the cross Canada campaign announced at the conference.

“This campaign will bring fairness and equity to Canadian workers and their families, and reaffirm the historic compromise, which balances the rights of workers and employers,” said Dave Cutler, President of CUPE Local 1063 representing the Manitoba Board’s workers.

Sandra Wright, Frank Lanzarotta, David Farrell, Jane Player, and Stan Reese represented the CEU at the conference.

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CEP

# Alcohol and drug policy makes peer support available to CEU members

One of the positive things that the CEU and the Board have worked on together in 2006 is the Alcohol and Drug Policy. When asked for her view of the policy, CEU President Sandy Wright had this to say: "Right now, it's just being implemented. But, over time, the CEU expects that it will be held in the same high regard as the Joint Return to Work Program."

Through the Drug and Alcohol Policy, the CEU and the Board want to help employees with alcohol and drug dependency restore their health, quality of life, and effectiveness at work. We also want to make sure employees with alcohol and drug addictions receive the same care and consideration as employees with other health problems.

This article outlines the principles of the policy and describes the peer support system, which is a key way of putting the policy into practice.

## What principles is the policy based on?

The policy is built around these important principles:

1. Alcohol and drug addiction is a serious health and safety issue.
2. Dependence on alcohol or drugs is viewed as a disability. (The B.C. Human Rights Code includes drug and alcohol addiction in its definition of disability.)
3. Alcoholism and drug dependency are treatable and progressive diseases.
4. A consistent approach of providing support and treatment to employees improves the chances of a full recovery.
5. The probability of lasting recovery improves with appropriate intervention and treatment.
6. Gaining access to care that is non-judgmental, supportive, and understanding is an essential step in dealing with the disease of addiction.
7. Employees must be able to self identify, in a confidential manner, that they have, or may have, a substance addiction and be assured that they will be provided with support and resources to receive the treatment they require.

## How will the policy be put into practice?

The Alcohol and Drug Policy is jointly managed through a committee of CEU and Board representatives. The members of the committee are:

**CEU representatives** – Frank Lanzarotta, Deborah Payment, and Carol Velon

**WCB representatives** – Val Molloy, Gavin Muir, and Wendy March

The committee has the responsibility to oversee the development, implementation, and ongoing effectiveness of the policy.

## Why do we need a drug and alcohol policy?

Many of us may not be aware that some of our colleagues struggle on a daily basis with drug and alcohol addiction. Drug and alcohol abuse and addiction are pervasive in Canada, and given the size of our workplace, we are not immune to these issues.

The disease of addiction can become overwhelming if left untreated. It significantly impacts an individual's physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual well-being.

There have been many occasions over the years when the Board and the CEU have faced the challenge of helping employees with alcohol and drug addictions. In some cases, the employee's illness was significantly impacting their work, their families, and their health. Because the Board did not have a policy, help was provided on an ad hoc basis. The Drug and Alcohol Policy will guide the parties in the future and ensure fair and consistent support for those that need it.

## What are Peer Supports?

When drafting the policy, the committee realized that employees needed help to get the information, support, and encouragement they required to seek and obtain assistance. Thus, employees have been identified in many Board locations that are committed to helping co-workers with alcohol and drug problems. We have called these individuals Peer Supports.

The individuals selected to be Peer Supports are trusted and respected by their colleagues. They will

deal with the people who approach them in a neutral, non judgmental way. Having Peer Supports in many locations makes them generally more accessible in the work place (although employees can access any Peer Support in any work location).

The Peer Supports are not advocates for colleagues with dependency issues. Neither are they counselors, nor are they experts on addiction. They are a resource for employees. They have received training on the Drug and Alcohol Policy and the process, and they know what services are available to employees. They provide a voluntary, confidential service for all employees who may wish to seek them out. (See the sidebar for Peer Support contact information.)

## What other ways are there to get help?

Here are some other ways you can obtain the information and treatment you may require for drug and alcohol dependency.

- You can speak to:
  - o A CEU shop steward
  - o A Return to Work Coordinator
  - o Your Manager
  - o Your Human Resources Manager/Advisor
  - o A member of the Joint Committee for the Alcohol and Drug Policy
- You can contact the Board's Occupational Health Nurse, Corrina Hellens. She is an independent resource, knowledgeable about the policy and what is available to employees.
- You may also contact the Joint Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP).

## If I go on leave to undergo treatment, will I get help returning to work?

The Alcohol and Drug Policy supports rehabilitation and the return-to-work of employees who have had problems with alcohol or drugs within the principles of our existing Return to Work Program. As with any other return-to-work, the process would be tailored to your needs.

## Where can I get more information on the policy and resources?

For additional information regarding the policy and resources available please visit the Alcohol and Drug Policy website on WSN.

## Peer Supports

The names, locations, and contact numbers of the Peer Supports are as follows:

### Richmond

Larry Gregg, 604-231-8416  
Alex Jackson, 604-276-3020  
Lynn Slater, 604-214-6916  
Sara Strachan, 604-276-3009

### Nanaimo

Tom Keane, 250-751-8011

### Kelowna

Bev Sharpe, 250-717-4368

### Prince George

Joyce Judge, 250-612-4940

*You can contact any of these Peer Supports; you do not have to contact one in your office.*

## Summary of Support Available Under the Drug and Alcohol Policy

Many types of support are available under the Drug and Alcohol Policy. For example:

- You can get a referral to substance abuse professionals specializing in assessment, treatment, and recovery plans
- The Board will pay the cost of an assessment conducted by a substance abuse professional
- If you require treatment that is not covered by the provincial health plan or your benefit plans, the Board will provide you with an interest free loan
- You and your family can access services available under EFAP (Employee and Family Assistance Program)
- Peer Supports, the Occupational Nurse, and the Return To Work Coordinators are available to help you
- You will be given appropriate time off work in accordance with Article 34 - Sick Leave and Article 22 - Long Term Disability of the Collective Agreement
- Periods of treatment will be recognized as periods of sick leave absence, as is done with other forms of ill health
- If needed, the Return To Work Coordinators will consult with you to develop a graduated return to work program or modification of your duties
- All your personal and private information including your health or medical issues related to alcohol and drug addictions will be treated confidentially