

HUMAN RIGHTS

The week after elections I began receiving many queries by phone and e-mail from EE folks in UNDE asking me about accessing the EE budget and training. I attempted to link them to PSAC EE courses in their region. Except a few glitches it seemed to work well.

In September I had my orientation session and began the task of establishing links with our component structure, the PSAC, with other labour organizations who have members in DND and within the department.

My first task was to link with the RVP's to ensure that each region had a regional HRA. This took a bit of time but I now have one in every region except BC. Brother Miller is still working on finding someone.

In October I was the National HRA was suppose to attend a CLC Conference on Disability Rights but it was postponed and then later on cancelled. The last 3 days of the month I attended the PSAC Equal Opportunities Committee as the component Rep.

At the EOC there was a presentation by the Aboriginal VP of PSAC. Brother John Gordon came to talk to us about Regulation 15. After John spoke PSAC staff persons did a presentation education on the full regulation. It is up for review and the EOC was asked to collectively go over it with using an equity lens to be sure that it was inclusive of our needs and did not discriminate in any way. We were also asked to advise if anything equity had been over looked or left out.

November had me in Edmonton for a week working with the Army EE plans. The following week for 3 days I in attendance at national E. E. Conference put on by DND in Ottawa. This conference was very good because it gave me links to the other EE departmental Level 1's for the Navy, Air Force and CMP. I have reviewed 2 plans to date and will attach a copy of the finalized version with my report.

Outside of traveling I have been involved by providing assistance and guidance in 6 cases involving employment equity members who had legitimate complaints. Two have been resolved. One involves a member whom management has been trying to help and wanted to be sure they were doing things properly and not violating the member's rights. The other three are fairly recent and are either just started or ongoing.

As it was made clear that any spending of money by me need the approval of the National Executive I would like to propose the following. In the spring there is to be a conference/meeting of the Regional HRA's to provide training and the like. Prior to doing that I would like to ask for money to buy some HRA promotional items. I would like to be able to also have money to purchase a few books and or videos so that we can set up a resource centre for the HRA's to be able to use. For this I would be asking to spend up to a max of \$5,000.00. As I am just in the process of researching what we should get and their cost I do not have exact figures. However all spending will be vetted through the UNDE National Office.

UNDE has a membership with Lancaster House. They are an organization that looks at changes in employment equity both with in society and legislation. They seek both Sister Chamberlain and my ideas and opinions on EE/ Hr and trends analysis. The purpose of this is being applied towards developing

workshops for a national conference in 2009. As a contributor to this I would like to attend. It would be a good chance for me to network with others on human Rights issues. The people involved will be working to educate and find ways to stream line the problems and processes faced by people in their daily lives. I would therefore like to request funding to attend this conference. At this time I do not know the exact location and costs but I would like to propose funding of \$3,500.00. This request is with the understanding that the intent is for my transportation, accommodation, salary, and claimable expenses as per that of a National officer.

Besides our National executive meeting in December I will have been invited by the department to a Union table at 2 events commemorating the International Day for Persons with Disabilities. The official day is December 3rd but DND is hosting an event on December 1st in the Louis St Laurent Building in Gatineau. On December 3rd there is another event in Ottawa in the Pearkes Building. While it gives me a chance to promote Human Right and Employment Equity issues it with the current state of affairs of the union it also gives me the opportunity to address members concerns on other fronts as well. It should be noted that for many years I have tried to have a UNDE table at any of Employment Equity events put on by the Department in the NCR. It's good PR as it gives us visibility with both the membership and the employer.

On a personal note with the PSAC in the NCR region I chair a committee titled The Members with Disabilities Action Committee (MDAC). We are holding an evening event on December 3rd in the boardroom at PSAC's building on Gilmour St. Our keynote speaker for this event is Mr. David Onley the Lt. Governor for Ontario.

Patricia McGrath
National Human Rights Advisor