



Reports of National Departments

- National Services*
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- Union Development Department*

NATIONAL SERVICES

Daria Ivanochko, National Managing Director

CUPE's Department of National Services is comprised of four branches: communications, equality, legal, research, health and safety and job evaluation. The Department also includes: senior economist, senior officer, policy and planning; senior officer, international solidarity; anti-privatization coordinator (till 2014) and senior officer, political action.

These four branches and senior officers perform the core of the work within the department but they do not do so in isolation. Most activities involve multiple branches and departments and involve members and staff as well as other unions, community coalitions and non-governmental organizations. It is the primary task of national services to provide overall oversight, direction and coordination of this work for CUPE.

The Department of National Services works to implement CUPE's social, economic and bargaining policies and conduct research and policy analysis in support of those goals. CUPE delegates to the 2013 national convention adopted many resolutions along with a major strategic directions policy paper, *Proud of our Past, Ready for the Future*. The resolutions and the policy paper form the basis for our work in 2013-2015. A Blue Print for the Future emphasized several priorities including: 1) Strengthen and Expand Our Membership 2) Achieve Real Gains for Our Members – It's Time For a Raise! 3) Achieve Real Gains for All – Make Progress Politically; and Socially; and 4) Supporting Strategic Directions.

Each branch and staff within national services is mandated to meet these objectives, often working in conjunction with the Union Development Department, the Department of Organizing and Regional Services, the Department of Finance and Administration, the National President's Office and the National Secretary-Treasurer's Office, as well as our allies in labour and the community.

National Defence Fund

National services is responsible for the administration and oversight of the national strategic initiatives portion of the National Defence Fund. The \$2,050,000 budget is designed to fund several distinct areas of work within the union: a) sector meetings and issues; b) CUPE activity at meetings hosted by employer organizations; c) innovative communications and research activity; d) initiative's and sponsorships to provide visibility for CUPE at cultural and political events, funding for our international program and support for strategic coordination of CUPE locals; e) support for legal interventions related to our policy

work and lobbying and political action; f) support for community coalitions; and g) support for various other campaigns and initiatives.

Economy

CUPE senior economist, Toby Sanger works with all branches to provide economic analysis, commentary, information and support for bargaining, economic education and advocacy relevant to the work and priorities of the union.

Brother Sanger produces considerable material for his own and the National President's presentations and media work on economic issues. He provides analysis and support for regional divisions, researchers and locals on a range of economic issues and works with allies advocating for economic policies in the interests of CUPE members. This involves developing CUPE's pre-budget submissions and budget analyses; presentations at legislative committees, conventions and conferences, analyses at the national, provincial and local level; specific research reports; rebuttals against misinformation and attacks on key issues (including austerity, public sector pay and privatizations), and making the economic case for stronger public services, fairer taxes, higher pay and greater equality.

A major priority has been on increasing economic capacity among CUPE members. This has involved holding two sessions of popular economic breakfast presentations at all regional and many sector conventions with Brother Paul Moist. Three years ago we launched a new quarterly publication through communications entitled *Economy at Work* produced by Brother Sanger. This past year he also started a new e-weekly sent out by CUPE entitled *Eye on the Economy* to help CUPE members and staff make sense of economic events. Together with this, we are developing more online economic tools and resources. We may not have the financial capital or control over media that our adversaries have, but we do have the power of our people, which is why developing the capacity and confidence of our members and allies on economic issues is so important.

Priority issues over the past two years have been:

- Combatting austerity, cuts to public services and suppression of public sector worker pay.
- Exposing public-private partnerships, problems with contracting out and privatization and advocating for public alternatives.

- Promoting progressive and fair taxes at federal, provincial and municipal levels.
- Development of CUPE's fair funding toolkit for cities and communities Building Better Communities.
- Working with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to secure increased funding for municipalities.
- Promoting strengthened public services, particularly in CUPE's priority areas of retirement security, health care and child care.
- Supporting campaigns for greater equality, higher minimum and living wages, better labour standards.
- Defending more equitable public sector pay scales, including updates with the CCPA to CUPE's Battle of the Wages report.
- Working with electoral and other allies to develop progressive alternatives and policies.
- Initiatives on Good Jobs and progressive policies on climate change.

Brother Sanger works especially closely with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, where he is a research associate and key contributor to the annual Alternative Federal Budget, and with the Canadians for Tax Fairness, where he is a board member and key economic and tax advisor. He contributed chapters to the recent books *The Great Revenue Robbery* and *Tax is Not a Four-Letter Word* and also provided research background to the directors of the recent documentary films, *The Great Canadian Tax Dodge* and *The Price We Pay*.

Political Action

From 2013 to 2015, we have had municipal and school board or provincial elections in practically every province. Sister Archane Rampure has supported the implementation of regional election plans in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island as well as supporting regions that have carried out work around municipal and school board elections. Working with other national services staff in the research, legal and communications branches, Sister Rampure has also been working hard to ensure that CUPE's response to federal legislation has also been a mobilizing opportunity for our members. We have been particularly engaged with Bills C-525 and C-377, both of which take aim at the union movement, as well as on the Conservatives' many omnibus budget bills.

On the federal legislative front, Sister Rampure and other staff from National Services have been working with the federal NDP on some of CUPE's priority issues: child care, infrastructure funding, the changes to airline flight attendant ratios, health accord, the *Elections Act* and Bills C-377, C-4, C-51, C-2 and C-525. Some of this work has also

focused on other bodies such as the Council of the Federation and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities as well as ad hoc groups that have sprung up in response to various events such as the People's Social Forum which was held in Ottawa in August 2014. CUPE was part of the organizing for the People's Social Forum for over a year, and spent staff time and resources to recruit members to attend the opening rally on the August 21st as well as a series of CUPE workshops on the *Let's rethink child care* campaign, *Resisting Water Privatization* and on *I ♥ (Love) Public Health Care* campaigns and the Public Services workshop where Brother Moist spoke. Much of the work on key campaigns has involved coordinating CUPE's work on these files with the work of the CLC and other affiliates as well as with our partners in social movements such as the Council of Canadians, the Canadian Health Coalition, Canada without Poverty and others.

Work on the federal election has been ongoing since the last federal election. Our work has involved educating CUPE members on the importance of the election, identifying critical "swing" ridings where CUPE activists can help the federal NDP to win and then working to ensure that our rank-and-file members know where the parties stand on the four key issues of child care, health care, retirement security and good jobs.

This work is done to help locals and members understand why CUPE supports the NDP. Preparation for the federal election has involved extensive travel and working with regional staff who have taken on the responsibility of being the regional election leads.

Members such as those who sit on the National Political Action Committee play an essential role in organizing their co-workers and getting out the vote. They will continue to play a pivotal role in assuring success this October.

The division conventions this spring, have provided additional opportunities to highlight the importance of the 2015 federal election and the impact of federal legislation on CUPE members. Sister Rampure has attended several conventions and met with CUPE members in sector and regional groups to encourage continued political activism.

International Solidarity

CUPE is committed to creating a culture that supports the rights of workers around the world. Over the past two years, we have developed and sustained partnerships and relationships with unions and social movements around the world over. Today we support worker-to-worker, union-to-union solidarity in Colombia, Nicaragua, Honduras, Cuba and the Philippines and we continue to support and learn from the strong social movements

emerging to fend off privatization and maintain public services, defend human rights, and promote climate justice.

In 2014, national services led CUPE's assessment of our international solidarity work, as per Resolution 181 adopted by convention in 2013. Members and allies from across the country gathered to discuss CUPE's vision for international solidarity and our future action. We drew lessons from the campaigns and struggles of our sister and brothers around the world, and developed an International Solidarity Policy Statement that adapts to our changing world and supports strengthening our relations and actions in solidarity with global struggles. The policy statement was adopted by the NEB in December 2014.

National services has supported the participation of several CUPE activists on international delegations. Brother Peter Dawson participated in a Common Frontiers-led election observer mission to Honduras in 2013. Sister Dianne Frittenburg and Sister Joëlle Ravary participated in a CoDevelopment Canada-led labour delegation to Nicaragua and Honduras to mark International Women's Day and to meet with our Global Justice Fund partner organizations in 2014. Sister Gloria Lepine, alternate diversity vice-president aboriginal to CUPE National Executive Board and Chief Steward CUPE 3550 participated in a KAIROS-led Learning Tour to the Philippines in 2014 in response to an appeal from Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in Zamboanga del Sur region who are affected by the Canadian mine TVI Pacific.

Following the devastation of the Rana Plaza building collapse in Bangladesh in 2013, which claimed the lives of over 1,200 workers, national services worked with the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) and the Maquila Solidarity Network (MSN) to support a Canadian tour of Kalpona Akter, executive director of the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity (BCWS). At our invitation, Sister Kalpona toured across Canada to inform the general public of the current situation of Bangladeshi garment workers producing clothing for multinational corporations. This visit led to a Parliamentary/Canadian Labour delegation to Bangladesh to commemorate the first year anniversary of the Rana Plaza building collapse, and provided the opportunity to meet with trade unions, NGO's and government officials in Bangladesh to hear firsthand the challenges they face to protect the safety and rights of workers. National services international solidarity staff continue to support and oversee a multi-union project with the BCWS.

In April 2015, national services supported a seven person delegation, led by Brother Charles Fleury, to Mexico City to attend the Public Service International (PSI) Inter-American Regional Conference (IAMRECON). National Services continues to support CUPE priority work with the Global Union Federations (GUFs) and coalitions through the collaborative relationships we continue to strengthen with PSI, the Canadian Labour Congress International Consultation Committee, Common Frontiers (CF), and the Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC) to name a few.

International solidarity officer, Sister Kelti Cameron, continues to administer and report on the Global Justice Fund, and liaise with our partners working and mobilizing in Asia and South and Central America. A great deal of time is devoted to soliciting reports and project proposals from our international partners, and to further engage locals and divisions in our international solidarity work broadly. The sisters and brothers continue to remind us that CUPE's solidarity and efforts to foster worker exchanges are of critical importance to their organizing efforts and in some instances to their safety and survival.

We are working hard to create opportunities to ensure information about our international work is shared and is linked to CUPE's fight back and organizing efforts. National services international solidarity supported the inclusion of international solidarity in the CUPE National Human Rights Conference in 2015 and worked closely with the Equality Branch to support a panel discussion on the topic of engaging members and our communities.

National services continues to collaborate with the Communications Branch to produce an *International Solidarity Annual Report*, and three Global Justice newsletters per year. The *International Solidarity Annual Report* is mailed to all CUPE locals and our partners and allies in the government, the labour movement and in the community every fall. We were pleased to support the inclusion of a Global Justice focus section in the winter edition of *Counterpoint* in 2015.

We are pleased to report that the collaboration between National services, the CUPE National Global Justice Committee and Union Development Department as resulted in a new CUPE international solidarity course which is available as of July 2015.

Finally, we take seriously the need to respond when critical events occur globally. National services has supported CUPE's efforts to speak out when global events require solidarity, and to call on the Canadian Government to act, or to be held accountable for their inaction and complicity when necessary.

Policy and Planning

Sister Carol Proulx, senior officer in national services, has as core responsibilities project planning, management and implementation of strategic directions and resolutions, as mandated by CUPE national conventions. Working in the policy and planning position since its inception seven years ago, Sister Proulx coordinates policy work in national services, under the supervision of the managing director. The focus of the assignment continues to evolve as CUPE's needs and work progresses.

Strategic initiatives are the priorities of our union's work. Sister Proulx project managed, coordinated and supported a number of initiatives, working in collaboration across CUPE National departments and branches.

- The International Solidarity Strategy Meeting brought together members, staff to discuss the principles and positions that inform our international work. Working with the international solidarity officer, we developed a vision for this work to integrate a global labour perspective, updated our international policy statement, and proposed strategies to expand the resources for our global justice project work.
- CUPE Human Rights Conference in Winnipeg, February, 2015, was a major project involving all CUPE departments, with direction from the Equality Branch. Over 500 participants explored equality and social justice in the context of today's challenges. We planned an engaging conference that allowed us to develop strategies and actions that will help us advance human rights and equality in the workplace and in our communities, focusing on our strengths in bargaining, mobilizing and political action.
- CUPE National All-Committees bi-annual meeting brings together CUPE activists sitting on the 17 national committees, working groups, task force and council. We designed a process to examine where we have power and consider opportunities to build a progressive labour movement and strong communities. We discovered approaches that would help us connect with our members and build community.

Sister Proulx, with support from the Communications Branch, completed the HIV toolkit for CUPE members and staff. The policy booklet that provides the context of our HIV work as a labour and human rights response, the adopted CUPE HIV and AIDS policy, and suggestions for locals to become involved. The kit also includes CUPE Health and Safety's updated HIV fact sheet, and a bargaining checklist. The new HIV poster is graphically designed from original art commissioned for this project. The kit materials are available and will be launched

officially in preparation for World AIDS Day, December 1, 2015.

Sister Proulx submission on behalf of CUPE to the Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, calls for the immediate withdrawal of Bill C-2. The Harper government continues to oppose Supervised Injection Sites, drafting legislation to create significant barriers to harm reduction programs, and to promote a 'law and order' agenda. The Supreme Court has ruled against such an agenda and views the approach as discriminatory on the basis of disability. The submission supports CUPE locals 1004 and 1936, of the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, InSite project. CUPE members have endorsed resolutions and policies on harm reduction and Supervised Injections Sites (SIS).

Anti-privatization work is ongoing across teams to coordinate efforts, centralize resources and respond to request from CUPE membership, as well as tracking regional and local efforts resourced by the Anti-Privatization Fund. She provides support in reviewing applications for the Fund, tracking and reporting the campaigns, and acts as point person for regions to direct requests for resources and assistance.

From Strategic Directions, we determine the scope of our union's work for the upcoming two years. Sister Proulx develops our tracking systems, scans, templates and reports to help us manage projects, initiatives, and priorities.

CUPE has a requirement under the *Federal Lobbyist Act* to register all of our federal lobbying activity. Trade unions must file an initial return with the Lobbying Commissioner and then update that return on a monthly basis. National Services Department oversees this responsibility and Sister Proulx, works with Sister Fortin and our Legal Branch to ensure our compliance.

National standing committees

National services provides administrative, financial and policy oversight for CUPE's 17 national standing committees, working groups, task force and council. These groups provide advice to CUPE's National President and National Secretary-Treasurer as well as the National Executive Board. At times the committees take key roles in the implementation of activities on the ground and in the assessment and revision of education courses or other tools used by the membership. Staff advisors to these groups come from National Services, Organizing and Regional Services and Union Development Departments.

The committees, working groups, task force and council are:

- National Aboriginal Council
- National Advisory Committee on Pensions
- National Child Care Working Group
- National Contracting Out and Privatization Coordinating Committee
- National Environment Committee
- National Global Justice Committee
- National Health Care Issues Committee
- National Health and Safety Committee
- National Library Workers' Committee
- National Literacy Working Group
- Persons with Disabilities National Committee
- National Pink Triangle Committee
- National Political Action Committee
- National Post-Secondary Education Task Force
- National Rainbow Committee
- National Women's Committee
- National Young Workers' Committee

Reports from these committees, working groups and council are available in your convention materials. Also, look for their audio-visual report during convention business.

Staff changes and acknowledgements

The directors of the constituent branches of national services face heavy assignment lists, looming deadlines and short notice requests. I appreciate their work immensely as they have coordinated hundreds of activities to provide exemplary service to the members.

These directors are: Nancy Rosenberg, Legal; Heather Fraser, Communications; Elizabeth Dandy, Equality; and Shelly Gordon, Research, Health and Safety and Job Evaluation.

I want to thank Brother Toby Sanger, senior economist, for his steadfast commitment to all things progressive. In this period of economic uncertainty and threats to public services, public sector unions and to the working class, He provides clear and insightful analyses to the National President and National Secretary-Treasurer offices, the National Executive Board, our members, our staff and allies in the community.

Sister Carol Proulx, senior officer, policy and planning, is tasked with many and varied responsibilities and is expected to bring some semblance of order and coordination to the complementary processes of

formulating and implementing policy. Her work is central to our efforts to ensure that our policy is implemented in a timely and effective manner. It is not an easy task but she rises to the occasion with enthusiasm, skill and determination.

Sister Archana Rampure, senior officer, political action has developed close working relationships with a wide variety of allies as well as our labour partners and the NDP. Her sensibility, discretion and strategic thinking has kept us up-to-date on political trends and legislative challenges. Her enthusiasm for all parts of campaigning allows her to report on our many election campaigns from the ground level. She also reminds us frequently to view the sometimes complex political matters from the perspective of our rank-and-file and for that we are all grateful.

Sister Kelti Cameron, senior officer, international solidarity has a deep commitment to developing solidarity at a worker-to-worker and union-to-union level on issues that cross national boundaries. She has developed a broad range of contacts resulting in new projects and new lasting relationships with many organizations. I thank her for her unparalleled commitment to strengthen our international program.

Sister Mary Catherine McCarthy, national coordinator anti-privatization, retired in 2014 and she quietly provided advice and assistance to staff, our standing committees, or members and many others on anti-privatization, contracting out and contracting issues. I thank her for sharing her extensive knowledge. And wish her and her family all the best on her retirement.

I would be remiss if I did not thank National President Paul Moist and National Secretary-Treasurer Charles Fleury and their respective staff for their ongoing support and advice. The staff is integral to the teams constructed to carry out our mandate.

I also wish to thank the clerical staffs who make National Services run smoothly. Sister Melissa Fortin works as the bilingual executive secretary. Her dedication, patience, attention to detail, good judgement, and sense of humour makes an invaluable contribution to CUPE goals. I would be lost without her. I also welcome Sister Stéphanie Lévesque our new bilingual clerk-typist. Sister Nicole Chenier retired earlier this year after supporting the department for many years. We wish her all the best in her retirement.



National Services

COMMUNICATIONS

Heather Fraser, National Director

Nationally and regionally, CUPE's Communications Branch provides a range of services for members, locals, and divisions.

These range from assistance with materials; campaigns to protect important public services or build our union's image in the community; support for bargaining; help in dealing with the media; planning and implementing cost shares between national and locals; mobilizing members; translating materials into English, French - and providing strategic advice about what to do and how to say it.

At any given time there are more than two dozen - communications representatives working in the branch, plus support staff who play a key role in all the work we do. The majority of the work is on regional assignments supporting local, regional and division priorities in the field. Ottawa-based staff focus on national issues and campaigns, work with the national officers; provide support for other departments and branches like research, equality and organizing; maintain our website, cupe.ca; help expand our social media capacity; provide technical web support to locals and regions; and prepare and design a host of CUPE publications.

Read on to find out more about what we do.

Online communications: cupe.ca and social media

Since the last convention, we have launched our new and improved website. As well as featuring a new look designed for both computers and devices, the new site puts resources for our members right up front – whether it's bargaining resources, health and safety fact sheets, or our publications for members.

Among the new features are online registration for workshops and events, the ability for members to look up information about their local through our national site, and an improved system for members to order materials from CUPE.

Finally, the new cupe.ca has a bunch of features to make it easier to share interesting information on social media – and we've been deliberately packaging our information, especially our publications, to be easier to share.

When it comes to social media, the landscape has changed dramatically since our last convention. We've more than doubled the number of people who follow our Facebook page, which has significantly increased the number of

people we can reach online. An equally important part of increasing the number of people we can reach has been in creating and sharing the most current, relevant and dynamic content so that our members and allies want to share our content with their friends, families and communities.

This means that we are now regularly reaching hundreds of thousands of Canadians through Facebook, using their friends, family, and co-workers as our spokespeople.

As a result of the better social media integration, our audience on Twitter has also more than doubled since the last convention. As with Facebook, we continue to be a leader in the labour movement on this online community.

Since many members rely on email for news about CUPE, we've updated our email distribution systems and are actively collecting email contact information for those who want to keep in touch.

Finally, we've continued to develop new and modern designs for the websites we host for our union locals and divisions. Since the last convention, we've worked with an additional 200 locals to help them improve their current sites or to create new ones.

Media Relations

We continue to support the National Officers in their roles as national spokespersons for CUPE. Issuing hundreds of news releases, opinion articles and letters to the editor each year nationally and in every region of the country, we continue to promote CUPE and unions as counter-balance voice against right wing think tanks and politicians attacking the principals and values of the labour movement, workers, and the public services CUPE members deliver every day.

Developing key messages on core work and on emerging issues is also an important task in our branch to ensure that CUPE's leadership is equipped to speak on key issues with a common message.

This year, we developed new media relations training to broaden CUPE voices with the news media. This will help better convey the messages and stories of CUPE members, and the issues they care about, across the country.

We also continue to constantly monitor the media for breaking stories and commentary to find opportunities to

shape the narrative and to keep CUPE's leaders and staff informed on key issues.

Publications

CUPE produces publications to address key issues for members and the union. Each of these publications has been recently updated. The result: modern, accessible, interesting publications, which deliver critical news and information to our members.

We've also revamped all of our publications so that they can be shared by email as well as in print, web and on social media, and we've been rapidly growing those email lists. If you're not receiving these publications, and you'd like to, you can subscribe at cupe.ca/subscribe.

Publications include:

- *CUPE Celebrates*, the annual report of our unions' activities
- *Counterpoint*, CUPE's quarterly newspaper – giving an overview of CUPE activism across the country
- *Tabletalk*, all about bargaining
- The annual *International Solidarity Report* and the quarterly *Global Justice News* to chronicle our work around the globe
- *The Canary*, a vital source of information on workplace health and safety
- *Economy at Work*, a key tool to navigate the big picture of the economy.

National and regional communications staff also provides support for division publications.

Anti-Privatization

CUPE's national anti-privatization communications work continued to promote the benefits of publicly-delivered services and publicly-owned infrastructure. Our focus on the dangers of public-private partnerships expanded to also highlight new forms of privatization like social impact bonds and asset recycling. Ongoing polling and focus group work has allowed us to track issues and trends in public opinion and refine our messaging to better support local and regional campaign work.

Production continued on a series of profiles of the corporations likely to bid on Canadian water and wastewater P3s. The branch also supported the publication of two case studies of detailing the problems with recreation and education P3s, and an updated edition of *Our Best Line of Defence*, CUPE's guide for locals on how to use our collective agreements to fight privatization.

We campaigned against water privatization in partnership with the Council of Canadians, and as member of the Coalition for Bottled-Water Free Communities. Communications support also continued to CUPE's work opposing the Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), which will promote and lock in privatization of public services.

Our branch also worked to enhance CUPE's pro-public messaging by supporting the development of a research paper and popular toolkit promoting public, progressive sources of municipal revenue. The toolkit shows that P3s are not the only way to finance a much-needed renewal and expansion of water and wastewater systems, roads, bridges and other vital municipal infrastructure. We launched this positive vision at the 2014 annual conference of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and have rolled out a user-friendly advocacy toolkit in several municipalities.

Training and Resources

In addition to update media relations training, CUPE Communications staff deliver training to members through our Communicating CUPE courses. We are working with the Union Development Department to update the course to keep it fresh and relevant.

The branch also supports the development of a range of resources for members including fact sheets and guidelines on a range of topics from health and safety to human rights, brochures, sector profiles, promotional material, a new organizing kit, a new members' kit, and resources for local communicators including newsletter and website templates.

Working with the Union Development Department, communications assists in developing graphics for new workshops such as the new bargaining workshop and we also help bring union education closer to our members through the web.

We are constantly updating our tools and tactics to expand our reach and effectiveness online.

Strategic Directions/Resolutions

Much of our day-to-day work supports the priorities and undertakings approved in CUPE's 2013-2015 strategic directions and resolutions passed at the 2013 convention. This includes support for the following campaigns.

- The 2015 federal election – including materials, tools and tactics to engage members in the election, raise key issues important to our members and work to elect the NDP.

- The health care campaign to protect, strengthen and expand Medicare – including materials, an earned media strategy, support for town hall meetings and the saveourhealthcare.ca website.
- CUPE’s child care campaign and multi-union “Let’s rethink child care” campaign – including a dedicated website and social media presence and a variety of tools for locals and activists.
- The campaign to expand the Canada Pension Plan and defend our workplace pensions – including online resources and petitions, campaign materials and new resources to help defend workplace pensions. CUPE also campaigned against changes to Old Age Security (OAS) that increased the age of retirement from 65 to 67.
- The Scrap the Changes campaign against changes to Canada’s Employment Insurance program – including support for on the ground campaigns in the Atlantic and Maritime regions as well as national materials and tools.
- Our campaign with the Trade Justice Network to stop the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement – including support for rallies, earned media, events and actions.
- The Airline sector 1:40 campaign – The campaign to maintain the ratio of one flight attendant to 40 passengers was supported with a range of lobbying and communication tools.
- CUPE’s Economic literacy efforts – including the production of a series of videos, which highlight the causes of inequality and possible solutions. We also supported the National Presidents breakfast series on the topic.

Ongoing Campaigns and Projects

Nationally and regionally, communications staff helped members, staff, and leaders develop hundreds of campaigns to win contract settlements, and for cost shared, strike averting, anti-privatization and around other import public policy issues. In 2014 alone, the communications team supported more than 70 cost-shared campaigns.

Other campaigns and projects included defending our pensions; responding to federal and provincial government budgets, responding to Conservative bills like Bill C-377, C-525 and Bill C-51, defending Radio Canada from cuts, fighting the privatization of Ontario Hydro and

supporting the union’s literacy work. These are just some of a large number of campaigns and issues specific to one province or region that are too many to list.

Helping to promote the work of our Equality Branch on a number of women’s issues, Aboriginal issues, temporary foreign workers, precarious work, and disability rights is also front and centre in our work. We supported the development of anti-harassment materials and helped mark a variety of commemorative days throughout the year. Work is ongoing to support the equality history project to document and celebrate achievements and milestones.

CUPE’s international solidarity work adapts to the needs of our changing world. Communications helps deliver that work through video solidarity messages, articles written for the Global Justice newsletters and web stories on topics like water privatization that link our work overseas to local bargaining. We also assist with letters of concern to governments and messages of solidarity to our sisters and brothers around the globe.

The Communications Branch continues to provide support for the *Unite for Fairness project* to connect with our 633,000 members. We’ve collaborated on leaflets, displays, fact sheets, materials, kits and other resources.

Polling

We use polling and other opinion research tools to help us better argue in favour of maintaining public delivery of public services, defend our jobs and pensions and support the campaigns on priorities issues. Polling projects and key issues covered include:

- National privatization focus groups and polling on privatization threats in a variety of regions
- Focus groups and polling with CUPE members and the public about the federal election
- A wide variety of polls associated with bargaining
- Support for the CLC-led project to improve the labour movement’s image (Fairness Works)
- Ongoing participation in the Union Opinion Project
- Opinion research on our messages around health care
- Support for the first ever comprehensive survey of CUPE members

Many of these polls were undertaken as part of cost shares with locals.

Design Work

Layout and design services are provided centrally in Ottawa for CUPE, divisions and locals. Since the last

convention our graphic designers have completed hundreds (approximately 500 a year) of design tasks – from simple buttons for a local campaign to complex work on major publications and displays. They continue to turn around growing numbers of high quality materials in very short timelines.

Conferences, Conventions and Special Events

Branch staff worked hard on a range of conferences, conventions and special events including the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and Canadian Library Association annual meetings, the Council of the Federation, Canadian Health Coalition lobby days and conferences, NDP conventions and the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association, the People’s Social Forum, Labour Day events and the Broadbent Institute Progress Summit.

Providing support for CUPE’s first-ever National Sector Council Conference and the National Human Rights Conference was also a key focus of our work. These national events had robust communications support from registration and event planning through to material production and event staging. This year, communications staff in the regions and from the national office attended and supported all CUPE division conventions as well as a large number of regional and division events and conferences. The Communications Branch also plays a key role preparing for the National Convention – overseeing all design work, videos, promotion and coverage.

With all events we strive to ensure CUPE’s brand as a credible, modern, member-driven and thoughtful organization is demonstrated throughout these events.

EQUALITY

Elizabeth Dandy, National Director

Introduction

The Equality Branch promotes an understanding of the systemic barriers faced by equality-seeking groups and identifies systemic remedies to support their empowerment. We bring a human rights/equality analysis to the work that CUPE does, and develop expertise to promote and defend the human rights of all of our members, to insure a more representative union, workplace and society, and to assist frontline servicing staff with these goals. The branch provides advice to members and staff on diverse equality issues, such as bargaining equality, organizing in diverse workplaces, pay equity, employment equity, harassment, anti-oppression and duty to accommodate.

Context

Canadian unions have experienced unprecedented legislative attacks on labour rights, affecting our most vulnerable, precariously-employed members who are predominantly from equality-seeking groups. Governments and employers across the country have also used privatization, deregulation and concessionary bargaining to reverse equality gains like pay equity, employment equity and the equalizing effects of public sector employment and programs. The spread of two-tier wages, pensions and benefits disproportionately harm equality-seeking workers who are concentrated in low-pay and precarious sectors and occupations.

Growing diversity in Canada and barriers to good jobs for newcomers, racialized workers, Aboriginal peoples and persons with disabilities have led to calls for more a representative public sector and employment equity, both through negotiation at the bargaining table and new legislation. Young workers from equality-seeking groups face particular challenges. Lack of representation in public sector jobs, and the precarious nature of work for these groups make it particularly challenging for them to participate as union activists and in leadership positions.

The outcome of the past term of the federal government is an extremely dismal human rights record. The government has systematically targeted and scapegoated equality-seeking groups and tried to silence their advocates. Bill C-51, *Anti-Terrorism Act*, has exacerbated this, providing for a range of measures that allow people to be detained based on little evidence. The government has also increasingly used the Temporary Foreign Worker Program to allow businesses to exploit low-wage migrants in Canada

who have little in the way of citizenship rights. The list of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls continues to grow while the federal government refused to address this human rights crisis.

In the context of growing inequality, criminalization and insecurity, some Canadians along with governments, police, employers, the media and other institutions have stigmatized and isolated marginalized groups, blaming them for social and economic problems and creating a culture of fear. Police shootings of black people in the United States and Canada, and the lack of justice for victims and their families have led to widespread protests. In Canada, xenophobic responses to refugees and migrant workers, the criminalization of Aboriginal peoples, the backlash against reproductive rights and cuts to disability supports – these developments signal a worrisome trend.

In light of these trends, many of the influential progressive movements that have emerged in recent years are rooted in equality-seeking groups or take a strong anti-oppression approach. This includes, for example, #BlackLivesMatter, Idle No More, living/minimum wage campaigns and mobilization for refugee and migrant worker rights. Equality issues like duty to accommodate, mental health, same sex marriage and gender identity rights are some of the areas where we are making gains. It is crucial that we continue to connect with these movements and gains. We need to frame issues like union security, anti-privatization and austerity as equality battles.

Priorities

Committees

Equality staff provide assistance to five national committees, including the National Women's Committee, the National Rainbow Committee, the National Aboriginal Council, the National Pink Triangle Committee, and the Persons with Disabilities National Committee. Staff also collaborate closely with the Diversity Vice-Presidents to facilitate their important work on issues of concern to racialized workers and Aboriginal members.

Equality staff in the regions provide assistance to the many CUPE equality committees across the country, including: organizing activities marking the various special days such as International Women's Day and National Aboriginal Day; organizing conferences on various human rights issues; organizing events at conventions such as caucuses and special luncheons; and mobilizing members to take part in

demonstrations and marches, such as the *Sisters In Spirit* vigils. It would be impossible to list all the work that is undertaken by the staff in their capacity as advisors to the committees. Their work with CUPE divisions, locals, members, and other staff is critical to advancing equality in our union, our workplaces and in society.

National Human Rights Conference

A key focus of the Equality Branch was the organization of the CUPE's second National Human Rights Conference, as called for in Strategic Directions 2013-2015. Over 500 labour and social activists attended the conference in Winnipeg, February 5-8, 2015, focusing on workers' power to advance equality and human rights in the areas of bargaining, organizing, mobilizing and political action. The Conference was a major success, highlighting both the power and responsibility that CUPE members have to bring about change and build worker power through advancing equality within the union, workplaces and communities. Plenaries and workshops focused on achieving this through mobilizing and organizing the full diversity of our membership, with strong connections to communities and non-unionized workers, and taking political action through support for the NDP and universal public services.

Privatization and precarity

Research over the past several years confirms that privatization and precarious employment have a disproportionate impact on equality-seeking members. The Equality Branch provided support to the Research Branch in developing CUPE's Membership Survey project, which found that CUPE's equality-seeking members are much more likely than other members to experience precarity. It also found that 68% of CUPE's members are women and that Aboriginal peoples and racialized workers are underrepresented in our membership compared to the general population.

Equality also used CAIS and Statistics Canada data to build portraits of CUPE's lower-waged and precarious membership by sector. This analysis was presented to the National Executive Board, the Ontario, the Manitoba, and the Saskatchewan divisions' executives, and several national committees. It also showed the equality-seeking members are more likely to be lower-waged and precariously employed.

Equality continues to be a partner in the Changing Public Services project led by the Centre for Research on the Advancement of Women (CRIAW), helping to coordinate the work in the regions. The project focuses on the impact of privatization and austerity on diverse women across Canada. With CRIAW, CUPW and the CLC, we also secured funding and hired a researcher to do work on precarious employment and women in the public sector.

Staff also attended the 59th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW59) in New York City, March 7-13, 2015, as part of the CLC's delegation. The theme of the session was 'Beijing +20', a review of the Beijing Declaration on the Rights of Women and Platform for Action, adopted in 1995 as a key international instrument for advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women. Along with 100 other union women from around the world, the delegation organized a number of actions to call for decent work for women to counteract trends of privatization and precarity. We also secured a commitment from UN staff to reconsider public-private partnerships in advancing UN goals.

Bargaining equality

The branch is updating and developing new resources to assist bargaining committees, local union stewards and officers, and other activists in bargaining and implementing equality provisions in their collective agreements. Over the past two years, we:

- Updated CUPE's harassment resources with the new and very popular guide, *Stop harassment: A guide for CUPE locals*.
- Produced fact sheets on duty to accommodate and bargaining disability rights.
- Worked with other staff, developed a new checklist for bargaining language on HIV and AIDS as well as a fact sheet on HIV and AIDS and Health and Safety.
- Supported Health and Safety Branch with the update of the violence in the workplace kit.
- Developed a guide to bargaining provisions related to domestic violence.
- Produced fact sheets on employment equity and pay equity.

Equality history project

The Equality Branch developed a timeline of key moments in CUPE's history related to equality and human rights. The timeline is available on-line and will support union education on labour history and human rights. Members and staff can learn about our equality history and explore what can be built on. The project was profiled at the National Human Rights Conference, where participants had an opportunity to engage in conversations about CUPE's equality achievements and contribute their own stories to the project.

Pay equity

Pay equity continues to be an important part of equality work across the country. CUPE women continue to experience ongoing wage discrimination, and this is worse for women experiencing multiple oppressions.

In New Brunswick, work has involved supporting locals who fall on under the province's *Pay Equity Act*, pressuring the province on the voluntary, non-legislated pay equity process, and supporting the New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity to raise awareness about the need for legislation for the private and broader public sector not covered by the NB *Pay Equity Act*. The New Brunswick Association of Nursing Homes were supported in lobbying on the issue of low pay and underfunding of this sector and the shortcomings of the non-legislated pay equity program in the community services sector.

The struggle for pay equity in Quebec was advanced when the Supreme Court of Canada ordered the Quebec Court of Appeal to hear CUPE's case against the *Expenditure Restraint Act* (ERA). ERA rolled back the salary increases negotiated by local 675 (CBC/Radio-Canada), and prevented the local from updating the pay equity plan. ERA was challenged on the grounds that it violated collective bargaining rights protected under s. 2 (d) the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. More recently, the main focus of pay equity work in Quebec has been related to Bill 42, which signals the government's intention to abolish the Pay Equity Commission.

In Manitoba, a pay equity strategy was developed with a focus on social services, day cares, and ACLs. We provided support to the Abilities Manitoba campaign about the redevelopment of programs for persons with intellectual disabilities to ensure sustainability, and to improve wages and working conditions.

Violence against women

The branch actively promoted the CLC-Western University survey on the impact of domestic violence on work. A similar survey in Australia led to major breakthroughs in collective agreements for leave to deal with the impact of domestic violence. There were close to 8,000 responses to our survey to our voluntary, online survey. The report on survey results was released just prior to the 25th anniversary of the *École Polytechnique de Montréal* massacre, and found that domestic violence is prevalent and has a significant impact on work. Equality highlighted these results in issues of CUPE' *Tabletalk* and *The Canary*, and through presentations to members. Equality also developed a guide to bargaining language on domestic violence and participated in the CLC working group to develop a kit of best practices for unions in addressing the impact of domestic violence on work.

The branch continued to be active in promoting awareness of the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and calling for a national public inquiry and justice for victims and their families. The branch supported CUPE's participation in the Native Women's Association of

Canada's October 4th *Sisters in Spirit* vigils to remember missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls, including the rally on Parliament Hill. We coordinated CUPE's support for the National Roundtable on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women in February 2015 in Ottawa and participated in the Peoples' Gathering, a parallel event to the Roundtable for discussions and recommendations for action to prevent and end violence against Indigenous women and girls. We also coordinated support for FAFIA's work on international treaty reviews on this issue, and circulated releases through social media for International Women's Day.

The 25th anniversary of the *École Polytechnique de Montréal* massacre was December 6, 2014. Equality promoted actions and awareness of the anniversary, including an event at national office and the promotion of several campaigns including Shine the Light, YWCA's Light the Night, #NOTokay and the Report on the Impact of Domestic Violence on Work. CUPE National Office was lit up in purple from November 25-December 6, 2014.

Child care

The National Child Care 2020 Conference in Winnipeg, November 2014 was a major success with a strong labour presence and clear linkages made between child care and the struggle for gender equality. The conference focused on critical policy questions to consider as we build toward the 2015 federal election. Following the 2013 National Convention, the *Let's rethink child care* campaign moved into a political mobilization phase leading to the election. Staff across the country assisted with regional activities for the campaign, and worked with provincial child care coalitions to promote it. We also coordinated kitchen table discussions with members and child care organizations related to the challenge in finding good quality child care, and actively promoted the "Spring into Action for Child Care" week of actions May 10 – 17, 2015.

In addition to the national campaign, staff also worked on issues specific to their regions. In Newfoundland and Labrador, roundtable discussions were held on the province's *Child Care Services Act and Regulations Review*. Staff also worked with child care activists to develop a response to Nova Scotia's review of child care. In Manitoba, a brief was submitted for the government's review of the Child Day Care program. In Quebec, there was mobilization against the Quebec government's announcement ending universal public child care with rates going up from \$7 to between \$9 and \$20 a day, depending on family income.

HIV/AIDS

CUPE's new HIV/AIDS policy was officially launched on December 1st, 2013 World AIDS Day, and Equality supported

a number of local events across the country in partnership with HIV and AIDS organizations to promote the policy. Educational materials on HIV/AIDS were developed that address prevention, testing, and access to care, treatment and support, including information on health and safety, bargaining and ways members can take action in their communities. These will be promoted leading up to World AIDS Day 2015.

Community outreach/movement building

Building alliances with community organizations and advocacy groups outside our union is more important than ever at a time when labour rights, human rights and social justice are under attack. The branch supported CUPE's participation in a wide number of community events and initiatives. Highlights include:

- Supported delegations of members to the Assembly of First Nations' Annual General Assemblies and Special Chiefs Assembly and Tradeshow in Winnipeg in December 2014 where Perry Bellegarde was elected as the AFN's new National Chief. We also organized a CUPE table in the Assembly galleries.
- Promoted public sector alternatives to P3s in response to First Nations' water issues at the AFN's Infrastructure Conference in February 2014.
- Coordinated support for indigenous land and environmental struggles, such as actions by Grassy Narrows First Nation to demand a full cleanup of their river and an end to clearcut logging on their homeland and the Earth Day event of the Indigenous Peoples Solidarity Movement.
- Supported a delegation of Aboriginal members to the Indigenous Adoptee Gathering in Ottawa in September 2014, focusing on the '60s scoop' in Canada, when indigenous children were removed from their families and placed in non-indigenous households throughout Canada, the United States, and Europe.
- Coordinated CUPE's participation in World Pride 2014 held in Toronto, June 20-29. This included coordinating with CUPE Ontario on plans for the Pride parades, supporting a delegation of National Pink Triangle Committee members at the Human Rights Conference, and organizing a CUPE table in the conference gallery. The branch also worked with the CLC to ensure that CUPE's achievements in LGBTTI rights were included in one of the labour workshops and conference handouts. The conference focused on movement building and solidarity in advancing LGBTTI rights internationally.
- Supported CUPE's participation in the work of anti-racist, civil liberties and migrant workers' organizations such as the Coalition of Black Trade

Unionists, the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group, the Urban Alliance on Race Relations, and the Migrant Workers Alliance for Change.

- Promoted and participated in the closing activities of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in June 2015. The Commission's final report highlights the atrocities of the residential school system and makes crucial recommendations for action.
- Coordinated CUPE's participation in the World March of Women, including events on March 8, April 24 and October 17, 2015, and produced and circulated background information on the march. The 4th International World March of Women 2015 was launched on March 8, 2015 International Women's Day, and concluded October 17, 2015, International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.
- Supported the *Up for Debate* campaign with a coalition of organizations across Canada to call for a nationally broadcast leaders' debate on women's issues.

The branch supported members in organizing, promoting and participating in various community events and days of action across the country, including December 6, Black History Month, the Leonard Peltier vigil, Walking with Our Sisters, Have a Heart Day for Aboriginal children, the Assembly of First Nations' (AFN) Christmas gala, and many more. Staff attended meetings and events organized by many different community organizations across Canada.

Education and equality advice to locals

The branch assisted the Union Development Department with the development and piloting of CUPE's new human rights weeklong workshop, the mental health workshop, the update of the bargaining education series, and revisions to the women's leadership courses. Staff also developed and facilitated workshops for locals and schools across the country on a number of human rights topics, such as harassment and bullying, duty to accommodate, anti-oppression, racial justice, Aboriginal awareness, bargaining equality, and women's leadership.

There is a continuing demand for harassment and bullying workshops in the regions, as well as duty to accommodate workshops. There is also increased demand for information on mental health issues. Equality supported staff representatives in cases and policy reviews related to these and other human rights issues.

Acknowledgements

The branch would like to acknowledge Sister Maureen Morrison, who retired from her position as Manitoba Equality Representative in 2014, after 30 years with CUPE. Sister Maureen worked tirelessly on behalf of equality-

seeking members, making a significant contribution to advancing CUPE's equality agenda and acting as director of the branch for a time. We would also like to extend our congratulations to CUPE's Anti-Racism Coordinator, Brother Harminder Magon, who was the 2013 recipient of South Asian Community Activism Award presented by the Ontario Common Front and Ontario Federation of Labour.

We would like to acknowledge Brother Paul Moist, Brother Charles Fleury, and the National Executive Board (NEB) for

their ongoing support, particularly Diversity Vice-Presidents, Sister Yolanda McClean and Brother Brian Barron, and the NEB members who act as liaisons to the National Equality Committees. We also extend a special thanks to our COPE sisters in the Equality Branch at National Office, Sisters Danielle Wright and Debbie Rebeiro, as well as those in the regions who support our work.

LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE

Nancy Rosenberg, National Director

CUPE's Legal Branch consists of a branch director, lawyers, paralegals, and our support staff. We work as advocates in every region and at National Office, appearing in court, at arbitration, labour boards and other tribunals on behalf of CUPE and its locals. We support the officers, staff and members of CUPE on a day-to-day basis, providing strategic legal advice and legislative analysis. We also assist with education and training for members and staff.

In any given year, the lawyers and paralegals in the branch deal with hundreds of matters. Together, we are uniquely positioned to monitor legal developments which impact CUPE, and the labour movement as a whole, and to help CUPE to fight for positive change in the legal realm.

Constitutional Rights

The historic development that occurred in early 2015 was the release of the *SFL* decision, in which the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the appeal of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour and a number of named affiliates including CUPE, and ruled that workers have a constitutionally guaranteed right to strike. CUPE played a very important role in this case, from initiating our CUPE 3967/Regina Qu'appelle Health Region case at the Labour Board which provided an important factual context for the *Charter* challenge, to our role as a party/intervenor at the Court of Queen's Bench and the Court of Appeal, to our input on the SFL's Committee of Instruction – CUPE was there every step of the way. At the Supreme Court level, CUPE negotiated to have our legal counsel join the SFL legal team in order to have maximum input and influence in the presentation and outcome of the case.

The case began in 2008 when the Saskatchewan Party enacted new essential services legislation for most of the public sector. Employees deemed by their employers to be essential were prohibited from striking. There was very limited recourse to the Labour Board and there was no mechanism for resolving a bargaining impasse (i.e. interest arbitration).

Writing for a majority of the Supreme Court Justice Rosalie Abella held that:

'The right to strike is protected by s.2(d) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which guarantees freedom of association...the right to strike is an essential part of a meaningful collective bargaining process in our system of labour relations... it seems to me to be the time

to give this conclusion constitutional benediction... the right to strike is essential to a collective bargaining process because it permits workers to withdraw their labour in concert when collective bargaining reaches an impasse. Through a strike, workers come together to participate directly in the process of determining their wages, working conditions and the rules that will govern their working lives....'

Inspiring words and a powerful judgment which represents a very significant victory for CUPE members in Saskatchewan and for the whole labour movement. It overturns almost thirty years during which labour has been denied the fundamental freedom to associate that the *Charter of Rights* was supposed to guarantee. In addition, the case was characterized by an unprecedented level of collaboration and co-ordination amongst the many unions involved as parties and intervenors and, for that too, it represents a very positive new development that will hopefully continue into the future.

The *SFL* decision was released in conjunction with two other cases – one was the *Mounted Police* case in which the Supreme Court held that workers have a constitutional right to choose their own independent trade union. Like *SFL*, this decision too was replete with labour positive language. Another big win for labour! The third decision, however, was not at all helpful to labour. In *Meredith* the Supreme Court held that the federal government did *not* violate the freedom of association rights of public sector workers by legislating a retroactive wage freeze.

CUPE 675 (administrative personnel at Radio-Canada) intervened in *Meredith*, as it was battling its own case challenging the same legislation – the *Expenditure Restraint Act*. After *Meredith* was released, the Supreme Court ordered CUPE 675's case to be remanded to the Quebec Court of Appeal of Quebec for disposition in accordance with the decisions in *Meredith* and *Mounted Police*. This is a very positive development, however, the final outcome for CUPE 675 remains to be seen.

Unfortunately, after the *SFL* and *MPAO* decisions of the SCC, the BC Court of Appeal released its decision in the *BCTF* case concluding that the B.C. government did *not* breach s.2(d) of the *Charter* by stripping class size and composition provisions from the teachers' collective agreement because it had 'consulted' in good faith. This decision moves away from the *SFL* principles and allows a government to make very significant unilateral changes to

working conditions and collective agreements simply by listening to and considering the union's position. The B.C. Teachers' Federation is applying for leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. If the decision stands, it will be an unfortunate step backwards in the battle to have the courts fully recognize our constitutional right to a meaningful process of collective bargaining.

Challenging Regressive Legislation

Since last Convention we have seen a bumper crop of regressive legislation, aimed at interfering with our right to organize, to bargain collectively and to strike. Here are some of the highlights we have been dealing with:

In late 2013, the Alberta government introduced two pieces of labour legislation - Bill 45, (which introduced hefty fines and sanctions for any Union and its members engaging in unlawful strike action or even "unlawful strike threats") and Bill 46 (wage restraint in the public service). Within a month, both bills were passed and received Royal Assent. Bill 45 applies to over 100,000 unionized workers in Alberta including CUPE members in Covenant Health, Red Deer College, Keyano College, Athabasca University and our EMS locals.

The *Saskatchewan Employment Act* repeals and amends virtually all labour legislation and includes a number of new provisions which will impact collective bargaining, including more hoops to jump through before job action; last offer votes, provisions exempting supervisors from their bargaining units unless they are in a supervisory employee-only unit; additional exemptions from the definition of employee; provisions easing the way to decertification; and provisions expanding the Labour Board's jurisdiction to police the internal regulation of union affairs and union financial reporting. We are looking into challenging the issue of excluding the supervisors.

At the federal level, Bill C-525 will make certifying more difficult and decertifying easier. In Newfoundland, we saw the disappearance of the short lived card-based certification – brought in in 2012 and repealed in 2014. Given the Supreme Court's ruling on the amendments to Saskatchewan's *Trade Union Act* in the *SFL* case, it would appear that changes like this do not violate s. 2(d) of the *Charter* and we can expect to see more legislation of this kind across the country.

In Nova Scotia, the *Health Authorities Act (Bill 1)* reduced the number of health authorities down to two and specified that each of four unions in the sector would represent one of four bargaining units. A mediation process was imposed at which CUPE challenged the constitutionality of the legislation arguing that it violated

our freedom of association under s. 2(d) of the *Charter*. We advocated strongly for a bargaining association model that would allow all the unions to keep their members. The mediator agreed with our submissions that the legislation violated the *Charter*, that it could be interpreted in such a way as to make it *Charter* compliant, and that a bargaining association model was a possibility. After a compelling drama during which the government sought to fire the mediator, the unions collaborated on terms for a bargaining association model. Ultimately, Bill 69, the *Health Authorities Act* enshrined the bargaining association model which CUPE had advocated for throughout. Our Nova Scotia health care members are delighted to be members of CUPE Local 8920 - the successor to our former acute care locals.

Also, in Nova Scotia, *Bill 30*, essential services legislation, was enacted in the Home Care Support Sector. It was later subsumed within *Bill 37*, which brings essential services requirements to virtually the entire health care sector including acute care, long-term care and community services. We filed constitutional challenges of both *Bill 30* and *Bill 37*, and have been awaiting the *SFL* decision. We are now proceeding initially with the *Bill 30* challenge.

Nova Scotia also saw the introduction of Bill 100, the *Universities Accountability and Sustainability Act* – proposed legislation which allows a university with a "significant operating deficit" to start a restructuring process in order to continue to get government funding. The *Bill* gives broad powers to a University entering into such a process, to interfere with labour matters and bans strikes and collective bargaining during the revitalization process! Eight CUPE locals are directly affected.

The New Brunswick Association of Nursing Homes and CUPE's New Brunswick Council of Nursing Home Unions are parties to a collective agreement covering 46 nursing homes. For a first application of the *Essential Services in Nursing Homes Act*, the parties agreed to litigate the essential services designations for their largest nursing home as a template for the rest. The Labour Board designated 90% of the LPNs and Resident Attendants to be essential. Given the high level of designations ordered by the Board, and given the Supreme Court decision in the *SFL* case, we will now be returning to the Board to pursue a constitutional challenge of this legislation.

Our *Charter* challenge to Ontario's Bill 115, the so-called Putting Students First Act, which imposed collective agreements in the school board sector had also been awaiting the *SFL* decision. It is now scheduled to be heard in November, 2015. We have also filed a complaint to the ILO.

Now that we have received the *SFL* decision, we will also be proceeding with a challenge to *Bill 150*, the legislation that deemed all of the Toronto Transit Commission to be an essential service.

And, of course, we are still facing Bill C-377, an astonishingly aggressive piece of legislation aimed at convincing the public that unions are not transparent in respect of their financial affairs and at tying unions up in administrative nonsense. The Bill requires public reporting of a kind required of no other kind of organization in this country. Another *Charter* challenge is likely in the offing.

Strikes and Lock-outs

We were very actively involved in providing strategic legal advice in connection with strikes at the University of Toronto and at York University. We also worked tirelessly during the very lengthy Bonfield lockout in Ontario, filing unfair labour practice complaints regarding bad faith bargaining and the terminations of five (of sixteen) striking members.

On the west coast, in a highly coordinated and effective effort, our legal reps worked closely with a large strategy team of staff and outside counsel to provide support for locked out members of CUPE 7000 who were fighting back against Southern Railway's push for two-tier retirement benefits. Through nearly four months locked out by this anti-union, private sector employer, the union was able to stay one step ahead of the employer. We dominated at the board and in the courts, and in the process we created new law favourable to unions in BC, and helped build and maintain member engagement and support.

We successfully challenged the Employer's unlawful use of scabs (managers who had been promoted from the bargaining unit after notice to bargain). This was an important victory as it reduces the pool of people employers can use during a labour dispute – an issue that had not been resolved in BC prior to our case. We convinced the BC Supreme Court to modify the standard language used in picketing injunctions to be less restrictive and more respectful of freedom of expression. In one scabs application, the local was awarded \$5000 damages for the employer's unlawful use of contractors during the lockout - a remedy only awarded once before in British Columbia. Remaining energized and focussed until the end, the local achieved a non-concessionary collective agreement – without two-tier benefits.

Contracting Out and Privatization

Locals 5999 and 4980 have been challenging the decision to contract out all health care laundry services in

Saskatchewan to K-Bro Linen Services via grievance arbitration and an unfair labour practice application. The parties are negotiating a resolution which will include bridging and enhanced severance, as well as retraining/re-employment monies for workers who will be laid off.

Our BC legal representatives are working with staff representatives in a number of sectors, to push back against the contracting out of our work. Many employers in BC are actively engaging contractors wherever possible. As one example, CUPE 15 is facing this at Langara College where, having hired private sector consultants to run its IT department, the employer then sought to convert bargaining unit positions into contractor positions. Barring the union representative from the premises of discipline against the two employees who spoke up against this, was the icing on the cake. Multiple grievances have been referred to arbitration.

In Alberta, less than a year after CUPE 1505 agreed to take a 10% roll back in wages, the Fort McMurray Airport contracted out the custodial jobs to a local employment broker who employs temporary foreign workers. It then sought to contract out the security guards and maintenance employees, as well. We are investigating the possibility of seeking an injunction to stop this wholesale contracting out, until the matter can be heard in arbitration.

And in Ontario, we are seeking legal solutions to battle the wholesale privatization of Hydro One, complete with legislative changes that obliterate any possibility of future oversight over this critical public resource.

Pension attacks

We are working towards a new governance model for the LAPP in Alberta. We've had some success in Newfoundland where we gained joint trusteeship and retained defined benefits. We are working assiduously in New Brunswick to challenge the legislated change from defined benefit to target benefit in the public service pension plan. We are pursuing a complaint against the Superintendent of Pensions who is obligated to perform an independent validation before approving such a change. There is no evidence that the Superintendent has done so. We are also engaged in talks with the new Liberal government, failing which we will be considering a *Charter* challenge.

In Quebec, Law 15 requires municipal employees to retroactively contribute half the cost of their pension plans and also caps pension plan costs. This substantially interferes with free collective bargaining. We have brought a constitutional challenge, in co-ordination with other unions, arguing that this law infringes our right to

freedom of association recognized by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms of Quebec*.

Pay Equity

A number of our locals participated in a successful legal challenge to the reform of the Québec *Pay Equity Act*. The Québec Superior Court held the 2009 reforms to be unconstitutional, in part, because the adjustments are not retroactive and the employees lack access to sufficiently detailed information. The Court held that this violates the guarantee of equality in both the Québec and Canadian *Charters* and gave the legislature one year to remedy the problems.

Together with other public sector unions in Québec, we are challenging the constitutionality of the pay equity law regarding the obligation to maintain pay equity. Maintenance is to be carried out every five years, but without the mandatory participation of unions and employees – we are arguing that this violates s.15 of the *Charter of Rights*.

And, CUPE 503 members who work at the Ottawa Public Library won an important pay equity victory at the Pay Equity Tribunal. We had challenged the Library Board's failure to maintain pay equity when the City workers achieved wage increases. The Tribunal ordered the Library to make pay equity adjustments back to 2005, for every year where library employees had received a lower wage increase than city employees – a very important win for library workers in Ottawa and a long time coming!

Workers' Compensation

The Ontario Legal Branch includes four paralegals – Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) specialists who provide assistance to members with Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal matters (WSIAT).

The WSIAT has issued a significant decision regarding Chronic Mental Stress in which they determined that limiting entitlement to mental stress that “arises from an acute reaction to a sudden and unexpected event” was discriminatory and unconstitutional. We have received the good news that the government will not be judicially reviewing this decision. In a related matter, we were successful in obtaining a precedent setting WSIB award of compensation for traumatic mental injury. Our legal representatives then successfully defended the WSIB decision in Superior Court.

We strongly opposed WSIB policy changes designed to focus the Board's decision – making on pre-existing

conditions (even asymptomatic ones) in determining whether an injured worker's ongoing impairment is work related. With other unions and legal clinics, we lobbied the WSIB chair and the premier to stop the implementation of these changes which would clearly have a disproportionate impact on older and disabled workers making claims for aggravation, permanent impairments, recurrences and non-economic losses. Despite our best efforts, the changes were accepted and are now standard policy.

Arbitrations

In Quebec, we obtained an award entitling two discharged temporary workers to a remedy – relying on labour standards which provide protection after two years of service. This is an important confirmation of the right of long time precarious workers to be protected against discharge without just cause.

A marathon 56 day hearing which took almost two years to complete, resulted in the reinstatement of 15 of 21 dismissed road crew workers with the City of Hamilton. Six workers received very substantial retroactive compensation and some very lengthy suspensions were dramatically reduced. Our Ontario legal team was able to demonstrate that the alleged poor performance of the grievors reflected a long standing culture of low expectations in the workplace, which could only be attributed to a failure of management.

Airlines

We are currently working with CUPE's Airline Division in numerous litigation files challenging the exemptions from the 1 in 40 flight attendant/passenger ratio given to Sunwing Airlines, Air Canada, rouge, Canjet, Canadian North and Air Transat. These Airlines can now operate with a 1 in 50 ratio. We are judicially reviewing all the decisions granting these exemptions and, in the case of Sunwing, we are also challenging evacuation tests conducted with the new ratio which were repeatedly failed until Transport Canada suggested and approved a modification to the safety procedures.

Protecting our Constitution

We received an excellent decision in a lawsuit brought by CUPE 558 (Edmundston Police) against its former officers. The local was seeking \$48,000 which had been removed from the local's bank account by its executive officers who transferred the money to a new association. The judge held that the defendants had breached the terms of the CUPE's National Constitution, as well as their fiduciary duty owed to the Local, and ordered that the money be returned.

We also received a decision from the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board on a duty of fair representation complaint alleging a denial of natural justice in the conduct of several trial appeals and challenging provisions of the Constitution relating to the trial procedure. The board completely exonerated the local in respect of the trials and described the actions of the Local and the process under CUPE's National Constitution as "commendable" and "quite reasonable."

Staffing and Acknowledgements

Sister Martina Boyd is back from maternity leave, Sister Carol Reardon has left us for 18-months to become the Local Government Co-ordinator in the BC Region and is replaced by Sister Amanda Rogers. Brother Matt Yun has been seconded to the EDRMS project and is being replaced by Sister Natasha Morley. Sister Julian Saxberg is currently on her second maternity leave. The Saskatchewan Regional Office is in good hands with Brother Robert Logue, previously our articling student in the National

Office. Brother Ronald Cloutier is back in the Legal Branch in Quebec Region.

Sister Elizabeth Nurse has returned from her second maternity leave. Brother Devon Paul and Sister Alycia Shaw have joined us on a temporary basis. Sister Nancy Patchell and Brother Alex Kerner have joined the WSIB team. Sister Anne Gregory has moved from the National Office to the Ontario Regional Office.

Our sincere thanks to Sister Daria Ivanochko, Managing Director of National Services whose steadfast support of the Legal Branch is very much appreciated. And, a huge thank you is due to all the members of the Legal Branch and to the clerical staff who support us in our work – your hard work and commitment does not go unnoticed. It is much appreciated by myself, by your colleagues, and by the 630,000 members of CUPE who rely on the wise counsel of our great legal team, every day.

RESEARCH

Shelly Gordon, National Director

The Research, Job Evaluation, Health & Safety Branch continues to provide CUPE members, elected leaders and staff with essential research, bargaining assistance, campaigns against privatization of public services, support for national committees and sector councils, assistance with achieving fair and equitable wages, and wide-ranging advice and resources to help prevent and eliminate workplace hazards and address environmental issues.

With the largest research capacity of any union in Canada, CUPE can be proud to have a dedicated and highly qualified staff of specialists assigned to a wide variety of technical and political files. There are 10 senior research officers at the National Office covering each of CUPE's sectors and the issues of pensions, benefits, privatization, trade, employment insurance, organizing and political action. Two of the senior officers at National Office are also assigned to the social services and education sectors in Ontario. Seventeen regional research representatives assist CUPE members with bargaining and campaigns – one in each of the Atlantic, Maritimes, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta regional offices, two in Quebec, six in Ontario and four in British Columbia.

Four senior job evaluation officers at National Office provide technical expertise in pay equity and job evaluation to CUPE members in all of the regions except Quebec and British Columbia. There are four pay equity representatives in the regional offices in Quebec, four job evaluation/pay equity representatives in Ontario and one job evaluation representative at the British Columbia Regional Office.

One senior health and safety officer at National Office services the Maritimes, Saskatchewan and Alberta regions as well as leading CUPE's health and safety research and publishing. The second senior health and safety officer at National Office is dedicated to CUPE's environmental work. There are two Health and safety representatives in the Ontario Regional Office, one each in British Columbia and the Atlantic offices, and one in Manitoba (who also has a servicing assignment). Two health and safety representatives in Quebec also cover CSST appeals.

Five collective agreement analysts are dedicated to the Collective Agreement Information System (CAIS).

The national director, one administrative officer, one research assistant, two administrative assistants, one executive secretary and five clerical staff round out the

National Office Research, Job Evaluation and Health and Safety Branch in Ottawa.

The work of the Research, Job Evaluation and Health and Safety Branch is wide-ranging and diverse. The following report is a snapshot of the variety of work carried out by branch staff.

Support for Bargaining

Research, job evaluation and health and safety staff provide support for bargaining in all regions in a variety of ways. CUPE researchers provide analysis and reports to regional bargaining and sector conferences on the economic climate, bargaining trends and priority issues. They respond to specific requests for information from locals through their national servicing representatives. They assist local bargaining committees to develop and analyze bargaining surveys of the members. On some occasions, researchers participate in bargaining at provincial or local tables and/or assist with bargaining issues as required on issues such as negotiated benefits, pay equity maintenance or solutions to safety issues. CUPE's pension researchers have been called to attend bargaining more and more often to assist locals to resist employer attacks on defined benefit pensions. Research officers and representatives prepare and present interest arbitration briefs for locals who are required to access that process for collective bargaining, such as hospital and long-term care home employees.

Collective Agreement Information System

The Collective Agreement Information System (CAIS) is a unique resource that manages more than 3,000 collective agreements and contract settlements covering members in CUPE's locals. The average duration of a collective agreement is a little more than three years. This results in bargaining activity that has seen more than 1,700 agreements and approximately 1,000 settlements added in CAIS between conventions. In 2015, for the first time, we added the B.C. Hospital Employees' Union's (HEU) 103 agreements to CAIS and made this resource available to HEU.

CAIS is now more than 11 years old. In 2015 we worked with information technology to design a new version of the software to take advantage of always-changing technology. The new and improved CAIS will launch in 2016. All the CAIS wage and provision information will

become directly available to national servicing representatives, putting invaluable information much closer to local union leaders and bargaining committees.

Member Survey

National Convention 2013 mandated the Research Branch to conduct a survey of CUPE members to gain a comprehensive knowledge of the changing demographics and diversity of our membership that will underpin a renewed commitment to equity. The survey also served to identify members who work in temporary and precarious jobs as an initial step to developing tools and strategies for best defending these members' rights.

The biggest challenge to surveying CUPE members to get reliable results is the union's lack of a single unified membership list. Working with *Viewpoints Research* from Winnipeg we developed a framework for a representative list. Locals were asked to share their membership lists to create a list that had enough members for each size of local, for each region, and each sector. One hundred and ninety eight locals submitted contact information for over 80,000 members, and over 3,000 members were interviewed over the telephone for the first successful CUPE members' survey.

Results of the survey were reported at the Human Rights Conference in 2015, in *Tabletalk*, on cupe.ca and at division conventions.

Health and Safety Publications

Much of the work of the Health and Safety and Research Branch is producing written material for use by CUPE members and the public.

Five issues of *The Canary*, the Health and Safety Branch's regular newsletter, kept CUPE members up to date on events and issues to keep them safer and healthier at work.

EnviroAction – CUPE's national environmental newsletter – features the most recent environmental news for CUPE activists.

The Health and Safety Branch worked very closely with the Equality Branch to bring CUPE members new materials on the hazards of and responses to workplace harassment and bullying, which has emerged as the primary health and safety issue for CUPE members in this time period.

CUPE Health and Safety Branch conducted an online survey of members to gain a greater understanding of which members work alone and the risks of that work. As

public services cut staff, more and more CUPE members find themselves in the hazardous situation of working alone.

New Health and Safety fact sheets published in 2014 and 2015 are:

- Bed Bugs
- Working Alone
- Critical Incidents and Critical Incident Stress
- Patient Lifts and Transfers
- Ebola Virus Disease

In addition to the fact sheets, the Health and Safety Branch developed "*Health and Safety Guidelines: Recommendations to protect frontline members most at risk of exposure to the Ebola virus*", with a particular focus on protecting front line CUPE members working in health care, as ambulance paramedics and as flight attendants.

Health and safety officers assisted in preparing briefs and presentations to try to prevent the Harper government from eroding the right to refuse unsafe work for federally regulated CUPE members in industries such as transportation and communications.

The new health and safety learning series workshops were developed by the health and safety officer working with Union Development Department and piloted in 2015. Health and Safety officers conduct education programs in each region.

Research Publications

CUPE Research produced seven issues of *Tabletalk*, providing local bargaining committees and servicing representatives with useful information for bargaining.

As needed, CUPE national and regional researchers publish *CUPE Facts* or backgrounders to inform members and the public about developing issues. These factsheets are often part of CUPE's campaigns, or prepared for particular events such as the National Sector Council conference. Listed below are some of the factsheets developed by national research officers since the last national convention. All are available on cupe.ca.

- Asset recycling: privatization coming to a community near you
- Project bargaining language kit
- Income splitting vs child care
- Ten things to know about the conservative's cuts to Old Age Security (OAS)/Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)
- Pension bargaining priorities

- Two-tier bargaining - how to recognize it and reject it
- CUPE members deserve at least \$18 per hour
- Temporary foreign workers program and the live-in caregiver program
- Building Canada Fund 2014 – less money, more privatization
- Bill C-4 – a budget bill attacking workers’ rights
- Changes in Ontario child care
- Funding for developmental service workers (Ontario)
- Bill C-377 – an *Act* to amend the *Income Tax Act* (labour organizations)
- What provincial auditors have said about P3s

CUPE researchers write submissions to government for consultations, about proposed legislation and for and about government budgets on issues of importance to CUPE members.

Campaigns

The work of CUPE researchers is central to all of the members’ campaigns in every region and nationally.

Since the 2013 National Convention the *Health Care Accord* campaign has worked with members and allies in every region (except Quebec) to raise awareness of the effects of the federal Conservative government’s cuts to health care transfers to the provinces and the increasing pressure on underfunded health care services to privatize.

CUPE has led the successful *Let’s rethink child care* campaign, and was a sponsor and partner in organizing the ChildCare2020 conference, the first national child care policy conference in a decade and the fourth such conference in Canada’s history, held in Winnipeg late in 2014. Child care is on the agenda for the 2015 federal election.

CUPE members and staff are targets for right-wing governments’ attempts to erode secure decent pensions and replace them with target-benefit and defined contribution plans, both for entire workforces and through the introduction of two-tier pensions. CUPE has campaigned for an expanded *Canada Pension Plan* to benefit all workers in Canada, and against the erosion of decent pensions for those who have them.

The Harper Conservative government has bowed to pressure from the airline industry to reduce service and safety standards by reducing the number of staff required on commercial airlines. CUPE research has supported CUPE members’ vigorous campaign against the

introduction of the 1:50 ratio of flight attendants to passengers.

CUPE national researchers support CUPE members in their political action as well, through providing issue backgrounders, information and presentations to members, government and the public. CUPE has campaigned against the Harper government’s anti-union bills to make it harder to organize a union, to erode democratic freedoms and to undermine unions.

National Committees and Sector Councils

CUPE’s Advisory Committee on Pensions, Health Care Issues and National Library Workers’ Committees, Post-Secondary Education Task Force and the Child Care Working Group are supported by national research officers. CUPE’s National Health and Safety and Environment Committees are supported by national health and safety officers. Each committee meets twice each year.

Research officers and representatives from both national and regional offices began their work as staff advisors to the eleven new sector councils in 2014. Working with the co-chairs, they attended the first meeting of the council in July, prepared new sector profiles and background policy documents and worked with the co-chairs to hold the first National Sector Council conference in October 2014.

Job Evaluation

Job Evaluation staff at National Office and in the regions continue to work with locals and employers to achieve fair and equitable wages. They were successful in assisting members in each sector to achieve fairer pay and put money into the pockets of members. In Ontario, members working in libraries, for municipalities, in long-term care homes and in social services all achieved pay equity settlements. In New Brunswick, where provincial government employees are entitled to pay equity, CUPE negotiated pay equity settlements for court stenographers and school board employees. In Saskatchewan, CUPE staff assist members on the Joint Job Evaluation Committee with the Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations. Elsewhere, there is a high demand for CUPE’s expertise in job evaluation for internal equity, reclassification issues, wage designs, bargaining preparation and addressing market value challenges.

Staffing

There have been many staff changes since the last national convention.

We extend our thanks to the research officers and representatives who have left since the 2013 national convention. Sisters Margaret Evans, Bonnie Ferguson, Kathy Corrigan and Brothers Richard Balnis, Keith Reynolds and Sylvain Pilon have retired. Sister Kathy Corrigan retained her seat in the provincial election, continuing to sit as a BC Member of the Legislative Assembly. Brother Ricardo Miranda moved from organizing and servicing in Alberta to the research position, and then successfully contested the Calgary Cross riding for the NDP in the provincial election and is currently a Member of the Legislative Assembly. Sister Lise Anne LeBlanc resigned. Brother Mike Yam and Sisters Sarah St. John and Marcia Gillespie worked with the CUPE Research Branch, ably filling temporary vacancies.

We have added great researchers to our team, and welcome Sisters Janet Dassinger and Sarah Ryan to National Office, Vallie Stearns in the Maritimes Regional Office and Matt McLean in the Manitoba Regional Office.

Thanks for their continuing excellent work go to, regional research representatives Carol Ferguson, Nathalie Blais, Doug Allan, Andrew Ward, Simon Collins, Jonah Gindin, Cheryl Stadnichuk, Stephen Elliot-Buckley and John Malcolmson, as well as Sister Elizabeth Blackwood who moved from the Manitoba to the Ontario Regional Office and then on to B.C., and Brother Venai Raniga who moved from B.C. to the Ontario Regional Office.

Also thanks for their continuing excellent work go to, the national office senior research officers Margot Young, Kevin Skerrett, Joe Courtney, Paul O'Donnell, Mark Janson, Jordana Feist, Graham Cox, Govind Rao and research assistant Heather Farrow.

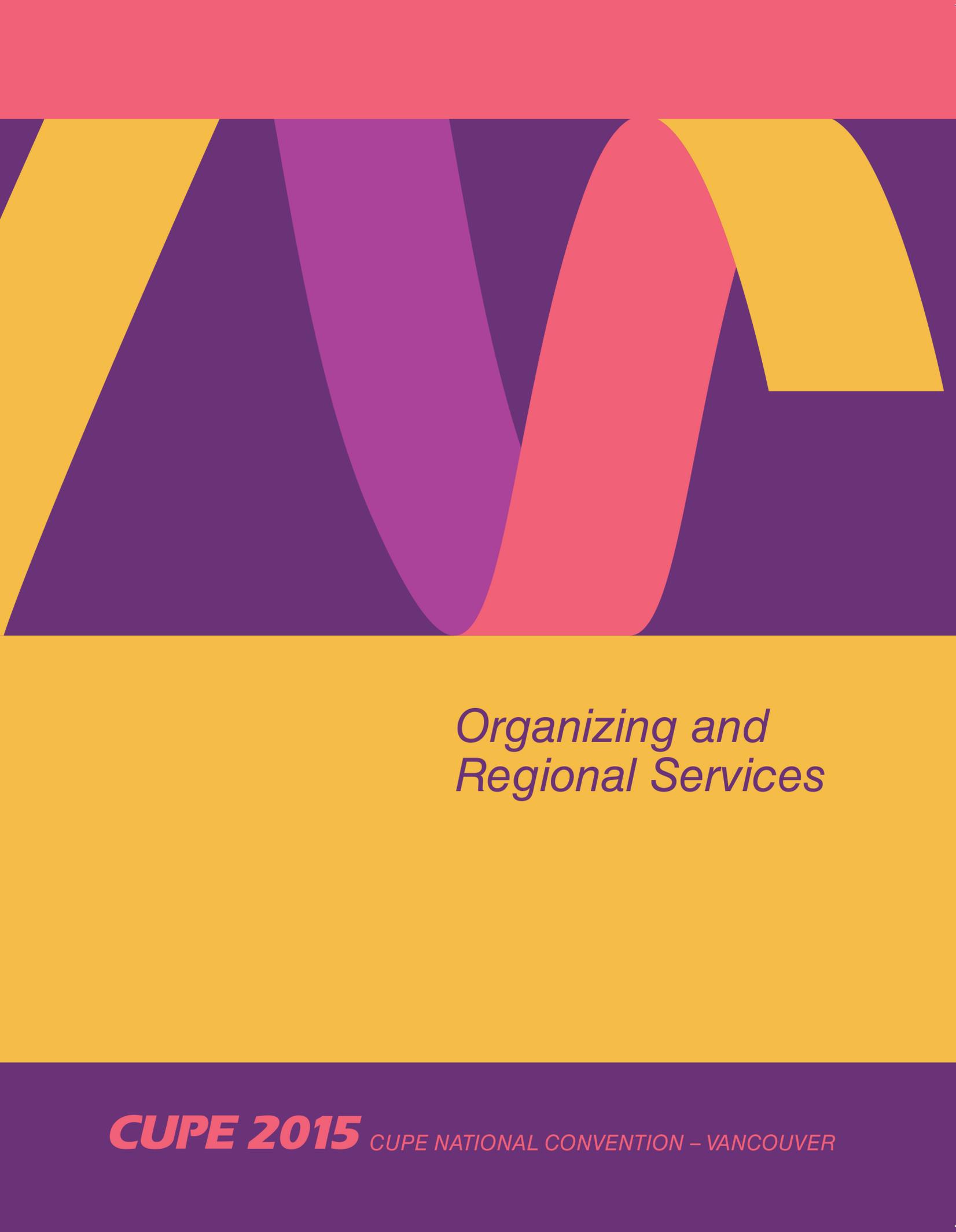
CAIS is kept up by senior collective agreement analyst Brian Edgecombe and collective agreement analysts Ric Dagenais, Tammy Laurin, Cathy Sculland and Holly Bruns.

Sister Geneviève Burley is acting administrative officer for our Branch, while Sister Tammy Emond staffs a position in the National President's Office.

In the Job Evaluation Branch we thank Sister Sharon Angel and Brothers Brad Dale, Dave Gardner and Serge Robichaud for their work as senior job evaluation officers working out of National Office, Sister Anne Didier and, Brothers Steve Lillico and Steve Kenney as Job Evaluation Representatives from the Ontario Regional Office and Brother Peter Coombs in British Columbia. Sister Helen Gibb-Gavel has replaced Brother Tom Baker who has returned to servicing. We thank Sister Suzanne Hotson who worked with the Branch on a temporary basis.

We extend our thanks to Brothers John Brookfield, Atlantic Region, Wally Skomoroh, Manitoba, and Sister Vanessa Wolff, (BC), Brothers Troy Winters, and Matthew Firth, National Office, Sisters Andréane Chénier (Ont) and Céline Giguère (Que), and brother Blain Morin (Ont) for their continued work for the health and safety of CUPE members.

None of our research, job evaluation or health and safety work would get done without the able assistance of our support staff: Selena Lashley, executive secretary; Julie Fenton, job evaluation assistant; Julie Jobin, health and safety assistant, statistical clerk-typists Halinka Brown, Wendy Lyon, Suzanne Chamseddine, Seema Shah and Kristine Dupuis.



*Organizing and
Regional Services*

CUPE 2015 CUPE NATIONAL CONVENTION – VANCOUVER

ORGANIZING AND REGIONAL SERVICES

*Gwen Hewitt, National Managing Director
Kathy Johnson, National Assistant Director
Chantale Grenon Nyenhuis, National Assistant Director
Andy Mele, National Assistant Director*

Government attacks on unions through proposed legislation such as Bills C-377 and C-525 and chronic government underfunding of public services and a privatization agenda creates an environment in which staff, locals and members must fight back aggressively at the bargaining table and through issue focused campaigns and by unseating a right wing government at the municipal, provincial and federal levels.

The Organizing and Regional Services Department provides services and resources to staff, locals and members and builds capacity through developing skills and tools to assist the staff and membership to successfully push back against the regressive and oppressive anti-union agenda carried out by employers in the workplace.

The department oversees and coordinates many of the services that CUPE provides to members in the regions. This includes but is not limited to staffing in the regions, organizing new members, conducting workplace restructuring representation vote campaigns, coordinating regional/national bargaining initiatives.

The department provides support and assistance with the recruitment, interviewing, and deployment of servicing representative within the regions. As well as participating in the staff recruitment and selection process, the department is responsible for the coordination and approval of regional staff assignments. The department is currently reviewing the servicing requirements of the regions as well as the recruitment and interview process to ensure that the needs of the regions are met as the demands change. This is more important than ever as just over 1/3 of the current staff are within five years of age 60 and/or have reached the 80 factor for retirement. We continue to work toward recruiting staff that is more reflective of our membership.

Organizing

Organizing of unorganized workers is vital to building the labour movement, CUPE's strength and giving us all stronger voice in our workplaces and communities. Organizing is occurring in an increasingly challenging climate.

The Federal Government's agenda to undermine unions via changes to legislative frameworks is evident with the

passing of *Bill C-525: An Act to Amend the Canada Labour Code, the Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act and the Public Service Labour Relations Act (certification and revocation – bargaining agent)*. As the title of C-525 makes clear, this bill amends long-standing rules about how unions certify and decertify under the Canada Labour Code. CUPE represents almost 20,000 members in 40 + locals under the Canada Labour Code (other CUPE members fall under provincial labour legislation). C-525 is anti-union legislation, plain and simple. It makes it harder to certify and easier to decertify unions under the Canada Labour Code. Parliamentary committee hearings confirmed that there is no evidence that there was any consultation with unions, or even employers, on this legislation.

Provincial Governments have also created pressure through regressive legislative agenda's and sectorial restructuring of workplaces and/or bargaining unit configurations. Please see the regional reports below.

In addition many employers are waging aggressive anti-union campaigns during organizing drives resulting in CUPE filing an increasing number of unfair labour practice complaints. We are also spending a greater amount of time at the Labour Board dealing with Sale of a Business/Related Employer applications.

Despite these challenges CUPE continues to organize new members and grow our union. Since the last convention, CUPE has organized 12,078 new members into 157 separate bargaining units across the country.

The successful organizing of unorganized workers requires careful assessment of organizing opportunities and planning of campaigns. This sometimes involves individual workplace assessments, while at other times it requires the mapping of workplaces within a sector to identify organizing opportunities. In an effort to prioritize strategic targets in each region, organizers are meeting with sector leadership, coordinators and researchers to identify sectorial organizing opportunities. The first priority is organizing that supports strong bargaining and strategic membership development.

In addition to new member organizing, we provide support for union representation votes that come up as a result of workplace mergers and reorganizations. Often when a

workplace merger occurs and more than one union represents the workers for a bargaining unit in that organization or some of the workers are non-union. When this occurs the labour legislation for the region sets out the requirements of a union representation vote. There continues to be a significant amount of restructuring happening across the country, which has led to some very challenging representation votes involving CUPE locals.

Due to the number of active campaigns and complex organizing challenges, the use of member organizers, member organizer training and potentially supernumerary staff during peak periods are resources needed to support the organizers in the regions.

Recruiting for temporary staff

Over the next five years, the recruitment and training of new staff will be demanding. Due to retirements, we are dealing with the highest rate of turnover ever experienced by CUPE. The interview, assessment, training and support for new staff is a priority.

CUPE has a strong tradition of recruiting and hiring new national representatives from amongst our own members and activists. Those who apply for CUPE national representatives' positions are first interviewed. Of those successful at the interview stage a determination is made of who will be moved into the trainee representative program for further training and assessment.

The first phase of the trainee representative program is a two week residential program. This in-class training covers areas such as, bargaining, labour law, grievance management, role of representatives in building strong locals as well as, other skills important for the position of national representative. In the two years since the last convention, there have been a total of five Trainee Representative Residential Programs held. They have been run in Quebec, Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia with a total of 76 members and activists from across the country participating in this training.

Following the in-class program assessments are made regarding the need for a trainee to move into a field placement to shadow a national servicing representative for further capacity building and assessment.

Those who successfully complete the trainee representative program may be placed into temporary servicing representative assignments based on regional needs.

The department continues to work towards recruiting trainees who reflect the membership of CUPE. The application process for national representative positions

allows applicants to self-identify if they are part of an equality seeking group.

The application for staff positions with CUPE is found on the cupe.ca website. If you are interested in exploring staff opportunities a recruiting table has been set up during this convention in the CUPE Village.

Staff Development and Support

The department is also responsible for staff development and support. The department administers and oversees various programs to help prepare new or prospective staff for positions within CUPE and with programs that provide continuing development and support for existing staff. Mentoring is one of the programs provided.

Continuing education for the regional directors, assistant regional directors, temporary and permanent staff is of vital importance to ensure that they have the tools to provide the necessary resources and support in the field. Needs are assessed on a national and regional basis. Education is provided at least twice yearly on relevant topics such as legislation, legal issues, health & safety, duty to accommodate, mental health, bargaining and arbitration. Guidelines and checklists are being developed as resource materials for staff.

Arbitration Training

To ensure a high level of servicing at a time when the turnover among national representatives is important, CUPE is committed to providing new representatives with continuing education. One way to accomplish that is through the arbitration training program. Over the course of two weeks, participating union representatives are taught the finer points of arbitration, and get to work on an actual case. Since the last convention, one such programme has been offered to eleven national representatives.

Pension Training

Pension plans have come under attack in all regions. In order to ensure that we are in the best position possible to fight those attacks, CUPE has created a network of pension resource staff to assist locals and other representatives. The network is made up of 30 servicing representatives and researchers from every region in the country. Every year, they come to Ottawa for a week of training about various aspects of pensions so that they can take that knowledge back to their regions. And over the course of the year, the members of the network exchange information via email and conference calls, discuss particular situations that arise and trends that manifest

themselves. The network works in close collaboration with CUPE's pension specialists.

Mentoring

New servicing representatives (those with fewer than five years under their belt) can benefit from the mentoring programme that has been set up. The mentoring is provided by peer coaches in each region, and can assist a new representative with any type of situation, from preparing for a first round of bargaining or a first arbitration to handling challenges within locals, or familiarizing themselves with CUPE as an employer. Each year, funds are made available to the regions to have a mentor for a number of months.

Collective Bargaining

Government legislated wage freezes and/or employer austerity agendas continue to challenge the staff and locals at the bargaining table. Employers continue to use pressure tactics including lockouts to achieve major concessions in pensions and benefits and achieve two-tier wage and vacation grids. The Organizing and Regional Services Department helps coordinate bargaining, identify bargaining initiatives and develop strategies within the regions to assist staff and locals in overcoming the challenges at the bargaining table.

Fairness

The *Unite for Fairness* project was rolled out across the labour movement in 2013 with a goal of engaging more directly with our membership. We acknowledged the need to shift members from seeing the movement as "the union" to members referring to "my union". This project is a strategic approach to build sustained membership engagement. At the core is an ongoing conversation to building connection and relationship with our members.

The Fairness conversations are about getting back to the basics of organizing when:

- workers talked in their workplaces and the community about the power of a union
- workers would fight to get a union and fight to keep it
- workers knew the only way to have power was to work collectively

In each region we are seeing positive outcomes where local and sectorial leadership have connected with the membership in a more direct way. The winning formula has been to:

- GO to the members
- LISTEN to their concerns and connect them to the value of being in a union

- BUILD relationship and understanding from where the member is at.

The Fairness structure built within a local establishes the mechanism for information to flow back and forth between the local leadership and membership. It also ensures that members are responded to in a timely way if they have questions and concerns and that the leadership is able to effectively communicate information directly to members.

Concrete outcomes reported from locals who have implemented the Fairness approach included:

- Positive connection with rank and file members to their local and the union as a whole
- Increased engagement in mobilization activities
- Stronger support of local bargaining including;
 - Clearer understanding of bargaining process by membership
 - Increased participation in surveys
 - Stronger support of bargaining priorities
 - Higher participation in workplace activities to support the bargaining team
 - Stronger support of job action if needed to achieve a collective agreement
- Higher number of members coming out to meetings and other union events
- Creative community profile initiatives
- Increased numbers of members sharing and updating their personal contact information.

A number of tools have been developed to support leadership in establishing the Fairness approach within their locals. There is Fairness training available via Union Development Department in addition to modules which may be delivered within each local. In 2015, tools have also included specific kits being rolled out to support getting the Federal Election vote out and bargaining.

An import tool for every bargaining committee has also been developed. This Fairness Bargaining Kit entitled "Protecting our representation rights" contains sample collective agreement language that supports:

- ongoing communication with our members
- clear language related to dues deduction and remittance
- provisions in the event there are legislative changes to union financial disclosure, dues deduction and/or remittance

This kit will assist bargaining teams to assess their current collective agreement language and provides sample language to draw from in order to strengthen collective agreements. We need to entrench our ability to access

workplaces, information and time in order to ensure strong representation.

Profiles of how leadership have integrated the Fairness approach to support the work of their local have been gathered from across the country. These profiles are available for local leadership to review and consider as they develop their own membership engagement plan. For further information please visit the *Unite for Fairness* project booth in the CUPE Village. The national representative assigned to each local is also able to assist in accessing this information.

The CUPE Divisions have also been working to further the integration of the Fairness approach into the work of the union.

Changing how we work takes time. Although we are making progress with the *Unite for Fairness* project there is still much to do before the approach is the norm. We know:

- When members have a say and have a relationship with their union, they participate;
- When they participate we have power;
- When we have power, we have influence;
- When we have influence we are stronger at the bargaining table, at the ballot box and in our communities.

So let's have the conversations and build our union's power.

Airline Sector

Since 1984, CUPE remains the Union of choice for flight attendants employed within the Canadian airline industry, with over 10,000 sisters and brothers working in eight different airlines.

CUPE's Airline Sector is made of representation from each member airline (Air Canada and Rouge, Air Transat, Calm Air, Cathay Pacific Airlines, First Air, CanJet, Canadian North and Sunwing), known as the Council of Component Presidents (COCP). They hold quarterly meetings and a bi-annual conference to share developments and coordinate political and legal actions on a sector-wide basis.

CUPE's airline sector is at the forefront in representing our members with gains in wage and benefit improvements. The COCP wields considerable influence in the direction of flight safety and regulatory oversight.

Our airlines are federally regulated and have operations locally, in every major city within Canada.

Flight Attendant Day

On May 31, 2015, CUPE sponsored Canada's first ever International Flight Attendant Day, in recognition of the exemplary work carried out by flight attendants around the world. The event was hosted in Toronto by the Council of Component Presidents (COCP), and boasted approximately 400 attendees. Paul Moist, national president was a keynote speaker and Charles Fleury, national secretary-treasurer was attending.

Already celebrated in several countries for many years, International Flight Attendant Day serves to recognize the many important contributions made by flight attendants. Beyond ensuring the well-being of travelers, flight attendants are above all else highly trained in-flight safety professionals. In any number of emergency situations, they are essential to ensure the safety and security of passengers.

Bargaining and Mobilization

It is a busy time for airline sector negotiations. Five of the eight airlines represented by CUPE are in bargaining. Sector bargaining issues include; staff ratios, improvements in pension and benefits and scheduling. The economic climate for bargaining lends itself to some success in obtaining improvements in these areas.

CUPE has initiated mobilization which include membership surveys and launch of a "stand up for fairness" campaign.

Flight Attendant Passenger Ratio 1:50

In October 2013, the Ministry of Transportation began granting exemptions of the regulated flight attendant staff ratio on aircrafts. These exemptions sought to reduce 1 flight attendant for every 40 passengers, to 1 flight attendant for every 50 aircraft seats. This change resulted in significant layoffs, increased work, and compromises passenger safety.

In response, CUPE filed seven judicial review proceedings in Federal Court, against Sunwing, Air Canada, Rouge, Air Transat, Canadian North and CanJet. As of July 2015, proceedings were completed on the Sunwing file and a decision was pending. In anticipation of a decision favourable to the union, the Ministry of Transportation implemented new regulations, effective August 1, 2015, permanently changing ratios to 1 flight attendant per 50 seats.

CUPE has re-directed our legal strategy to challenging the implementation of the new regulation on two grounds:

1. A Charter challenge, citing detrimental effects from the regulation on flight attendants and on the public.
2. Challenging the process on the grounds that the Ministry failed to properly consult with the bargaining agent.

Air Canada Flight 624 Halifax

March 29th 2015, Air Canada Flight 624 experienced what the airline is calling “a hard landing,” which resulted in significant and irreparable damage to the aircraft. Fortunately there was no fatalities, although 23 passengers suffered injury. Many thanks have been expressed from the passengers, media, and Air Canada, for the heroic efforts of the cabin crew and onboard flight attendants who were not working but in travel status.

We are waiting for the results of the official Transport Canada enquiry, for a determination as to the cause and effect of the “hard landing”.

Departmental Staffing

There has been some changes of directors in the Organizing and Regional Services Department since the 2013 national convention.

Sister Kathy Johnson joined us in March 2013. Brother Brian Blakeley retired in June 2013. The death of Sister Donna Felder saddens us all. Sister Chantale Grenon Nyenhuis joined us on December 2, 2013. Brother Andy Mele joined the department in January 2015 when Brother François Bellemare moved to the position of Assistant Regional Director, Québec. Brother Bob Hickes retired as National Managing Director in December of 2014. Sister Gwen Hewitt has taken over Bob’s responsibilities.

The team is committed to working on the challenges ahead and to providing the necessary support and resources to staff and members.

Retirements

We wish a long and happy retirement to former Organizing and Regional Services Department Managing Director Brother Bob Hickes and National Assistant Director Brian Blakeley and to former regional directors: Sister Connie Credico of Alberta, Brother Bill Sumerlus of Manitoba, Brother Gordon Black of Maritimes and former assistant regional directors; Sister Rhonda Spence of British Columbia, Sister Karen McNama of Ontario and Sister Linda Craig of Québec.

We also wish a long and happy retirement to the following national representatives, secretaries and administrative assistants in the regions who have retired since the 2013 convention:

Lawrence Power, Thomas Steep, Stephen Edwards, Kathrine Hutton, Sylvie Jones, Anna Sweet, Judy Barry, Robert Cull, Doug McLaughlin, Sylvie St-Pierre, Jean Pierre Cabana, Marian Wiwchar, Brian Ellis, Dorritta Fode, René Fréchette, Shirley Mathieson, Pierre Thériault, James Keenan, Maureen Morrison, Daunine Rachert, Cora-Lee Skanes, Alain Anglehart, Danielle Laramée, Ann Robins, Bonnie Ferguson, Donald MacAskill, Paula Larocque, Diane Thériault, Edith Wolfe, Joseph Badali, Robert Bellerose, Denise Harder, Colette Proctor, Patricia Beaudoin, Matthew Graves, Heather Hibbard, Heather Inglis, Helen Manning, Kelly Murray, James Squires, Lorna Myers, Lise Therrien, Kathleen Corrigan, Monique Drapeau, Allyson Currie, Donald Devine, Sylvie Pepin, Elaine Ehman, Ruth Scher, Frederick Blake, Sylvain Pilon, Pierina DeBellis.

Current Regional Directors and Assistant Regional Directors

The Regional Directors are as listed: Maritimes, Debra Grimaldi; Atlantic, Jacquie Bramwell; Quebec, Denis Plante and Assistant Directors, Marc Ranger, Serge Morin; François Bellemare Ontario, Linda Thurston-Neeley and Assistant Directors, Jim Flynn, Robert Lamoureux, Derek Blackadder, Linda Newman; Manitoba, Lee McLeod; Saskatchewan, Aina Kagis; Alberta, Yvonne Fast; BC, Robin Jones, Assistant Director Meena Brisard.

ATLANTIC

Jacquie Bramwell, Regional Director

NOVA SCOTIA

2013

We begin our report on a very disappointed note. On October 8, 2013, the provincial NDP lost government to the Stephen McNeil Liberals, who now have a sizeable majority government.

Two days into office, the new government pulled the plug on the public paving plant that Local 1867 had worked so hard to secure. This set the tone for things to come.

The Liberals planned to move to a health 'superboard'. The eight District Health Boards would be merged into one, as well Capital Health and the IWK would also need to be considered during the amalgamation. This could lead to representation votes. Our acute care locals fought this initiative with a series of strategy meetings and follow-up actions. As part of the Nova Scotia Acute Care Campaign, a bargaining survey was developed to reach out to acute care members across the province.

We concluded negotiations for 47 long term care facilities, with a term of November 1, 2011 to October 31, 2014. We were able to achieve a substantial increase of 7.55% over three years.

We concluded provincial negotiations with our seven school boards and have reached a three-year agreement, with an economic increase of 7.5%. The Nova Scotia School Board Council of Unions struck a committee to review the Nova Scotia School Board Association Pension Plan.

For the first time community services (small centres and residential care facilities) bargained at a provincial table. Pensions remain an issue in the community services sector. There is a defined benefit pension plan in place with the larger employers, although members with the 'smaller' employers have still not achieved a defined benefit pension plan.

The provincial settlement for home support was tabled in September. The term of renewal is April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2015, with the following economic increases: 2% in 2012, 2.5% in 2013 and 3% in 2014.

Members also worked on sharing their experiences with violence in the workplace. We identified two systemic issues within workplaces that are preventing appropriate responses to incidents of workplace violence:

1. Barriers to reporting;
2. A lack of investigative processes.

Local 3945 – Municipality of the County of Colchester, were faced with a two-tier pension proposal and resolved the matter with an agreement to make contribution increases and a Memorandum of Agreement stating if the plan falls below a certain funding level, the parties will meet to look at further contribution increases.

Local 3953 negotiated a Memorandum of Agreement with VON stating that pension changes can no longer be unilaterally imposed by the employer.

2014

The Liberal government introduced two essential services Bills for health care. Bill 30 applied only to home support locals and the second bill, Bill 37 applies to all health care – Acute Care, Long Term Care, Home Support and Community Services. Bill 37 captures approximately 9,000 CUPE members.

The Division undertook a fight back campaign to oppose the provincial government's *Essential Services Act*, Bill 37, which encompasses all of our health care and community services locals. Sixty percent of the members mobilized for rallies and protests at the legislature and MLA offices.

Bill 1 passed on October 3, 2014. CUPE gave notice to the Attorney General under the *Constitutional Questions Act*, that CUPE will be raising issue of Freedom of Association under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms – at mediation/arbitration with Jim Dorsey – not a court challenge. Unlike CUPE, the Nova Scotia Government Employees Union aims to launch a court challenge and seek votes.

The Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities has dissolved its defined contribution pension plan, which affects five CUPE locals. We have attempted to move all these locals into the Multi-Sector Pension Plan.

Pensions remain an issue in the community services sector. Defined benefit pensions plans are in place with large employers. Members with a number of "smaller" Employers have still not achieved a defined benefit pension plan and this needs to be addressed in the next round of bargaining.

The first bargaining survey was developed for the Nova Scotia school board sector working with the Nova Scotia

School Board Council of Unions (NSSBCU). The survey was presented at the NSSBCU bargaining conference and is now being distributed by locals to their members.

Although the Nova Scotia School Board Council of Unions reached an agreement, Local 3890 – Chignecto-Central Regional School Board - did not reach a tentative agreement due to contracting-out concerns and commenced a one day strike on January 27, which was resolved with a mediator being appointed.

The acute care sector continued to mobilize and mounted an extensive campaign, “Count Me In.” Faced with the Liberal government’s plan to amalgamate the district health boards, they are mobilizing members through a communicator’s model identical to the communication model employed in the *Unite for Fairness* campaign. The response was extremely positive.

Nova Scotia currently has the lowest paid early childhood educators in Canada. The members of Local 4745 in Halifax have undertaken a reasonable wage structure for ECEs in the province.

CUPE Nova Scotia released a report card on the McNeil Liberal government’s first year in conjunction with activities on Labour Day.

In December 2014, the McNeil government announced that it had hired a consultant to look at tendering the delivery of home care in Nova Scotia.

2015

It is not often that we get a majority government to back down on legislation, but that is exactly what we did in Nova Scotia earlier this year. The aforementioned Bill 1, which would have carved up union membership in the acute care sector, was exposed as being unconstitutional by Arbitrator James Dorsey. Instead, CUPE, Unifor, Nova Scotia Government Employees Union and the Nova Scotia Nurses Union prevailed in their desire to have all union members stay in their own union and bargain under a new, Council of Unions model. In short, we got the same thing we had presented to government almost one year ago.

Bill 69 was introduced, which vacated the Dorsey arbitration decisions assigning bargaining agents to bargaining units and amended the *Trade Union Act* to create councils of unions for the four types of bargaining units. It also amended Bill 1 to create this structure, wherein all unions will keep their own members. As a result, five former CUPE locals, encompassing eight district health authorities, formed CUPE Local 8920. There are 4,700 members in the new local and we are currently

working very closely with them as they navigate their new structure.

We were recently advised that the acute care local won the CALM award for its “*In Your Hands*” campaign. They are to be congratulated for their great work of keeping CUPE in the forefront.

The Nova Scotia government released a draft of the Workplace Health and Safety Regulations which will consolidate a number of existing regulations while modernizing some requirements. Not all proposed changes would be beneficial to CUPE members; there is a proposal to have exposure limits for hazardous substances rolled back to 2011 standards and locked in for five year intervals.

Our efforts to draw attention to the ongoing threat of violence in long term care homes has gathered interest and momentum in Nova Scotia and we hope to see the development of a standardized code of practice for addressing this hazard not just in long term home care but also in other health care workplaces.

Our approach of fostering greater worker participation in addressing these hazards has been adopted by many locals and has not only helped address the risk of violence, it has also generated more participation by the membership in health and safety. Having such an approach adopted in a Code of Practice will ensure that more of our workplaces are equipped to deal with this growing risk.

The Nova Scotia government tendered an RFP for home support delivery. The pretence of the RFP is to look at providing a better model of care. We believe the initiative of government is to eliminate the non-profit Home Support agencies and go to a private non-union delivery. As a result, our five home support locals launched a fight back campaign and were successful in having the government shelve the RFP for approximately a year, with the intent that government needs further opportunity to consult with stakeholders.

For the first time ever, Locals 227 and 1431 with Halifax Water launched a joint strike-averting campaign. Both locals commenced strike action on May 19th, with the main issue being a proposed concession to the defined benefit pension plan. As of the writing of this report, both locals resumed conciliation on Saturday, June 20th for a period of five days. Unfortunately, there was no resolve and the strike continues.

We presented a submission to the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development’s Child Care Review. Working through the

equality representative, we have coordinated efforts on strategic priorities with Unifor and the Nova Scotia Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, organizations with a presence in this sector.

Bill 100 was passed on May 11th and gave power to the universities to take away workers' rights. A university with a "significant operating deficit" could initiate a restructuring process to produce a "revitalization plan" in order to continue to receive government funding. As well, a university could participate in a revitalization planning process if approved to do so by ordinary resolution of its governing body. The aims of the revitalization plan would basically try to turn the university into a profit centre.

The government introduced amendments at the 11th hour, but Bill 100 still bans strikes and collective bargaining during the "revitalization process".

The government encountered 23 amendments to the Bill a few minutes before the Law Amendments Committee was set to begin. Two of which are significant for labour:

1. deletion of the clause banning grievances during the revitalization process (8(1)) paragraph (d); and
2. deletion of the clause that applies Section 8 to university mergers (Clause 13).

Bill 100 affects the following CUPE Locals: 3912, 1636, 2733, 3131, 4198, 4388, 4491, and 4428.

Local 3912 – Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) ratified a collective agreement in the midst of the implementation of Bill 100.

The Liberal Government has halted the implementation of the former NDP Government's new Workplace Health & Safety Regulations (WHSR's) and has given no indication as to when, or if, they will resume the process.

Our 48 locals representing approximately 4300 members in long term care have collective agreements that expired October 31, 2014. Provincial Lead Table Proposals and Common Provincial Proposals are completed and have been circulated to all locals and servicing representatives. Notice to Bargain and Notice to Bargain Essential Services have all been served.

Our 16 locals representing approximately 100 members in the community services sector have commenced preparation for the upcoming round of bargaining. Agreements expired March 31. Notice to Bargain has been sent out as well as Notice to Bargain Essential Services.

Collective agreements in our acute care sector expired on October 31, 2014, dates for negotiations are yet to be determined. With the Dorsey decision, there are now four Council of Unions: Nurses, Health Care, Clerical Professionals and Support. We will lead negotiations in the clerical unit and will be second chair in both health care and support.

Collective agreements in the education sector expired on March 31, 2015, dates for negotiations are yet to be determined.

We have been notified of a three-year wage freeze for non-union/management public service employees. We can only speculate that the three year freeze will be presented at all of our tables, excluding municipalities. We are currently coordinating with the other public sector unions to determine how best to represent our members in the coming three years.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

2013

After several months of campaigning, we reached a tentative agreement in our contract talks with the provincial government. The sectors include health care, school boards, housing, libraries, group homes and government house. A job evaluation plan was also agreed to as part of this settlement.

Local 2329 – Provincial Information and Library Resource Board – reached a new agreement that contained landmark changes for the local. The negotiating committee successfully negotiated the removal of all "community librarian" language which limited benefits of the collective agreement. This group of employees are largely rural women who work part-time in libraries throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, and they have had to endure lesser benefits since they were organized in the 1970s and 1980s. This is a monumental win for the local.

2014

All of our master bargaining is concluded in Newfoundland and Labrador, although we continue to bargain in the municipal sector. We are achieving very good collective agreements, no concession bargaining and fair economic settlements in this sector.

We began a strike averting campaign for a very small group of sisters in Labrador City who are employed at Hope Have Inc. (Local 4732). The strike averting campaign was a result of government's refusal to implement the job evaluation agreement that had been negotiated for all public sector employees during bargaining. The campaign was a huge

success and as a result an increase of \$8 per hour was achieved.

Memorial University has recently admitted that some CUPE members (Local 1615) were exposed to asbestos after the employer had conducted abatement operations and given the all clear for staff to return to the affected area. Unfortunately, before its recognition in 2008, many of our members working in this area engaged in tasks that brought them in direct contact with the source of asbestos. The exposures after the initial abatement operation may be even more severe as the remaining fibers were all friable and loosely distributed around the work area.

Across the entire province and particularly in the municipal sector many employers are attempting to enact changes to the terms of reference of the workplace health and safety committees. These changes are attempting to limit the ability of committees to make recommendations to the employer by requiring a consensus rather than a majority vote of the committee.

All the school board contracts were negotiated under master bargaining and are in effect until March 13th, 2016.

Bargaining in the municipal sector resulted in new collective agreements for four of our larger municipal units. Local 569, 1289, 2099 and 3034 all dealt with pension issues at their respective tables.

Work is ongoing on the TRIO municipal plan, the public service pension plan, the City of St. John's plan and the Town of Happy Valley Goose Bay plan. Locals in the TRIO pension plan had their best-five year benefit formula arbitrarily changed to career average by the TRIO Board. Through the pressure of a cost-share campaign, CUPE was given a seat on a review group and we are optimistic that a best-five year benefit will be put in place on a go-forward basis. Members can expect to see a 1% increase in premiums to accommodate this.

Locals 569 and 2189 (City of St. John's) were not able to push back an employer proposal that will see new hires enrolled in a defined contribution pension versus a defined benefit pension that is available to current employees. The tipping point regarding this proposal was when the employer offered a significant wage increase and provided unprecedented protection of pension benefits and contribution rates for current employees.

Although there was significant movement in the TRIO pension plan, they did not immediately flow through to Local 2099 - City of Mount Pearl - and as a result they were locked out after negotiations broke down due to a

proposed change in the contribution level in their pension plan and wages. After being locked out for 21 days, the local was successful in achieving a fair economic increase and fixed the contribution level in their TRIO pension plan.

Local 3034 -Town of Conception Bay South - also participate in the TRIO pension plan and were able to achieve a reversing of the damage implemented by TRIO.

All of the municipal locals highlighted above ratified new four-year agreements with wage increases ranging from 15% - 18%.

We negotiated an historic pension deal in Newfoundland and Labrador, via the Public Sector Pension Plan. Even with a PC government in power, we were able to keep our defined benefit plan for all plan members, albeit with some changes to contribution rates and benefits.

2015

We began 2015 with a lockout in Local 2019 – Happy Valley-Goose Bay – who faced the same issues that 569 and 1289 were unsuccessful in pushing back a defined contribution pension for new hires. The lockout was the result of the local refusing to bargain a two-tiered pension plan. After four weeks of strike, the local achieved very positive results and returned to work with all employees in the same pension plan.

The provincial government is completing a statutory review and holding final consultations with stakeholders regarding changes to the Health & Safety Legislation, as well as Workers' Compensation Policies. We have made a number of proposals that would make workplaces safer and ensure injured workers have easier access to compensation.

We are now facing a first-ever attempt by the province to implement P3s. The Davis government wants to build four new long term care facilities via P3. As well, they are suggesting that the P3 model is a way to alleviate the province's debt. A P3 symposium sponsored by CUPE Newfoundland & Labrador was held on July 14th. The intent was to highlight the negative impact of P3s on the economy.

With a provincial election in October 2015, the NDP is working hard to rejuvenate the party. The expectation is that the Tories will be defeated, with the Liberals expected to be the next government. Their cost saving measures would be no different: cutting public services, privatizing and increasing taxes. The NDP have an opportunity here.

Organizing

New groups include:

- Local 5165 – The Magnolia, Rosecrest Ltd, Long Term Care
- Local 5204 – Amherst & District Residential Services Society, Adult Residential Centre
- Local 5247 – MacKenzie Ambulance Service, Ambulance

Since the writing of our last national convention report, it has been an extremely challenging time for our two Divisions, members and staff. There were disappointments but many gains. The Atlantic Region continues to keep our members' issues at the forefront when dealing with austerity budgets and union busting tactics. Our members are proud and strong and are very appreciate the continued support from our National Officers and National Executive Board.

MARITIMES

Debra Grimaldi, Regional Director

The Maritimes Region may have the reputation to the rest of Canada as having a more laid-back lifestyle, but that could not be further from reality. It is the school of hard knocks for our members. We are fortunate they are hardworking and proud people.

2013 ended with members of Local 4893, employees of the Town of Kensington PEI, being locked out in early December. Six members were forced to walk the picket line, while our six police officers were deemed essential services and worked during this time. The lock-out, the first in living memory in PEI, gained considerable public and media sympathy for our members and raised our already high public profile in the province. The lock-out ended after seven days, when the employer decided to return to the table and negotiate a collective agreement.

In November of 2014, members of Local 76, who work for the City of Campbellton, NB, were locked-out by their employer. The employer chose to hire scab labour while our 43 members walked a picket line. Again, our essential service employees, firefighters, maintained their hours of work. The groundswell of support in the community was overwhelmingly opposed to the actions of council. The lock-out ended one month after it began, with our members returning to work alongside the scabs who replaced them. We are pleased to report that since the lock-out, although three contractors remain in place, they have reduced the number of routes that they are working on.

Provincial Elections

New Brunswickers went to the polls in October of 2014 and threw out a Conservative Government. They exchanged it for a Liberal Government, which ran on the platform of job creation and fiscal responsibility. Immediately after the election, the government announced it planned on cutting \$450 million in spending and saving another \$150 million for a contingency fund. This “fiscal responsibility” appears to mean layoffs, as they centralize services and privatization starts creeping into more public services.

Staff and division executive members participated in a strategic planning session to strengthen and mobilize our membership as we face the government agenda. Our Action Plan, “Stronger Together”, will increase the visibility of public sector workers in the province and is mobilizing our members to support each other.

Prince Edward Islanders went to the polls in May of 2015 and reelected a Liberal Government. To date, we are not

having membership loss as a result, although the government is dealing with a deficit.

Our activists worked extremely hard to educate the members on public service concerns and taught activists how to question the potential candidates during the election. Since the election CUPE PEI launched a “Public Services work for our Communities” campaign to be proactive with raising our profile to the public.

These elections have set the tone for the next four years.

NEW BRUNSWICK

Negotiations for provincial collective agreements have been slow, in part due to the new government trying to determine their direction. Our provincial bargaining units remain at the table with the exception of Local 1251 (Correctional Officers). Through a very successful lobbying campaign and a series of hard negotiations, Local 1251 was able to convince the government to take their wage issue to interest arbitration.

The remainder of our locals are facing a government mandate of removing the retirement allowance and 1% per year for a six-year agreement. While this government’s mandate is not as harsh as the previous mandate, it remains unacceptable to our locals as the government again wants to balance its books on the backs of its employees.

Pension challenges have continued in New Brunswick while many locals are faced with employers wanting to move to a shared risk pension model. In the public service, CUPE continues to try and address the issues surrounding the legislated shared risk pension.

We have tabled language in bargaining for a retirement supplement that would pay the difference from what members will receive under the Shared Risk Model and what they would have received under the previous defined benefits plan. To date, we have not been successful in achieving this.

Municipal bargaining units in both provinces are still seeing increases of 2% to 3%.

WorkSafeNB does not recognize post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a compensable injury. Local 4848, representing NB Paramedics, has been lobbying the government and will continue to do so in order to push this issue forward.

Essential service designations for negotiations in the nursing home sector, remains outstanding as the Employers' Association was successful at obtaining designations of 90% for some LPN's and Resident Attendants. As this designation could staff higher than the normal day-to-day staffing of the facility, we are looking into the potential for legal challenges.

Last year, we lost Brother Billy Mallock, a member from Local 4848, to a workplace fatality. Brother Mallock, a paramedic, died in an air ambulance crash near the Grand Manan Airport when returning from Saint John on August 16, 2014. Brother Mallock's passing saddens all of our CUPE brother and sisters. He will be missed.

Privatization / Contracting Out / Contracting In

New Brunswick has been seeing its share of privatization attempts in the province. CUPE Local 963 continues its fight against ANBL's (NB Liquor) desire to push products in corner stores and supermarkets. The employer has implemented a pilot project where the warehousing system is now supplying four grocery stores with a selection of wines and beers not available at NB Liquor stores. The pilot project will run to the end of 2015. The local ran a campaign this winter and thanked the public for supporting the public liquor stores. Supporting good paying jobs seems to be running up against consumer convenience.

CUPE Local 1190 (General Labour and Trades) is taking on cuts to road maintenance across New Brunswick with a campaign that includes a hotline allowing members of the public to report plowing problems anywhere in the province. The hotline has been a huge success and has gained the attention of the media and the government.

The government is starting to push for P3's to be used in nursing homes across the province. A new P3 nursing home has been proposed for Fredericton. In northern New Brunswick, two nursing homes we represent will be closed and amalgamated into one nursing home under a proposed P3. Our members are rallying and lobbying the government and public to stop this P3.

In the City of Moncton, a P3 was rejected by council for wastewater treatment after they deemed it was not in their best interest.

Unfortunately we are still fighting a proposed P3 in Saint John for water treatment. We have been working with the Council of Canadians to try and change the direction of this P3.

Legislative Issues

The government has proposed what they call "Common Services" and has amended the legislation to restructure its Service New Brunswick Component. This means that

they are reorganizing and centralizing services across the province. For some of our members, it means major disruption and changing CUPE locals and collective agreements. Local 1252, our health care local, has taken on the task of pushing the government to reconsider the unnecessary disruption being created. In the upcoming year, it could mean the loss of members to a union outside of CUPE.

Local 1866, WHSCC Clerical and Regulatory (WorkSafeNB), has had a section carved out by legislation. On April 1, 2015 the Appeals Tribunal moved from Part 4 of the Public Service to Part 1 of the Civil Service. This affected six CUPE members that were transferred to New Brunswick Union. That union refused to work out an agreeable transfer arrangement for their new members.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

On PEI, staff and members have spent the past few years working diligently to defend public sector services, negotiate good collective agreements and mobilize our membership. So far, the Island has not been subjected to the same privatization that has started to occur elsewhere, and we will hopefully be able to keep it that way. Unfortunately however, we have seen some restructuring of services in health care, which has impacted our members.

Marlene Hunt of Local 3260 ran for mayor of Cornwall in 2014. Although she was not successful, Sister Hunt is well respected within CUPE and her home community.

Gordon Gay, President of Local 1775 ran for Ward 9 in Charlottetown municipal elections. Also ran for provincial election under the NDP banner. He has gained valuable experiences and knowledge of campaigns which will assist all of us as we move forward into a federal election.

The 10% shift messaging was added again, to our messaging last winter as the Division promoted that Islanders shop at home. With a limited economy, it is a message that resonates with the business community as well.

CUPE held a very successful Duty to Accommodate Disabilities workshop this year with both union and employer representatives attending. The PEI Council of People with Disabilities also attended the workshop. All participants gained valuable insight into the process of accommodations.

CUPE PEI continues to take the lead on its Employment Insurance campaign for the Island. Working with the Coalition for Fair EI, they have distributed numerous leaflets to Islanders. It will be valuable work as we try and unseat the current conservative MP.

QUEBEC

Denis Plante, Regional Director
Linda Craig, Assistant Regional Director (2014)
Serge Morin, Assistant Regional Director
Marc Ranger, Assistant Regional Director
François Bellemare, Assistant Regional Director (2015)

Our strength

Since the last convention, 3,977 new members have joined CUPE in Quebec for a total of 112,726, with 36 new certifications for a total of 752 certifications in over 530 locals.

Our dynamism

We are present in 11 sectors with service being provided by a team of 90 representatives in 10 offices, who also receive support from a team of 27 clerical staff.

Our collective agreements

Since November 2013, we have had more than 234 collective agreements expiring and have so far renegotiated more than 100 of them.

Training

We provided 211 training sessions to 2,972 participants in 2013, 231 training sessions to 2,892 participants in 2014 and we estimate that 218 training sessions will be provided to 1,817 participants between January and October 2015.

Pay equity

December 31, 2015 is the deadline for setting up pay equity maintenance programs. The date may vary in cases where an employer became subject to the Act after 2009. In addition, modifications to the Act now allow an employer to carry out this exercise without the participation of workers, even if the initial steps taken had been carried out conjointly.

We are working to ensure that the maintenance programs are being put in place.

On the radio – CIBL – CUPE Québec

CUPE Québec bought the rights in 2014 and 2015 to a series of 10 one-hour radio programs at station CIBL 101.5. The themes covered throughout this series: Bill No. 3 concerning the reform of pension funds in the municipal sector; Bill 10, the health care reform of Minister Barrette and the negotiations in the public sector; health and safety at work; privatization of public services and private public partnerships; energy; dismantling of Radio-Canada; human rights; the advantages of unionization; what the unions have contributed to Québec society in general as well as our opposition to Bills C-377 and C-525. All these

programs are available (in French) via a link on the CUPE Québec website.

Campaigns

We have led more than 18 cost-shared, strike averting privatization and PPPs campaigns, to which the Communications Branch has contributed.

The political situation from November 2013 to April 2014

The Marois government was in power during this period.

There were a number of debates during this period concerning the “Charter of Values,” presented by the Parti québécois. This bill could have become a complex and delicate issue and might have had a direct impact on jobs for our Muslim members. This bill also touched our legal obligation to ensure representation without discrimination.

Criticism of supposedly over-generous pension plans for unionized workers became more and more prevalent in the media.

The Union of Municipalities of Québec (L’Union des municipalités du Québec) began a public pressure campaign on politicians for “fair and long-lasting pension plans.”

With this pressure coming from cities and towns, the government presented a bill to care of pension plan deficits in the municipal sector. We had succeeded in having changes made to the bill, but the project was never presented to the National Assembly.

The Commission of Inquiry on the Awarding and Management of Public Contracts in the Construction Industry (La commission d’enquête sur l’octroi et la gestion des contrats publics dans l’industrie de la construction), presided by Madame Charbonneau, was very active during this period.

Some witnesses sometimes criticised the work of the unions.

The government went to the polls in March 2014 and a new chapter began.

The political situation as of April 7, 2014

The return to power in the spring of 2014 of the Liberal party of Québec proved to be a veritable nightmare for union organizations. The Couillard government lost no time in putting its austerity agenda in place.

The population seemed to have quickly forgotten why the Liberals were sent packing in 2012, after ten years with a constant background of corruption that led at the end to the historic “Maple Spring” by the student movement.

In the first weeks following the election, the Couillard government engaged in a frenzy of attacks on public services, our pension plans and our union rights. Its austerity measures are putting the very basis of Québec society in danger. This obsession of the Couillard government with balancing the budget is affecting public services very negatively.

Against Bills 3 and 15, “An Act to foster the health and sustainability of municipal defined benefit pension plans.”

The Minister of Municipal Affairs, Pierre Moreau, was quick to set the tone by orchestrating an unprecedented attack against defined benefit pension plans in the municipal and land transportation sectors.

At the same time, together with the Montreal Firefighters Association (Association des Pompiers de Montréal), CUPE initiated a vast union coalition to put pressure on the government and act as a counterweight to the municipal lobby. CUPE’s Provincial Council for the Municipal Sector (Le Conseil provincial du secteur municipal – CPSM) was one of the main actors involved, since the issue of pension plans is a priority in the “Municipal Sector Strategic Plan.”

The coalition campaigned for the right to free bargaining.

Bill 3 became Act 15 when it was adopted in November 2014. A major court challenge was filed in January 2015 by CUPE and the other unions in the Coalition in order to have the Act annulled.

Against Bill 10 “An Act to modify the organization and governance of the health and social services network, in particular by abolishing the regional agencies.”

The Minister of Health also made his presence felt by tabling a bill that remodels the entire health care system in Québec. This bill was criticised by practically all actors in the health and social services network.

Act 10 came into force on April 1, 2015, modifying the organization and governance of the health network.

In each region of Québec, the Health and Social Services Centres (centres de santé et services sociaux – CSSS) have been merged with other public establishments in the Regional Agency in order to create vast Integrated Health and Social Services Centres (centres intégrés de santé et de services sociaux – CISSS) or Integrated University Health and Social Services Centres (centres intégrés universitaires de santé et de services sociaux – CIUSSS). Of the 182 previously existing public establishments, only 33 remain.

We have to have representation votes in most of our locals. The risk is real of losing many members.

Against cuts in education

The Minister of Education, Yves Bolduc, did everything except reassure the population by imposing new cuts totalling hundreds of millions of dollars to universities and school boards. The minister resigned following a series of blunders.

A major reform to school boards was announced by the new minister, François Blais. A project to merge various establishments and make changes in governance was announced. It was also announced that school board elections would be abolished.

Representation for changes to Act R-20, “An Act Respecting Labour Relations, Vocational Training, and Workforce Management in the Construction Industry.”

These modifications intend to target Article 19 more specifically, in order to add an exclusion so that all maintenance, renovation, repair and modification work can be carried out by specialized internal labour, i.e. our members. One of our greatest challenges is to have the development of and recourse to internal expertise recognized as being the best bulwark against collusion and corruption. CUPE Quebec supports the efforts to obtain these modifications, especially while the context has never been so favourable.

These modifications will be an improvement for the municipal sector and the university sector in particular.

Negotiations in the public sector and government offers

These negotiations especially affect our members in the Social Affairs and Education sectors, as well as all our groups that contribute to the Government and Public Employees Retirement Plan (régime de retraite des employés du gouvernement du Québec – RREGOP). This is also going to provide the framework for negotiations in several crown corporations and organizations.

The government is proposing a five year term collective agreement with the following pay increases:

April 1, 2015	0.0%
April 1, 2016	0.0%
April 1, 2017	1.0%
April 1, 2018	1.0%
April 1, 2019	1.0%

The government is also demanding concessions in the pension plan.

Changes starting on January 1, 2017:

- Deferral of retirement age without actuarial penalty from 60 to 62 years old;
- Increase in the actuarial penalty from 4% to 7.2% per year of early retirement;
- The calculation for the pension amount to be based on the eight best years rather than the five best;
- All of this is in spite of the excellent health of the pension plan, funded at 98.4%.

As there has been no progress made in the negotiations, unions participating in the Common Front are planning to use pressure tactics up to and including a strike for the fall of 2015.

The portrait of the different sectors

Social Affairs sector

The social affairs sector represents more than 20,000 members in the health and social services field, in more than 60 locals. Over and above their regular union activities, members of the Provincial Council on Social Affairs (conseil provincial des affaires sociales – CPAS) have set themselves the mission of promoting jobs and workers in the sector. In all regions of Québec, workers in the health care sector take very much at heart the preservation of services in the public sector, and assure the quality of these services on a daily basis throughout the various missions.

Communications sector

The communications sector is particular to CUPE Quebec. It regroups locals from a number of organizations, mostly private, working in a diversity of fields such as cable broadcasting, telephony, print media, television production, cinema and postproduction.

The last few years have been productive for the communications sector. New members voluntary joined us from a major communications union, the CBC French Network Technicians Union (Syndicat des techniciens et artisans du réseau français de Radio-Canada – STARF SCFP-

5757). In addition to more hiring at Vidéotron and Cogeco Câble, these additions have allowed us to increase our membership to 9,320 members.

We have filed a challenge to Act C-10 on behalf of members of SCFP-675 at Radio-Canada (SRC). Act C-10 is the law that came into force in the 2009 federal budget, legislating pay increases for federal public workers without any agreement being reached with the unions. For our members at SRC, this had the effect of cancelling the pay increase already negotiated and of modifying the collective agreement then in force. The Superior Court invalidated this law, declaring it unconstitutional because it was contrary to the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining.

The government took the case to the Québec Court of Appeal and unfortunately the decision was overturned. Local-675 then went to the Supreme Court of Canada and in January 2015, it rescind the decision of the Québec Court of Appeal.

The Canadian Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) has declared that a vote will be required in order to merge certifications following the request filed by the employer for one single union. A campaign for the vote between CUPE and the CSN took place from June 15 to 26, 2015. CSN won by a very slight majority.

Education sector

The education sector of CUPE Quebec represents 29 locals and nearly 9,500 members at various school boards, CÉGEPs, private colleges and the Computer Network Management Society for School Boards (Société de Gestion du réseau informatique des commissions scolaires – GRICS). Members include teachers, professionals, technicians, administrative workers, manual workers and child care workers. It is worth mentioning that Local 5222 represents more than 600 professionals (educational consultants, psychologists, career counsellors, psycho-educators, etc.) in some 250 establishments in Laval and the North Shore.

The sector also has two provincial councils whose primary mandate is to negotiate collective agreements. These are the Provincial Council on School Support (Conseil provincial du soutien scolaire – CPSS) representing 12 school boards and the Provincial Council for CÉGEPs (Conseil provincial des CÉGEPs) made up of four CÉGEPs.

Energy sector

All Hydro-Québec locals have renewed their collective agreements. For locals 2000 – Office (Bureau), 1500 – Trades (Métier), 957 – Technicians (Technicien), 4785 – Special constables (Constables spéciaux) up to December

31, 2018; and up to December 31, 2019 for locals 4250 – Specialists (Spécialiste) and 9867 – Network Development Agents (Agent exploitation réseau). All are now working to see that their various specific agreements, negotiated individually by each local concerned being implemented.

It is important to highlight the fact that the defined benefits pension plan has been maintained and includes the payment of deficits by the employer. Shared current service costs in equal parts (50/50) have been negotiated in a progressive fashion for the whole duration of the collective agreements.

Mixed sector

Since the last Convention, several members from the mixed sector have made health and safety at work one of their priorities. A dockworker at the Matane Port died after having been crushed by some pulp bales during a loading operation on board a ship. This was the second death in two years at this location. Also, another dockworker carrying out an unloading operation aboard a ship was the victim of a serious work accident when the crane in which he was sitting tipped over onto the ship. The dockworker remained imprisoned for some time and suffered permanent physical damage. However, the efforts made to defend workers who are victims of work-related accidents led to the obtaining of a first Canadian decision condemning an employer to pay fines totalling \$315,000, as well as \$35,000 to an employee who was seriously injured in a work-related accident. The company was judged before a criminal court for having failed in its obligations to protect the safety of its employees in a work-related accident. This accident occurred at the Sorel-Tracy Port and caused the dockworker to lose both legs.

With respect to transportation of cash, the mixed sector welcomed into its ranks more than 350 new members following the purchase of G4S by the firm GardaWorld. Cash services agents are also victims of events that greatly affect their health and safety at work, because like their brother and sister dockworkers, they suffer the consequences of their employer's inactions. In the last 13 months, six major events occurred; armed attacks, pepper spray attacks, etc. These attacks have revived the debate on public safety as well as that of cash services agents. In light of this, members have undertaken steps with the various organizations involved with the aim of improving the legislation surrounding the transportation of cash and thus ensure the safety of both agents and the public.

Considering all the major events of which workers in the mixed sector have been victims, the members have no other choice than to push the issue of health and safety at work forward. They must continue these actions in order to make their work environments safer. As for locals falling

under federal jurisdiction, considering the numerous and particular difficulties with which they are faced, they must redouble their efforts.

Municipal sector

For the last two years, the municipal sector has been very active, as much with respect to union work as on the political side. One only needs to think of the major round of discussions with regional groupings and the overall work surrounding the issue of work relations and the many negotiations in this sector, of Bill 3, "An Act to foster the financial health and sustainability of municipal defined benefit pensions plans," putting together a coalition "The Union Coalition for Free Negotiations," the work of the Charbonneau Commission, of Act R-20 "An Act Respecting Labour Relations, Vocational Training, and Workforce Management in the Construction Industry," and the fight against PPPs (private-public partnerships), which is still a necessary and important one.

Québec Crown Corporations and Organizations sector

The Québec crown corporations and organizations sector includes about 4,000 members in 18 locals, spread over different organizations: Société des alcools du Québec, the Montreal and Lac-Leamy casinos, the Financial Markets Authority (Autorité des marchés financiers), the Société du grand théâtre de Québec, the Québec Centre for Industrial Research (Centre de recherche industrielle du Québec), the SODEC – Société de développement des entreprises culturelles, the SOQUIJ – Société québécoise d'information juridique, Société Québécoise des infrastructures, the Québec Fine Arts Museum (Musée national des beaux-arts de Québec), Héma-Québec, the SOQUEM – Société québécoise d'exploitation minière and the SOPFEU – Société de protection des forêts contre le feu.

For the majority of locals, the recent years may be summarized by a wage freeze, budget cuts and austerity measures. Many locals have been subject to jobs being eliminated due to budget cuts. And in return for these cuts, their members have seen their workloads substantially increased.

Ground Transportation sector

We have created the Provincial Council of Ground Transportation (Conseil provincial du transport terrestre) along with its by-laws and regulations, which remain to be approved by CUPE National. The Council is counting on its actions and brand new logo for some increased visibility in 2015. For example, they are going to accentuate their presence in each of the public or private transport associations in Québec, and will invite them to participate in sectorial meetings so they can present their respective associations and their issues in general.

On February 25, 2015, we won an important victory. A law was adopted for a modification to the Criminal Code in order to better protect the members of this sector. It's an important victory for the members in our sector. This modification allows the courts, when determining a sentence, to consider as an aggravating factor the fact that a victim of an assault is the operator of a public transportation vehicle.

University sector

The École polytechnique, Université Laval, Institut Armand-Frappier, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, École de technologie supérieure, ÉNAP, Université du Québec à Rimouski, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, Université du Québec à Montréal, Université de Montréal and the IRRST – Institut de recherche Robert-Sauvé en santé et en sécurité du travail, have renewed their collective agreements. An important number of the members have signed collective agreements over the course of the last two years. Most agreements have been for a length of five years and wage increases are around 2% per year. As we are not currently enjoying the kind of good years in which gains were easier to obtain, we wish to congratulate and highlight the hard work done to defend members in this sector. The dramatic changes in the economic context under the Liberals should also be noted. The new governmental restrictions have led employers to reduce wage offers considerably, even to align with the Government Wage Policy (politique salariale

gouvernementale – PSG) negotiated with the Common Front.

We must therefore foresee that the present negotiations as well as those coming up soon will be much harder and require our wholehearted solidarity.

The last Liberal budget limited increased expenses to 0.2% for the Ministry of Education, which is below the operational costs. During the last ten years, this increase was around 4% on average. After the historic cuts of \$200M that went unremarked by any of the rectors, it became obvious that this should be denounced and that we need to shout out loud and clear that the current government is in the process of creating the kind of extensive damage that will take years, if not decades, to repair.

The sector is continuing representations and negotiations to limit the government's interventions and its development of legislation designed to attack pension plans in the university sector, as well as the continuation of acquired rights.

Airline Division sector

Please read the report from Organizing and Regional Services Department.

ONTARIO

*Linda Thurston-Neeley, Regional Director
Jim Flynn, Assistant Regional Director
Robert Lamoureux, Assistant Regional Director
Derek Blackadder, Assistant Regional Director*

Introduction

Since our last National Convention in Quebec City, Ontario held two major elections, provincial and municipal and, like the rest of the country, we are preparing for the federal election in October later this year, where CUPE members will work hard to elect our first federal NDP government.

Ontarians elected a Liberal majority government with Premier Kathleen Wynne. While Premier Wynne portrayed herself to not be the same beast as Tim Hudak and his Conservatives, she has proven to not have the true interests of workers in mind and she is pushing a similar agenda. One of those agenda items is the sale of Hydro One which is a public asset that this Premier had no mandate to sell. CUPE National and its staff have worked along with elected Ontario Division leaders in campaigns to stop the sale and privatization of a public service. Wynne also suggests that she is supportive of those in education but is taking forever to deal with a new negotiation process that has no one at the bargaining table at the time of writing this report and is pushing labour activists in the school board systems toward job action in the fall.

While Premier Wynne and her government have not implemented a wage freeze, they advise that this is a “net zero” bargaining forum. She enforces this by providing no increase in transfer payments to the sectors and letting them fight it out at the local level to claw back from workers who are having a hard time without adequate increases to even cover the cost of living increases over the last number of years.

During the October 2014 municipal and school board elections, CUPE helped elect 11 CUPE members to key positions including mayor, councillor and school board trustees in communities across the province.

Years of determination and resolute campaigning and lobbying by health care and social service workers and assigned CUPE staff resulted in wage gains for child care/early childhood educators, home and community care and developmental services staff.

CUPE members also took to the picket lines or were locked out in the municipal and university sectors in the past two years. But with our determination and solidarity in the face

of adversity, our members overcame difficult employers and secured gains for our striking and locked-out members.

These examples highlight our union’s solidarity and tenacity in fighting for our members and defending workers’ rights. Challenges will always be part of our journey but it is the way we rise up, together, and face these obstacles that tells the true story and character of CUPE.

I’m pleased to share this report which highlights our collective efforts from the past two years. I also want to thank our members and staff for all your hard work and determination in fighting for a better Ontario for workers.

Sector Highlights

Municipalities

In the municipal sector, the wages gained in the past two years have averaged between 1.5% and 1.75%. While our members’ have stood firm to hold on to existing provisions in our contracts and make gains in wages and benefits, some of the municipal locals had to go out on strike and some were locked-out to in order to achieve fair collective agreements. In the past two years, members from The Township of Bonfield in Northern Ontario faced a 10-month strike to fight off the employer’s major concession demands, while another northern community, Black River-Matheson, Local 1490, was locked out by their employer – with demands for concessions in the name of flexibility. This local fought off the concessions after a 52-day lockout. The Region of Durham, Local 1764, also went on strike to fight off concessions. More recently, the City of London’s inside workers, Local 101, walked the picket lines in an effort to fight off numerous concessions in the name of flexibility.

In the municipal sector, these concession demands on our members are becoming increasingly common and coordinated by employers. Attacks on hours of work, benefit plans, wage freezes and pressure to negotiate two-tiered agreements are the norm at bargaining tables across the province. In response to these concerted effort by employers, delegates at the Ontario Municipal Employees Coordinating Committee’s (OMECC) annual conference, passed a motion *to ‘endorse coordinated bargaining in order to be better prepared against our*

employers' who are organizing themselves regionally and provincially. Staff and elected leaders from this sector will develop a strategic plan to help move the sector forward with coordinated bargaining.

Plans are also underway to mobilize against privatization of municipal services such as solid waste, water and wastewater, street cleaning and others. National staff are also working with the Ontario Division to fight the privatization of Hydro One, with the Liberal government announcing their plans to sell off 60% of the public utility through a staged Initial Public Offering (IPO) and move to consolidate and privatize the municipal Local Distribution Company network.

Libraries

The Library Conference, "Plan For Action", was held in Ottawa in April of this year and was attended by 47 delegates, from 25 locals. The conference included a panel discussion on Working with Grassroots and Community Organizations for Success, a workshop on Bargaining: How to Mobilize your Members and a Health and Safety presentation on violence and bullying in our libraries. Members provided positive feedback about the conference and are planning on trying some of the ideas in their locals to engage their membership and others have committed to participation in the postcard campaign: Raising our Profile in Our Communities and the Library Profession.

The delegates endorsed two resolutions which are to educate all CUPE members about the library sector and the issues of precarious work, which is highest in the library sector, and encourage them all to get library cards in their communities.

School Boards

Over 55,000 education workers in the school board sector are preparing for a difficult round of bargaining with the government at the central table and with their respective school boards. In preparation for this round of bargaining under new legislation that mandates tandem central and local tables, members undertook local and central strike votes across the province over the month of March, after the conclusion of the OSBCC conference. Members mobilized 109 bargaining units in a double central and local vote and achieved a strike mandate of 93% on the central ballot question, with most results on the local ballot question coming in around that mark or higher.

The parties enter the summer waiting for dates from the Trustees Association and Government committee to return to the bargaining table after receiving an OLRB decision on what the Local and Central split on collective agreement provisions is. This has been a very frustrating

and slow start to bargaining under this new legislation. It is expected that CUPE and its bargaining units will be making applications for the appointment of a conciliation officer as is required under the *Ontario Labour Relations Act*. Notwithstanding the government stalling the process of bargaining a new collective agreement, the school board workers are well situated and mobilized in the event of job action becoming necessary.

Social Services

After years of no base funding increase for the Developmental Services (DS) sector, the frontline DS workers will be receiving wage increases for two years based on an additional \$180 million in funding received from the provincial government that is earmarked for wages for frontline workers.

This additional funding and confirmation that the funding is specifically for wage increases for low paid frontline workers is the culmination of years of pressure on the government by CUPE members and staff to fund the sector appropriately and adequately. CUPE staff and elected leaders from the sector advocated strongly for our frontline DS workers, during a consultation process with the government on how best to distribute the extra funding.

While the implementation of the additional funding was mired in delays and confusion, some employers were trying to use the funding for other items such as pay equity obligations or as a one-time stipend or worse, tried to use the funds to pay management under the wrongly-applied definition of 'low wage frontline worker'. However, in spite of these challenges, as of the beginning of May of this year, 32 of the roughly 60 DS locals had settled their collective agreement including the proper implementation of the additional funding earmarked for frontline workers.

The Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) was launched by the government on November 2014 for welfare delivery at Ontario Works – it was a failure from day one, not only to clients but to workers. CUPE has worked to help highlight and help resolve the problems facing CUPE members in Ontario Works offices. While the software continues to be nearly unusable, the government will not halt SAMS and return to the former system. CUPE worked diligently to highlight the disaster caused by SAMS on all stakeholders.

While all our actions against SAMS resulted in CUPE members being part of a Ministerial Committee to review SAMS and to find solutions for the many problems plaguing the new software – the outcome of this review was less than desirable. However, we remain resolute and CUPE continues to call for taking SAMS offline until fixed

and return to the previous software in the interim, but the province refuses to do so.

In the community agencies sub-sector, work has continued on issues surrounding the implementation of the Personal Support Worker Wage Enhancement (PSWWE) funding initiative. All CUPE locals that were entitled to the PSWWE have received it in some form now. Some locals received it only on direct service hours (as per the Minister's Mandate), but others were able to receive it on all hours of work. One employer, (with four CUPE locals in the province) has implemented it in a random non-compliant way. We are seeking a legal opinion to see what recourse we have, and have also raised this specific issue with the Ministry.

CUPE is lobbying to ensure that the 2% increase in base funding for workers in violence against women's programs goes directly to the base wage rates of workers in this sector, as some employers are trying to divert the funding for wages toward training programs etc.

In a joint labour/employer study on worker safety in the Children's Aid Society (CAS) workplaces, the report indicated an extreme level of violence and harassment inflicted upon CAS workers, managers and clerical support. However, the report also underscored the disparity of the viewpoints between management and workers as to the level of violence and harassment in the workplace, as well as the quality and levels of measures and training in place to protect workers. While the report contains numerous recommendations to address safety in the workplace, due to cost concerns, a significant number of employers remain reluctant to implement the safety recommendations. Both employers and unions are currently developing a proposal to the province to implement the recommendations in order of priority at both the provincial and agency levels.

The child care sector faces a busy year dealing with the threat of closures of municipal child care centres, changes to the funding formula and legislation in the child care sector and finally a long overdue provincial wage grant.

Premier Wynne announced that, after experiencing years of insufficient wage increases, both Registered Early Childhood Educators and program staff would receive a wage enhancement grant in January of \$1 an hour.

CUPE continues to organize child care workers. In the past year, four new centres were organized with 240 child care workers as our newest CUPE members. In February, we also ratified a first collective agreement for Dublin Heights Childcare centre.

Health Care

After 13 days of bargaining, Ontario Council of Hospital Unions - OCHU/CUPE reached a central agreement with the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) and participating hospitals. The new contract expires on September 28, 2017. While the wage and other monetary improvements were important, other priorities included protecting the job security language, workload issues, and employers' attendance management policies. The committee achieved all of the priorities.

Once the central agreement was achieved, the OCHU executive, assisted by assigned CUPE staff, began discussions and meetings with OHA in keeping with the Letters of Understanding on Benefits, Sick Leave and RPN wages that form part of the 2013-17 central agreement. The purpose of these meetings is to: explore ways for standardizing the fragmented and disparate benefit plans at all the different CUPE hospitals in Ontario; find a way to bring the three remaining hospitals without HOODIP into line with the rest of CUPE hospitals with a decent sick leave and LTD plan that members can survive on; and to find a way to bargain standardized RPN wages at the central bargaining table.

Locals and Hospitals exchanged proposals on May 9, to begin local issues negotiations, and began bargaining September 2nd, 2014. Bargaining was completed in December 2014, though several Locals have gone back to the table or have plans to return to the table, where there are many outstanding items. Local Issues hearings before a board chaired by arbitrator Kaplan begin in July 2015, with the coordinated issues hearing on July 9. OCHU and the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) have agreed that the Board will then issue an interim award on these issues, in order to expedite completion of agreements for those locals where coordinated issues are the only items still outstanding. Local issues bargaining for locals participating in the central bargaining process ended December 19th, 2014. Of the 55 participating hospitals and 77 bargaining units, we have four settlements to date, several locals proceeding on the coordinated issues only, with the majority of bargaining units heading to interest arbitration with several outstanding issues including wage adjustments.

Local 2841 at Sudbury Hospital Services—an outsourced hospital laundry facility exclusively serving Health Sciences North—received an excellent award in October bringing their conditions much closer to hospital terms. The award included no concessions and significant improvements in areas including wages (1.4% in each of three-year agreement, reflecting need for catch-up with hospital wages), premium payments, vacation entitlement, benefits, and layoff language. Improvements to Layoff

were the most dramatic, including a significant extension of the notice period; and the introduction of early retirement, voluntary exit and chain bumping. The award represented a major breakthrough for the Local in confirming that the appropriate comparator for contracted-out central hospital laundries remains the hospitals that own and are served by these laundries. This award also serves to reinforce the value of using the interest arbitration process for hospital locals outside of central given the major improvements secured.

Hamilton Health Sciences engaged in a representation vote with West Lincoln Memorial, represented by the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC). After a campaign of long hours by dedicated local organizers, the OCHU executive and CUPE assigned staff, the local was successful in winning the vote to represent the members of West Lincoln Memorial.

Long Term Care

CUPE continues to organize and attract new members from the long term care sector. CUPE now represents approximately 30,000 long term care workers in Ontario.

The long term care sector has faced bargaining challenges in the past year which have included proposals containing concessions from employers at the bargaining tables and a few interest arbitration awards with wage freezes and lump sum payments for the years 2012 and beyond. Yet, in spite of these, the sector continues to negotiate settlements and receive interest arbitration awards with percentage increases for the same years.

As a result of ongoing coordination, we have made improvements in collective agreement language and have seen other monetary benefits within the negotiated settlements and interest arbitration awards which have included bereavement leaves, weekend and shift premiums, increased vacations for senior employees, reversing the reduction of percent in lieu when part-time employees join the pension plan, improvements in benefits such as life insurance and vision care, uniforms allowances, strengthening seniority rights for many things including postings, transfers and layoffs, and pregnancy and parental leave sub-top ups.

CUPE continues to be successful at fighting back the employers' proposals to take away our sick days and convert to the employer's infamous EI carve out which they have been attempting since 2005, and keeping and improving our part-timers' percentage in lieu of benefits instead of the employers' attempts at changing this to a substandard pro-rata benefit plan, or worse, a flat rate, and refusing all of the concessions to our benefits the employers have brought to bargaining as well as the containment items.

Paramedics

A CACO lobby day was organized at Queen's Park on Tuesday May 5. Approximately 35 MPP's were lobbied by Paramedics as well as Ambulance Communication Officers (ACOs). The focus of the lobby day was to raise awareness of how the profession is affected by PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), and to urge the MPP's to support the passage of Bill 2. By way of background, Bill 2 has been introduced as an Act to amend the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act*. It sets out that PTSD is presumed to be an occupational disease that occurred due to their employment as an emergency response worker.

The group also engaged in discussions with the MPP's about the role of paramedics in pre-hospital care. A pamphlet was also left with each MPP which outlines the level of training as well as the scope of work of paramedics and ACO's. The purpose for raising these distinctions is to distinguish their advanced skills and scope of work from firefighters who are lobbying to have an expanded role in patient pre-hospital care.

In order to bolster support to ensure the passage of Bill 2, the CACO committee has been gathering signed petitions. Strategically, it has been determined that a number of petitions will be introduced by various MPP's in the legislature on different days. The first batch was introduced in the legislature by NDP MPP Taras Natayshak on December 10th, 2014. It is intended that we will continue to have additional petitions read in the legislature.

A letter has been drafted to the various MPP's to bring additional focus to the fact that CUPE is lobbying to have Bill 2 passed. A mail out was made to all MPP offices with a copy of the Bill 2 CACO Paramedic Workers poster.

Universities

CUPE 3902 (University of Toronto) and CUPE 3903 (York University) both staged strikes under difficult circumstances to improve wages and precarious working conditions for teaching assistants and contract academic workers this year – achieving tangible gains in wages and job security for thousands of non-tenured academic workers. The results not only help the striking members but will also help improve working conditions for all our university members across the province.

While our frontline members took to the picket lines and held their own and secured gains at the bargaining tables to improve their working and earning conditions, elected members from the university sector along with assigned CUPE National staff continue to represent our members' interest in discussions with the provincial government on two critical issues – a university sector-wide Jointly

Sponsored Pension Plan (JSPP) and a university funding formula review by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

A formal process to create a proposal for a university sector JSSP started in October 2014, with a university sector-wide meeting of employer and labour-side parties. While discussions are continuing within CUPE and with the government/employer group, it is our intention that our members' best interests are reflected in the final structure/roll out of JSSP.

This same foresight is guiding our discussions with the government on the issue of a university funding formula review that is currently taking place with MTCU. We have been and will actively participate in the review process to ensure that the public nature of postsecondary education (a public policy that supports good quality public sector employment and access to post-secondary education for all students from different economic backgrounds) remains a guiding principle in the roll-out of the review and revamped funding formula.

A number of campaigns have been launched in the past year and are ongoing to highlight some of the challenges facing the university sector, including WTF or Where's the Funding campaign (aimed at raising awareness of the impact on quality education caused by lack of funding and cutbacks on each campus), Coordinated Bargaining Campaign (to support locals entering bargaining with strategic resources and tools), A Day in the Life campaign (highlighting the precarious work issue faced by many of our members and other campaigns underway).

Organizing

Since our last convention, CUPE membership in Ontario has grown by 3,207 new members in a combination of organizing drives and mergers. Some of our new CUPE members include hospital workers at Markham Stouffville

Hospital, municipal workers with the City of Brampton, instructors and academic faculty members at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, ESL instructors at Upper Grand District School Board, Librarians at Barrie Public Library, university workers at York University in Toronto and King's College University in London, health and fitness staff at YMCA Scarborough, social services workers at Canadian Mental Health Association – Peterborough, child care workers at ORDE Daycare and others. Organizing drives will continue in all the sectors.

Specialized services

In addition to the services of their national representative, locals have benefited from the services of CUPE's specialized national representatives, including Legal, Communications, Research, Organizing, Workers' Safety and Insurance Board, Health and Safety, Job Evaluation and Union Development representatives. These resource staff provide strategic advice and assistance, working closely with servicing representatives to help locals achieve successes in bargaining, improve our members' workplace conditions, advance our members' rights and interests and move forward social issues that affect our members and their workplaces.

In closing, this has been a very tough couple of years for all in the Trade Union movement with attacks from all points, whether it be the employer, the various government bodies or unhappy people. Times like these make it difficult to lead and offer to assist. We need to be stronger in supporting those who take on the battles and fight the fights and step up to assist in the operation of our union.

I want to thank all of the CUPE Staff who work so hard on our member's behalf and our members who take on the roles of leaders in support of a big organization that we all care deeply for.

MANITOBA

Lee McLeod, Regional Director

Health Care

At our last convention, we reported that health care bargaining began in May 2013. The drawn out negotiating process was frustrated by the other five health care support worker unions agreeing to a monetary package that provided for a two year wage freeze and only modest improvements in other areas. A settlement by the Manitoba Nurses Union provided for significant shift premium improvements that far surpassed the shift premium improvements that were proposed to CUPE and the other unions. CUPE did not agree to the settlement. The employer tabled a final offer to us on April 25, 2014 that was unacceptable. It did not address our concerns and continued to include concessions. In June of 2014, we met with the employer through the mediation process. We were able to achieve resolution to a number of issues but we were still unsatisfied with a number of key issues that remained outstanding. As a result, the Provincial Health Care Council (PHCC) agreed to participate in Interest Arbitration to obtain a ruling on outstanding issues. The hearings were held in November 2014. On April 30, 2015, we received the Interest Arbitration ruling. The highlights of the report:

General salary increases of:

- 2.5% effective April 1, 2014
- 2.5% effective April 1, 2015
- 2.5% effective April 1, 2016

Additional 2% long service increment effective October 1, 2014 for all employees once they reach over 20 years of service and are at the top of their pay scale.

A ruling in favour of CUPE with respect to DSM Medical Lab Assistants who have been incorrectly paid for several years. This means a significant wage increase for these members.

A ruling not in favour of the union's proposal on amending the vacation to working days from our existing block vacations.

A ruling not in favour of shift premiums awarded to nurses during bargaining.

A ruling in favour of the employer with respect to continuing the practice of the employee paying both the employee's and employer's benefit contributions when on an unpaid LOA.

A ruling in favour of CUPE regarding the general salary increases for the child care workers at Mount Carmel Clinic.

The employer is obligated to provide all retroactive wage adjustments within 120 calendar days of issuance of the award.

School Board

The Defined Benefit Pension Plan and improved health care benefits remain the priorities in this sector.

The minister of education indicated that the government may be open to our proposed switch to a Defined Benefit Pension Plan for school sector support workers. The Manitoba School Boards' Association (MSBA) approached the school sector coordinator about the possibility of converting the MSBA plan to a "Target Benefit" plan which demonstrates a tremendous shift from their previous position. Language regarding the Defined Benefit Pension Plan was on the table for all school division locals. If accepted by the employers, a joint committee will be struck between representatives from CUPE Manitoba and the Manitoba School Boards' Association (MSBA) to work to convert the existing Defined Contribution Pension Plan to a Defined Benefit Pension Plan. If this cannot be achieved by a deadline to be determined by CUPE, then we will look at joining the Municipal Employees Pension Plan. We began the process of approaching pension plans, first starting with the Municipal Employees Pension Plan (MEPP) to see if they would accept our members into their plan. Preliminary talks suggested that they would take our members in their plan. The advantage of this plan is that the plan is exempt from projected solvency deficiencies.

CUPE Local 3305 reached a tentative agreement with Mountain View School Division, achieving an 8% wage increase over four years, with the added bonus of getting the employer to put \$600 per year into the Manitoba School Boards' Association (MSBA) Blue Cross Health Plan for participating members. The new MSBA Health and Benefits Plan now has over 20,000 plan members. This will provide members with even more stable premiums than first anticipated. Much debate continues over the MSBA Blue Cross Health and Benefits Plan. However, we are seeing that more than half of the locals in the sector are opting for this plan due to the size, stability and rates as compared to other plans.

The Federal Government is not going to move forward on its plans to group school support workers into the same Employment Insurance (EI) category as teachers.

Municipal

CUPE Local 500 entered into bargaining with the City of Winnipeg at the end of 2014. The employer did not propose an attack on the pension. Some of the concessions that the local had fought hard against and that were kept on the table were job security, long service pay and severance pay. The local found itself at an impasse as concessions remained on the table with job security being the main one. Both parties applied for conciliation with dates being set for May and June. Conciliation was held for one day to discuss monetary. The employer pulled their concessions off the table. Final deal was a two year term with 2% increase in each year. The long service pay that the employer wanted to take away was actually improved by an increase of \$5.00 per month. The settlement was ratified on Tuesday, June 2, 2015, by 61.6% in favour. This tells the city that we don't really like the deal.

The full-time unit president position for the public works unit was revoked by the city. The city paid for that position for approximately 15 years. A resolution to this matter was subsequently worked out in bargaining, allowing for time off for union business for unit presidents.

Municipal Election – October 22

Winnipeg elected a conservative mayor. There were also several new councillors elected. Two are labour-friendly and one is potentially labour-friendly depending on the issue. This provides the opportunity for a potential 8/8 vote.

The *Positively Public* campaign was wrapped up after the municipal election.

CUPE Local 500 started a snow clearing campaign to show the city that it is in their best interest to bring the work back in-house instead of contracting out. An abbreviated report was presented by the local to City Council with a full report and anticipated response from the city expected in the fall of 2015.

Social Services and Child Care

CUPE National, CUPE Manitoba and Local 2348 worked together to sponsor the Move for Hope event to raise money for programs working toward ending violence against women.

Local 2348, Osborne House – the province provided notice to the Osborne House Board of Directors (who were set aside, along with the executive director), that they would be withdrawing from the Service Purchase Agreement at

the end of 90 days and that they would no longer fund Osborne House. In the interim the province took control of the organization and brought in a provisional administrator to operate Osborne House. The province assured the union and our members that their jobs would be secure and that the province would try to have a new board in place and the shelter would be reopened under a new name. The province had tried to enter into a co-management arrangement with the board and they were turned down and therefore the province felt they had no choice. The province launched Willow Place.

Local 3085, Community Living Selkirk – took a strike vote over last summer and were on the verge of striking when the government announced that they would be prepared to provide \$6 million to raise the starting hourly rate to between \$13.00 and \$14.00 per hour by 2017. A recent announcement confirmed that the start rate will be minimally \$13.75 by January 2016.

Local 2348, Wayfinders – ratified a first contract with the Seven Oaks School Division and in the first year of the agreement members saw their wages increased by 17.4% to 30.4% (depending on which steps of the former scale they were on).

Long Term Care

A new letter of understanding regarding working short was negotiated into all Revera collective agreements in 2013. This letter of understanding is being monitored by local leadership and the CUPE representative.

A reminder was sent out to all locals to make sure they utilized the language in the letter of understanding. The workforce in this sector is aging and the nature of the workload in this profession is not very conducive to an aging workforce. Employers are taking steps towards early retirement offers in lieu of termination which members are accepting as they are not prepared to fight this issue, based on age, timeline to fight and financial impacts. This is a global issue that we should be addressing through the working short campaign. This sector has minimal pension security and there is a need to lobby for implementing Defined Benefit Pension Plans to allow for an aging workforce to be able to retire with dignity and respect. This sector has had many issues – fair and reasonable wages, working short, workload, violence and ageism. The local leadership was hearing positive feedback about the engagement of CUPE on the issue that is impacting the members the greatest. There is still much to be done to improve the current climate for this sector and to facilitate building on engagement in this sector. A brief was prepared to present to government on CUPE Manitoba's working short campaign. A meeting with the minister of health took place in March 2015 where the brief was

presented and where discussion took place regarding the recommendations that CUPE had prepared to improve the state of long term care for all Manitobans. It is important to all members of this sector that there is “dignity and respect” for all, making use of language most private facilities promote as the core foundation of their organizations. We are awaiting a response from the minister regarding the recommendations put forward.

The Long Term Care Committee meeting allowed further opportunities to hear presentations on the *Health Accord* as well as the working short brief. It was successful in linking the two issues and bringing awareness of the *Health Accord Campaign* as a secondary opportunity to connect with Manitobans about issues within long term care.

Energy Sector

The new CEO of Manitoba Hydro did not adopt CUPE’s methodology that as Hydro grows, so should CUPE. Instead, they are adopting an approach that characterizes the use of contractors and consultants as short term relief for peak periods. This has had a tremendous impact on the IBEW members and much less so on CUPE. But the CUPE Local 998 Executive is committed to enforcing the new language in the collective agreement that was intended to minimize the use of contractors to do work of the bargaining unit. There are also under-currents that the potential for the selling of Hydro remains a possibility. To this end, the local is looking to enter into a cost-share, if need be, to promote the value of Manitoba Hydro remaining a crown corporation owned by Manitobans. The local has many examples of the employer relying on the use of contractors in the workplace and they have responded by filing a series of policy grievances to address this issue.

The trend that other energy sector locals throughout Canada are facing has spread into the region and this trend has potential effects on the viability of Manitoba Hydro remaining an independent Crown Corporation. The trend is known as Asset Recycling. Asset Recycling is a method where the corporation sells off a department’s physical assets and then leases back the assets for use by the corporation. This method of divesting has already

occurred at Hydro One in Ontario where the corporation divested the rural power operations to private and municipal interests. Toronto is facing a similar challenge as the corporation attempts to divest its holding in the customer service centre. CUPE Local 998 remains committed at this time to seek a stop to this divestment through dialogue and the grievance process if necessary. Grievances and arbitrations continue to be on the rise as relations between CUPE Local 998 and Manitoba Hydro become further strained by the employer’s stance on vacancy management, contracting out and piecing off work of the bargaining unit to other unions/associations within the corporation.

A further complication may be the potential for the Power Smart Division of Hydro (Demand Side Management – DSM) to be moved to an arms-length operation that could impact between 70 – 100 employees. The local leadership has been working directly with both the Regional and National Offices to lobby the government to reconsider this matter.

Health and Safety

The province, through Safe Work Manitoba, is looking at creating a Manitoba Safety Certification Program to cover all sectors and workplaces to provide for accident prevention. A panel is being selected from both labour and the employers to study and review other practices around North America in order to develop a plan that would be seen as the “leading program” in safety certification. Brother Wally Skomoroh has been asked to sit on the panel, as it is recognized that CUPE should have a strong voice at this table.

Staffing:

At the time of this report:

In conclusion, I wish to thank the CUPE Manitoba Executive Board and Division President, Sister Kelly Moist, for their ongoing dedicated work in the Manitoba Region. We look forward to our continued work with the Division in the coming two years.

SASKATCHEWAN

Aina Kagis, Regional Director

The Context

CUPE Saskatchewan represents 29,500 members in 119 locals in Saskatchewan. We have added about 150 members in the last two years.

The Saskatchewan Party government, re-elected in 2011, continues to make all our work more challenging: in the prevailing right wing climate, employers are emboldened at the bargaining table and at the Labour Relations Board, organizing has more hurdles, and members often feel disenfranchised and frustrated by anti-union, anti-worker rhetoric and actions.

Our staff and financial resources are too frequently (and wastefully) expended to address issues created by the government's legislative "solutions" to non-existent problems – exclusion of supervisors from our bargaining units being a case in point.

However, with the support of our national officers and staff, we remain an organization committed to activism and positive change.

CUPE Saskatchewan carries this commitment into its daily work with members on the political front and its support of organizations such as *Next Up* and *Briarpatch Magazine*.

And our course, none of the work described below could have happened without the unstinting efforts of CUPE staff in the province – every staff person's commitment to CUPE members is simply outstanding.

The Win

CUPE's major achievement in Saskatchewan was our significant participation in a win at the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC). The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL) challenged the Saskatchewan Party (SK Party) government's essential services legislation. In January of 2015, the SCC ruled, in a 5-2 decision, that the legislation far over-reached the purported intent of protecting public health and safety, and that in doing so, restricted unions' right to strike to an unconstitutional extent. As a result, the right to strike now has Charter protection in Canada's unionized labour force.

The SCC gave the SK Party government one year in which to write new essential services legislation that complies with the court's ruling.

The Wages

Locals in Saskatchewan achieved average wage settlements in 2014 and 2015 of 2.3% and 2.23% respectively, with corresponding weighted average settlements of 1.6% and 1.7%. While these increases are themselves very modest, the government's wage funding increases to our CBO sector in 2015 were shameful: a 1% increase went to child care centres, while health care homes and vocational training centres received no additional wage funding at all.

The Wars

During the last two years, CUPE's energy has primarily been directed to pushing back against the SK Party government's privatization initiatives and to defending our largest pension plans from employers' determined efforts to eviscerate them.

Privatization initiatives threaten virtually every sector. These are but a few examples:

Municipal

Waste Water Treatment Plant, Regina
P3 bus barns and city yards, Saskatoon
P3 new South Saskatchewan River Bridge, Prince Albert

Health Care

User pay MRIs (legislation tabled spring 2015)
New privately operated (K-Bro Linen), centralized laundry
"Community based" day surgeries and diagnostic procedures

K-12 Education

Nine (9) P3 schools to be constructed

CBOs

"Self-managed care" options

In addition to running targeted campaigns against many privatization initiatives, CUPE is playing a lead role in the SFL's "Own It!" campaign, a provincial campaign with the goal of preventing the SK Party government from being able to claim after the next election (likely in spring 2016) that it was elected with a unfettered mandate to privatize. One component of the campaign is to collect 100,000 signatures on an anti-privatization petition. CUPE Saskatchewan hosted innumerable public events through the summer and fall of 2015 both to raise our profile and to collect signatures.

On the pension front, lengthy and difficult negotiations, and a highly effective public campaign called “Honour our Deal”, succeeded in maintaining the Regina Civic Pension Plan as a defined benefit plan that will continue to provide reasonable retirement income to about 3,600 CUPE members.

Over 11,000 CUPE members are covered by the Municipal Employees’ Pension Plan (MEPP). The MEPP Commission has been taking steps that indicate it intends to erode that plan’s benefits over the next few years. The success of our “Honour our Deal” campaign has resolved us to defend the MEPP with equal vigour.

Locals at the Universities of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon) and Regina will bargain in early 2016 with employers who have signalled that they will again be bringing proposals to reconfigure and reduce pension benefits to the table. Both locals fended off these attacks in the last round of bargaining and are committed to doing so again.

CUPE’s challenges in Saskatchewan, as in other jurisdictions, show zero signs of abating over the next two years. We are confident that our members, our staff and our political leaders will continue to meet every challenge with the energy and commitment demonstrated over the last two years.

ALBERTA AND THE TERRITORIES

Yvonne Fast, Regional Director

Alberta and the Northwest Territories have 35,000 CUPE members in 216 units across 108 local unions. The bulk of our members are in the municipal, K-12 and health care sectors, with smaller numbers in post-secondary, airlines, social services, libraries and others.

After 44 years of Conservative government, Alberta voters changed course in dramatic fashion on May 5th, 2015. A majority NDP government was elected and suddenly everything we knew about Alberta politics was wrong.

The new NDP government caucus includes many labour activists (including the Premier), and has promised new approaches to public services, labour laws, taxes, aboriginal relations, a review of energy royalties, and the environment.

As I write this in early July, the government has completed its first legislative session, having reformed election donation laws (banning corporate and union donations), scrapped the 'flat tax' in favour of higher taxes on the wealthy and corporations, reversed PC cuts to education and health care, announced a tuition freeze, and raised the minimum wage (with a pledge to keep raising it until it hits \$15/hour in 2018). Heady days for long suffering labour activists in our province.

The government and the province still faces big challenges. With oil prices hovering at about \$60/barrel, the province does not have the revenue it had counted on in previous years to pay its bills. This may lead to more hard rounds of bargaining for CUPE members if revenues do not improve.

After multiple generations of hostile governments, CUPE staff and activists are learning how to interact with a friendlier administration. We have started training activists and staff on the skills of lobbying and relationship building with the Notley government.

We consider these to be 'good problems' to have. Just one year ago, we were celebrating a victory for Alberta public sector workers against the PC government's attempts to roll back pension benefits. That victory came after an unprecedented, coordinated effort by multiple unions (including CUPE) to educate and activate public sector employees. After repeated demonstrations, phone calls and meetings with MLAs, the PC government changed course, referred the pension legislation to a legislative committee. After a series of public hearings, the pension changes quietly died.

The 2014 pension campaign woke a lot of public sector workers to the reality that the PC government did not have their best interests at heart. And it showed them the value of pressuring government to act. Hopefully, with our new provincial government – public demonstrations in -35 degree temperatures will not be necessary!

Organizing and Raid Aversion

New certifications:

- TOK Transit Alberta Limited (79 members)
- Revera The Heartland Retirement Centre (35 members)
- Edmonton Garrison Military Family Resource Society (24 members)
- Town of Bowden (6 members)
- Associated Ambulance (38 members)
- Canadian Blood Services (17 members)
- East Central Alberta Catholic School Division 16 (93 members)
- SUNRISE VILLAGE high River We have organized 69 health care aides and Licensed Practical Nurses in High River, Alberta.

Raid/Building CUPE

Campaigns have been ongoing in Local 4822 (Sodexo - Calgary), Local 2158, (Grande Prairie Care Centre) and Local 408 (St. Mike's Health Centre).

Decertifications

Local 37 – Epcor (Canmore) (11 employees)

Local 2038-01 – Town of Vauxhall (6 employees)

Legal and Legislative

2013

Bill 45: (*Public Sector Services Continuation Act*) was passed by the Alison Redford government in December 2013. The law imposed crippling penalties on public sector unions and their members who strike illegally, or merely threaten to strike. It sets out punishments for members of the public who "counsel" union members to strike. This law was never proclaimed by the government.

Bill 46 (*Public Service Salary Restraint Act*) was passed by the Alison Redford government in December 2013. The Bill removed compulsory arbitration for Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE) members working directly for the Alberta government, in effect forcing a settlement of

their contract negotiations. AUPE was granted a temporary stay at the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench, allowing the union time to reach a settlement with the government in April 2014.

2014

On February 1, 2014, Alberta's Employment Standards (Compassionate Care Leave) *Amendment Act* came into force. The Act provides that an employee may take an unpaid leave of absence of up to eight weeks to provide care or support.

In March 2014, the PC government approved a review of the Alberta Employment Standards Code. CUPE participated in consultations held in Edmonton and Calgary, submitting a brief and recommendations. There has been no developments or changes to the Code since this consultation.

Bills 9 and 10: As mentioned earlier in this report, the Redford government attempted to impose major changes on public and private sector pension plans in the province. Doug Horner, the Minister responsible, argued that large liabilities in the major public sector pension plans required a dramatic clawing back of pension benefits to our members. The labour movement response was that the changes were unfair, and that the pension plans were healthier than the government was portraying them.

After an extensive campaign to pressure the government to back down, the government referred the bills to an all-party committee for public hearings. After the hearings were complete, Premier Jim Prentice announced the bills were being scrapped.

2015

Bill 1 – The flagship legislation of the new Notley government was a change to the provinces election finance laws prohibiting provincial political donations to political parties and candidates from businesses and labour unions. The Bill, which passed with unanimous support in the Legislature, still allows businesses and unions to make in kind donations of staff. However, an all-party committee has been struck to examine more changes to election financing rules.

Bill 2 – Significant changes were made to Alberta's tax system, scrapping the so called 'flat tax' in favour of progressive income taxes for Albertans making over \$125,000 per year. In addition, the government raised corporate taxes from 10% to 12% on profits, reversing a 10-year trend in the other direction.

Projects – Political Action

The 2013 municipal elections were largely a success for CUPE and the Alberta labour movement. Three candidates with strong CUPE ties were elected, along with six of the ten other candidates supported by CUPE.

The 2015 provincial election was a success beyond expectations. CUPE Research Representative Ricardo Miranda was elected as part of an NDP sweep of the province. Significant staff and membership resources went into helping NDP candidates across the province achieve historic results.

Projects - Municipal

CUPE Local 1505 has been fighting the contracting out of security and custodial services at the Fort McMurray airport.

CUPE Local 1505 ran a successful campaign resulting in the Municipality of Wood Buffalo passing a bylaw naming the municipality as the only entity allowed to provide utilities within the municipal boundaries.

CUPE Locals 37, 38, and 709 have invested over \$300,000 per year in cost share campaigns to maintain a high profile for the work done by municipal employees and assorted issues that matter to the locals.

Projects – Unite for Fairness

Leadership workshops have been held with 56 locals and sub-locals participating and over 100 activists trained covering most areas of the province. The response from the members has been very good. Some areas have produced 90% of the members signing cards.

Sector Overviews - Municipal

In 2014, 55 locals and sub-locals received wage increases in Alberta. The average for each sector was:

- City 2.63%
-
- Energy 3.00%
- County 2.22%
- Town 2.72%
- Village 2.75%
- Municipalities 3.13%
- Misc/Other 2.66%

The overall wage increase was 2.68%.

BARGAINING – 2015

To date there are 42 local and sub locals that have been negotiated in Alberta and approximately 26 collective agreements will be negotiated this year in the municipal sector. Locals that have signed long term deals seemed to

have weathered the storm and should be in better shape than the agreements being negotiated in 2015.

FORECAST FOR MUNICIPAL CONTRACTS

Some of the challenges the Municipal Sector will be facing include:

- The Alberta economy with the price of oil being low will be a big challenge for locals bargaining in 2015.
- This would mean that it would be more advantageous to get to the bargaining table as quickly as possible, but not to accept a deal just to get it done.
- With the new NDP government, the hope is that CUPE and other unions will have control of the LAPP board. The finance minister and the government will not have the veto power.

ENERGY SECTOR

- CUPE Local 38 ENMAX has an agreement that runs until 2016
- CUPE Local 30 EPCOR has signed a new memorandum of settlement after a very hard round of mediation.

SUMMARY

Over the last four years the average wage increases in the municipal sector have been decreasing;;

- 2011: 3.14%
- 2012: 3.05%
- 2013: 2.88%
- 2014: 2.68%

As you see there is a slight decrease in 2014 however, we should see a leveling out in the next years based on the 42 Locals that have settled long term deals.

Sector Overviews – K-12

This sector is comprised of 46 locals and sub-locals. There has been an increase in membership over the last two years. There are in excess of 8,300 members and approximately 40-50% are part-time, casual temporary and/or ten month employees.

K-12 employers abandoned 'Transparency Guidelines' which were threatening to derail negotiations by posting every proposal and counter proposal made in bargaining to school district websites.

As of this report there are locals that will be commencing bargaining in the fall or have current tables opening that may or may not be taking a break for the summer. In 2014 and in early 2015 there were similar wage patterns of 0%, 0%, 0% and 2%. However since the provincial election in Alberta there has been a shift and locals are hopeful that the old pattern will not continue.

The average for those who completed bargaining in 2013 was 2.0%, down from 2.25% in 2012. For 2014 the percentage increases are as follows:

- 18 locals with 0 %
- 1 local with 1%
- 1 local with 2%
- 1 local with 2.5%

The average 2015 increase has been 2%.

CUPE remains involved in a coalition with other partners and sister unions in Alberta in this sector called Kids Not Cuts. The mandate of this project is to lobby the government to make sure that adequate funding is provided for the sector. The results of inadequate funding is clearly illustrated in the impact on the students and the support staff.

Alberta Education Employees Committee (AEEC) met in May 2015 in Calgary. This committee has been active in the Kids not Cuts campaign and has had town hall meetings with the general public to explain how cuts in this sector impact all aspects of their children's education. AEEC will be meeting again in September in Edmonton and are hoping to have the attendance of the new Minister of Education, David Eggen.

While there has been some relief in terms of budget anxieties and layoffs that were no longer needed due to restoring the funding by the incoming NDP government, there are still challenges to be had at the bargaining table and many locals are also working on establishing better working relationships with their employers.

Sector Overviews – Health care/Long Term Care

This sector is comprised of 28 locals and sub-locals representing members in health care sector across Alberta. The membership is mainly comprised of Health Care Aides, Licensed Practical Nurses, Technicians, Hospitality Aides, Cooks and Unit Clerks. There are in excess of 9,500 members and CUPE has been getting a number of requests for organizing from different facilities.

The average wage increase for 2014 for the health care Locals was 2.25%. Long term care locals reported settlements of 2.5% per year in 2014.

In late 2013, Alberta Health Services announced plans to privatize hospital lab services in the Edmonton region. AHS later reversed this decision, and was then over ruled by the PC government. The new NDP government is reviewing this decision.

November 6, 2013 Parkland Institute released their report "From Bad to Worse: Residential Elder Care in Alberta". CUPE provided financial support for this research project as it address priority issues for our members who provide working services for seniors – and for all CUPE members and Albertans.

There was a big funding cut in long term care, resulting in reduced hours of work for many members. As was pointed out in the report by the Parkland Institute, From Bad to Worse: Residential elder care in Alberta, there has been an ongoing trend of the replacement of Long Term Care (LTC) with Assisted Living (AL). Elders who would once have been placed in LTC have increasingly been diverted into AL. Also there has been the expansion of for-profit delivery of residential elder care. Recent years have seen a fall in publicly delivered elder care and a spike in for-profit facilities. Our members working in for-profit facilities are making much less in wages than their counterparts working in the facilities operated by a public body.

The Alberta Health Care Employees Committee (AHEC) is planning a campaign to Defend Public Health Care and raising awareness about funding cuts and their effect on the residents and our members.

In 2015, there are 15 Locals in the open period. With the NDP Government in the province, there is a big hope of funding increase to this sector. That is the reason, most of the locals are planning to begin negotiations in the fall.

Sector Overviews – Post-Secondary

The Alberta post-secondary sector is made up of six locals with approximately 1,200 members, about 1/3 of whom are part-time.

CUPE Local 1368 (Students Union - University of Alberta) ratified a new collective agreement in June 2013 which will see a 0.75% increase in the first year, 1.0% and a further 2.0% on May 1, 2015 of a three year agreement.

CUPE Local 2157 (Keyano College) bargained a four year deal with a 2% increase on July 1, 2012, July 1, 2013 - 1.5% January 1, 2014 – 1.5%, July 1, 2014 - 1.5% January 1, 2015 – 1.5%, and finally July 1, 2015 - 1.5% January 1, 2016 – 1.5%. There has been a number of layoffs and reductions in staff throughout the college and more are expected.

CUPE Local 4318 (Banff Center), reached a collective agreement and received a 1.5% lump sum payment effective January 1, 2015 plus an increase in the standby pay from \$2/hr to \$3/hr.

CUPE Local 1445 (Red Deer College) reached a four year agreement in the fall of 2012, with a 2% increase on July 1,

2012, 2% increase on July 1, 2013 and for July 1st 2014 and July 1, 2015, a base increase of 2% plus, if the Alberta CPI is higher than 2%, they will receive that difference also in those two years.

CUPE Local 1158 (NASA) settled for a four year agreement with 2% in 2012, 1.65% in 2013, 1.65% in 2014 and a \$1.00 per hour for all classifications in 2015. Also a \$400 lump sum payment to all employees employed on the date of ratification and for new employees hired within 30 days of the ratification. A new step was added to the wage grid which would give members in that step a 2% increase.

CUPE Local 3911 continues to fight the growth of the 'call centre' model of distance education at Athabasca University. With the university under new administration, and threatened with serious financial problems, the future is very difficult to predict. The local had an agreement in 2014 not to open the collective agreement for a year and will be in bargaining later in 2015.

Sector Overviews – Library

CUPE represents eight public library locals in Alberta with memberships ranging from three to 653 members.

There was no bargaining in 2013. In 2014, five locals successfully bargained wage increases from 15 to 33%. Three locals will complete bargaining in 2015.

CUPE has had a booth at the Alberta Library Association Conference in both 2014 and 2015.

Sector Overviews – Social Services

There are currently ten (10) Locals in Alberta covering 19 collective agreements with approximately 850 members in total.

There are currently two units that have collective bargaining. Of these units, Local 3782, is a wage reopener and the employer has proposed a 4% increase for 2015; five additional units are scheduled to begin bargaining in 2015.

The average wage increases over the last two years in this sector have been between 2% and 3.5% however, there have been some zeroes and one unit received 5%.

The major issues facing this sector are caused by insufficient government funding, including workload, and working alone, violence, understaffing, staff turnover and training. In 2014 Human Services increased the funding and provided a lump sum to all women's shelters, however this did not address the problems of workload and understaffing.

Sector Overviews – EMS

Over the past two years we have seen significant changes in CUPE's representation of EMS employees in Alberta. Two years ago we had five CUPE EMS stations within the province – all under administration.

Today CUPE represents ten EMS stations within the province – none under administration.

We lost St. Paul EMS as they divested their ambulance service within that region effective April 2015. We have approximately 200 EMS members excluding casual staff.

All tables are currently open in EMS except for Beaver EMS. We had a successful round of bargaining in May 2015

that has resulted in this small non-profit group becoming the highest paid EMS members in the province (including AHS employees). In 2017 Beaver EMS and AHS will be matched in wages. The other tables are very difficult due to the financial restrictions imposed by Alberta Health Services. We will likely see mediation or arbitration at these tables.

We continue to experience bargaining challenges within EMS because Alberta Health Services are the absent person at all EMS tables. Although AHS is not physically present at the tables because they are not the employer, they hold all purse strings for these groups. Therefore, all ratification is subject to final approval of Alberta Health Services.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

*Robin Jones, Regional Director
Meena Brisard, Assistant Regional Director*

The following sets out some of the more noteworthy activities in the BC Region since our last report to Convention 2013.

Bargaining Environment

The public sector bargaining environment in BC is currently shaped by government imposed mandates (5.5% over five years) and an Economic Stability Fund (ESF). If the actual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) exceeds the forecasted real GDP, a conditional percentage wage increase, amounting to 50% of the difference, would be applied to the hourly rate at the first pay period after February 1, 2016; 2017; 2018 and 2019.

All provincially funded sectors came in under these mandates, with a few achieving sidebars that will see potential increases with the introduction of JE Plans.

The Community Social Services sector was the only group that managed to exceed the imposed mandate, bringing long sought after wage adjustments to the poorest paid employees. 77% of the members will realize an 11.5% wage increase; another 20% will see 12% over the term of the agreement.

CUPE Local 873 Ambulance Paramedics of BC

As part of the Facilities Bargaining association (FBA), with HEU, a collective agreement was achieved in June 2014. Local 873 made gains in areas such as Community Paramedicine and were successful in securing their collective agreement as an appendix to the FBA agreement.

In early 2014, Local 873 was successful in winning a substantial wage increase award through reclassification arguments for the Critical Care Paramedics.

In June of 2015, Local 873 successfully negotiated a first collective agreement for a newly organized sub-local employed as inter hospital transfer attendants and drivers.

CUPE Local 608 Naramata Centre

Following a yearlong strike by workers at the United Church of Canada Naramata Centre, the Centre closed. Our disappointment in the way workers were treated by the Church cannot be overly stressed, and will affect our relationship with the Church on a go forward basis. Despite the poor treatment of workers and the legal

gamesmanship from the Church, we achieved a satisfactory severance settlement for the workers.

CUPE Local 7000 Southern Rail

Following a long and acrimonious lock out by the Employer Southern Rail, the Local achieved a no concession settlement that addressed many of their concerns. Southern Rail is owned by Dennis Washington, a Missoula (Montana) based billionaire with holdings in the Washington Group of Companies in the US and Canada. This Employer has a long track record of anti-worker actions in the US, and tried to import them to BC against Local 7000 Southern Rail component.

We contacted a labour friendly lawyer in Missoula who put us in touch with the American equivalent of our District Labour Council in Missoula. They coordinated with us to bring about pressure in Dennis Washington's back yard.

There were several Labour Board hearings involving common site picketing, unfair labour practices and other Code violations that were an almost daily occurrence.

We put together a lockout action team consisting of two legal representatives, research, and our Strong Community Working Group. We brought actions forward related to ally status against CP Rail and other companies that were assisting Southern Rail. Filings at the Labour Board alleging Code violations including replacement workers (scabs) were very effective. The Local prevailed in the vast majority of cases and in fact was awarded \$5K in damages at one point, something that was unprecedented in BC.

We retained the law firm of Quail, Worth & Allevato to assist our in house legal team rather than sending out the files. This tactic worked extremely well and we kept conduct of the files in a very efficient and cost effective way.

The solidarity of the members of Local 7000 was unwavering. The National Officers attended the picket lines on several occasions, and CUPE BC mobilized in support of the Local in their fight against a very nasty private sector industrial Employer.

Municipal Sector

Despite rumblings that the anti-worker provincial government is contemplating some form of wage caps on

municipal workers, we continue to achieve settlements in line with the cost of living. Slight improvements have been achieved in benefits. The largest group in Metro Vancouver is preparing to go to the table in the next few months, and we are working hard to ensure coordination between the Locals.

K-12

CUPE K-12 Locals in BC are settling into the abridged school year.

We are pleased to report all of the CUPE K-12 Locals successfully ratified new five year collective agreements before the November 30, 2014 deadline imposed by the Provincial Framework Agreement (PFA). In addition, all of the non CUPE support staff unions participating in the agreement ratified new agreements before the deadline.

Now that all Locals have ratified agreements, we are in the process of implementing all sections of the PFA. The PFA continued several committees and created others. The Education Assistants' Committee (EA) is continued. The committee is tasked with working on standards and credentials for EAs as well as determining best practices for EAs in the province.

The Support Staff Education and Adjustment Committee (SSEAC) is a joint committee that oversees many of the activities and initiatives in the K-12 sector. In January, the committee advanced funds for the creation of additional

EA training modules, agreed to commission a survey of the professional development needs of K-12 members, and reviewed the outstanding training budgets available to districts and locals.

We are in the process of developing a workshop to assist districts and locals work through the allocation of Support Staff Learning Improvement Funds (SSLIF). This is money provided annually to districts for the enhancement of EA hours and creation of new whole EA jobs.

The PFA also requires the parties to create a Provincial Job Evaluation Committee to oversee the development of a provincial Job Evaluation Plan. We anticipate engaging Brother Peter Coombes, the regional job evaluation representative, to develop the program. The PFA allocates funds to pay for this work.

In late January, we met with the Employer's Association in an attempt to resolve outstanding issues around the Employee Support Grant (ESG). The ESG is the money from which members were paid during the BCTF job action. We were able to resolve several issues, but one significant issue remains. Several locals have appealed on behalf of casual and temporary members who historically would have worked but were not called back to work in the first week of September because of the strike.

We have agreed to submit these disputes to a third party for resolution in accordance with the PFA.



*Union Development
Department*

CUPE 2015 CUPE NATIONAL CONVENTION – VANCOUVER

UNION DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Bill Robb, National Managing Director

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Nelson Mandela

Union development is one of five CUPE departments. Our work in education, engagement and mobilization is supported by a large national team of staff and member facilitators.

More than 35,000 members attended certificate workshops and weeklong schools in the past two years. In addition, thousands of other CUPE members participated in educational events supported by Union Development such as national and provincial conferences, local and district council events, and union education in the workplace.

The department is making progress on serving our francophone members outside Québec. Workshops are now available in French and English. Going forward, once new workshops have been developed, piloted and finalized, they are immediately sent for French translation.

Participation in union education programs creates stronger activists and leaders. The change begins with an individual member but very quickly ripples out into the union and beyond. Here are reactions from just a few of the participating members:

- "I will use what I have learned in this workshop to educate fellow union members to help my union, and to broaden my interest in getting more education to become a steward in my local. I want to be the 'heart' of my union."
- "Very relaxing and safe environment to learn the basics of CUPE and I was comfortable asking questions."
- "All of this training was very useful. I feel that we have come together and have sure made a great improvement in leadership and coping with issues. We can now build our union as stronger and positive approach. Thank you very much, hope to work with you again."
- "I will use this in everyday life as well as the work force."
- "The course went really well, especially for a large group! It was amazing how quickly we got the concepts. It was like you could see the light bulbs going on."

- "The course was fabulous! The class was super engaged and we had numerous meaningful conversations."

Union Development Program

The Union Development Department is responsible for four main national programs:

1. Membership education and union development
2. Literacy Program
3. Staff training and development
4. Ombudsperson Program

1. Membership Education and Union Development

This is an exciting time in union development as we build a comprehensive and contemporary national program. New workshops developed since the 2013 National Convention include:

- Building Bargaining Power (11 workshops)
- Health and Safety Learning Series (14 workshops)
- International Solidarity
- Introduction to Human Rights
- Labour History and the Class Struggle Today
- Steward Learning Series (5 modules – literacy awareness, privatization, bargaining, and two on mental health in the workplace)
- Using Our Power at Election Time

Training and education are the most powerful tools we have to create a union where “an injury to one is an injury to all” is a reality and not a goal. We use an equity lens and a class lens when we develop workshops.

Equality work is an ongoing priority for our department. In 2015, we were pleased to contribute to putting on the very successful National Human Rights Conference in Winnipeg. The department works closely with the Equality Branch to integrate equality issues into our education program. We offer a wide variety of equality-related workshops.

The new “Introduction to Human Rights” workshop identifies the links between oppression and class struggle. We discuss how various kinds of discrimination operated in the past and how they operate today. We explore how members can challenge oppressive attitudes, behaviours, ideas and systems in our society through individual and collective action.

Members are responding positively to two new modules in the **Steward Learning Series**: “Understanding Mental Health” and “Creating Psychologically Healthy and Safe Workplaces.” The modules draw on the expertise of the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) and the experience of CUPE staff representatives and stewards to ensure that the content is appropriate and current.

With CMHA support, we provided special facilitator training for selected staff and members to deliver the modules. We are working closely with the Health and Safety Branch to ensure consistency between our steward training and the training they are providing for health and safety activists about mental injuries.

The union development program is now broken into core, response and proactive sections.

Core Program

The core program includes the training that locals need to be robust and effective, and to meet their legal obligations. It is the foundation we stand on. We have a strong, current and comprehensive core program that includes:

- Collective Bargaining
- Duty to Accommodate
- Financial Officers
- Human Rights
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Steward Learning Series
- The Executive Series (workshops designed to support local executives to be developed in 2016 and 2017)

The new **Building Bargaining Power** education program kicks off at this National Convention. This membership program complements staff training in collective bargaining that has been developed by the Organizing and Regional Services Department.

The landscape for collective bargaining is rapidly changing in both the public and private sectors. Globalization has increased pressure for competitiveness and tax cuts. Bargaining issues have become increasingly complex in the context of funding cuts and declining government support for public services.

The face of our membership is changing. The baby boomers are retiring in huge numbers. They are being replaced by younger workers, workers born in other countries, racialized workers, and aboriginal workers. We also have more precarious workers in our membership.

In the bargaining education program there are workshops designed for seven distinct audiences reflecting seven distinct roles that members play during the bargaining cycle:

For Local Executives:

- **Strategic Planning for Bargaining**
- **Analyzing Your Collective Agreement**
- **Surveying the Members**

For Mobilization Committees:

- **Mobilizing for Bargaining**

For Bargaining Committee Members:

- **Notetaking for Bargaining**
- **At the Bargaining Table**

For Strike Committees:

- **Preparing for a Successful Strike**

For Picket Captains:

- **Picket Captain Training**

For Activists:

- **Bargaining Solidarity (weeklong)**
- **How Bargaining Works**

For Stewards:

- **What a Steward needs to know about Bargaining (Steward Learning Series)**

In some locals, there is overlap among these roles. For example, the bargaining committee and the executive might be the same people, or the bargaining committee or stewards might be responsible for mobilizing members for bargaining. The goal is to have a bargaining education program that gives different members what they need to play their various roles in the bargaining cycle.

Union development and the Health and Safety Branch are working together to produce a new **Health and Safety Learning Series** comprised of 14 workshops. By the time of our 2015 National Convention, at least 10 of these workshops will be completed. Any remaining workshops will be ready for members in 2016.

The Health and Safety Learning Series is a world class educational initiative for this important part of the union development core program. Members who take the 9-

hour “Introduction to Health and Safety” workshop can then gain access to the entire series. This is yet another example of the great results we achieve when we take on inter-departmental projects.

Response Programming

Union development responds to educational requests by locals and other parts of CUPE. Existing workshops from the Union Development national program should be requested at least 1-2 months in advance. This allows for materials to be ordered, facilitators to be confirmed and logistics to be organized. Emergencies such as strikes and lockouts, however, are responded to as soon as possible.

Proactive Programming

This programming assists locals and members to engage in the world around us that impacts communities, unions and progressive organizations. Workshop examples include “Building Strong Local Unions”, “International Solidarity”, “Labour History and the Class Struggle Today”, and “Using Our Power at Election Time”.

In today’s world, borders have become virtual for banks, companies and financial institutions – capital moves freely. Uniting with workers around the world in struggle has never been so critical. In the “International Solidarity” workshop, we explore the root cause of inequality, austerity and privatization. We then identify where we have the power to act.

CUPE’s 50th anniversary in 2013 and the Fairness Project sparked a renewed interest in labour history. “Labour History and the Class Struggle Today” has three main goals: to remember and honour those who came before us; to learn the best from the past in order to inform our struggles today; and to share our story with members and the community.

“Using Our Power at Election Time” can be utilized in the context of school board, municipal, provincial or federal elections. Building on CUPE’s Fairness Project, it helps members examine the central issues we face as well as the importance of participating in elections and encouraging other union members to do so too.

The Unite for Fairness Project – Engaging Our Members

The department helped develop training materials in French and English, and trained staff and member facilitators in each region to enable the Unite for Fairness Project to move forward. These trainers provide daylong leadership training sessions and 3-hour communicator training sessions for participating locals.

In addition, we continue to integrate a Fairness approach in our education programs. This encourages locals to engage their members and to create a stronger internal structure. For example, this approach is used in the “Building a Strong Local Union”, “Using Our Power at Election Time”, and “Mobilizing for Bargaining” workshops.

2. Literacy Program

Literacy work in Canada has been under attack by the federal government. CUPE’s non-governmental partners in advancing literacy work have suffered financial cuts that in many cases have caused the groups to cease operations.

In spite of the attacks, CUPE continues to move forward on literacy. We helped publish *Transformations: Literacy and the Labour Movement, Past, Present, and Future*, a book about the history of literacy work in the labour movement. Available in French and English, it shows how literacy has been and remains a powerful tool for social change.

We launched the *Learning in Solidarity Website* that has documents related to literacy in the workplace, most of which were developed by the Canadian labour movement. There is a series of excellent short videos in which workers, teachers, union members and literacy professionals talk about their struggles and accomplishments, and why literacy training is still so important for workers, unions, and society.

Updated versions of our “Clear Language” workshops are now available, and we have added “Literacy Awareness for Stewards”, a new 3-hour module, to the Steward Learning Series.

3. Staff Training and Development

Union development works with other departments to provide comprehensive staff training. Some of the many training areas include human rights, legal issues, conflict resolution, media relations, using facilitation tools, collective bargaining, mental health in the workplace, and duty to accommodate.

Since the last national convention, CUPE has delivered more training programs in information technology to support the changes staff are experiencing as CUPE modernizes software, information management, and administrative systems.

An important example of long term planning in staff training is the creation of a strong network of national and regional staff who increase CUPE’s capacity to maintain and expand pension coverage for our members. For the

past several years, union development has worked closely with the Organizing and Regional Services Department and with the Research Branch to provide annual training that ensures every region has staff who are able to work at a high level on pension issues.

4. Ombudsperson Program

CUPE is committed to creating a union that is inclusive, welcoming and free from harassment, discrimination and all types of bullying and intimidation. The Equality Statement and the Code of Conduct set out standards of behaviour for participants at national conventions, national conferences and schools and meetings organized by CUPE National.

CUPE ombudspersons are on site at these events to try to resolve complaints about behaviour that is not consistent with the Equality Statement and the Code of Conduct.

Union development manages and operates the national ombudsperson program within CUPE. Ombudspersons are staff and members who represent the diversity of CUPE. They receive training in the ombudsperson process, listening skills, conflict resolution, dealing with difficult behaviour, and maintaining confidentiality and neutrality.

Applications are made on cupe.ca. Participants are assessed during and following the training in order to officially be named ombudsperson.

Labour College of Canada

CUPE, as part of the Labour College Advisory Committee, is working with the Canadian Labour Congress on a comprehensive review of this over 50 year old labour institution.

Over the years, the Labour College has provided courses that deal with critical thinking, building leadership and strengthening the labour movement.

The review addresses increasing the number of affiliates who participate, decreasing direct costs, increasing access and diversity of participants, and building effective leadership for movement building. We are considering the implementation of an 18-month pilot project to assess the potential for success of the Labour College of Canada using a new model. We want to create a sustainable Labour College program, one that involves more union affiliates and builds upon existing labour education programs.

Collaborating with Others

Union development cooperates with many organizations and unions working in labour education. This strengthens

our program and involves us in the broader class struggle and the battle for equal rights and justice. Developing our membership base in concert with capacity building elsewhere is a precondition for creating a more progressive society.

The collaboration within the union movement takes place in workshop development, generating educational programming, and connecting us to struggles in Canada and around the world. We work with the Canadian Labour Congress, provincial federations, labour councils and other union affiliates, as well as programs such as the Prairie School for Union Women.

We continue working with groups such as the Canadian Mental Health Association, the United Association for Labor Education, the Workers Arts and Heritage Centre, the Art of Hosting community and Training for Change.

CUPE's Education Team

National Office in Ottawa

At National Office, the Union Development Department is staffed by five senior officers, five support staff and the managing director.

One senior officer coordinates CUPE's Literacy Program. The other officers create new workshops, update current workshops and coordinate French translation as well as train member facilitators and ombudspersons. Other duties include assisting national, provincial and sectoral conferences and strategic planning sessions, as well as pension training, staff training support and a considerable amount of facilitation.

Support staff at the National Office produce and ship education and literacy materials, maintain databases for membership education records, support the member facilitator and ombudsperson programs and provide administrative support for national programs and meetings.

CUPE Regions

In each region, there is at least one education representative responsible to identify, organize and deliver education to CUPE members. This takes place through schools, workshops, conferences and a variety of meetings, including workplace-based education sessions.

The Québec education program operates independently and is funded within the union development budget.

CUPE education representatives work with national servicing representatives and local union leaders to help build strong locals by assessing needs and developing strategic planning. Many locals are enjoying the benefits of developing annual education plans for their members. Councils, locals, and members have been very excited about new program offerings.

Union development has converted to an online calendar and registration process accessed through cupe.ca. It provides members with access to workshops by calendar date, by workshop location and by workshop title. The electronic calendar is updated regularly as workshops are requested and confirmed so it is current. It not only provides our members with an important planning tool, it helps us track and keep records of workshop participation levels and interest.

Each education representative is assisted by support staff who create and distribute brochures and calendars, look after registrations, maintain education record and support the regional education program.

The education team greatly benefits from the participation of national staff from other departments. Their experience and contribution allows the program to be richly diverse and far-ranging.

Member Facilitators

Member facilitators are a key part of CUPE's education program. This year marks the 11th anniversary of the Member Facilitator Program. In 2004, the National Executive Board recognized the importance of the program and the value of peer education by adopting a policy that put in place a comprehensive approach to recruiting, selecting, training and supporting member facilitators. The Member Facilitator Program replaced the "occasional instructor" program that preceded it.

Over the past 11 years, the program has evolved to reflect the needs of the union and the education program. Hundreds of members have been selected and trained, with an ongoing emphasis on recruiting and training members from equity-seeking groups. Many members have gone on to be recruited as servicing representatives.

Member facilitator training is frequently revised to better equip the union's facilitators. Union Development has refined the process for certification and ongoing development of member facilitators.

Union development will continue to increase the number of bilingual member facilitators and the number of member facilitators who are from equity-seeking groups.

Our dedicated facilitators have covered many long stretches of road, in urban and rural areas alike, to foster a heightened knowledge of workers' rights within the workplace, as well as to provide them with the tools and the confidence to be able to assert them.

We appreciate the involvement and the contributions that CUPE members and staff make to a vibrant education program that keeps getting stronger and stronger.