
JERRY DIAS
National President
Président national

MICHEL OUIMET
Quebec Director
Directeur québécois

PETER KENNEDY
National Secretary-Treasurer
Secrétaire-trésorier national

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Greetings!

Sisters and Brothers,

On February 12, Jerry and I met the Executive of BCE; George Cope (CEO, BCE), Bernard Le Duc (Exec VP, Corporate Services and HR), and Mary Ann Turcke (Exec VP- Field Operations).

The first topic of discussion was the Voluntary Early Retirement package and the unfairness of the Employer's decision to allow certain Bell companies access to the package while unilaterally exempting others from it. In Expertech specifically, Unifor members are filing grievances to be able to have access to the same VER plan that Bell Craft and Bell Aliant members were privy to. The discussion around whether currently the Employer can extend this package out to Expertech revolved around hiring that is taking place currently in the business unit, skills set of the Employees who are at top step, the importance of those skill set to the Company at this time, and the restrictions that geographical boundaries and response time to service customers places on the business unit being the key reasons why this sort of package cannot be offered at this time. We will continue to raise this point of discussion in following meetings.

One of the biggest challenges we face with having so many different bargaining units under Bell is that there is a lack of uniformity in terms of labour relations and communication. We stressed the importance of creating an inclusive forum to discuss common issues that plague our members – issues that surpass the boundaries of Collective Agreements and different companies and that ultimately are all part of the same BCE umbrella. We suggested that meetings take place; between local leadership from the different bargaining units and BCE executive in an effort to create this much needed forum for discussion, debate and resolution.

Sisters and Brothers, it is time we step out of these silos and look beyond the boundaries that are created by being an employee of Bell Craft, or Bell Clerical, or Expertech and look at the common denominator that we all share. We will work with the Executive at BCE to arrange these meetings and we look forward to your participation.

In Solidarity,



Naureen Rizvi
Director-Telecommunications/
Toronto Area Director
905-678-0800 x259
naureen.rizvi@unifor.org

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