

ITEM	MINUTES - DISCUSSION	ACTION
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**NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL CANADA (NRC)**

**MINUTES OF THE 84th MEETING**

**OF THE**

**NRC – JOINT CONSULTATION COMMITTEE (JCC)**

**DATE:** June 11, 2015  
**TIME:** 9:30 a.m.  
**LOCATION:** 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room, Building M-58

**IN ATTENDANCE**

**Chairperson:**

Cathie Fraser, President, RCEA

**Representing NRC:**

Isabelle Gingras, Vice-President, HRB  
 Roman Szumski, Vice-President, Life Sciences  
 Joe Grebenc, Acting Manager, Labour Relations and Pay and Benefits, HRB  
 Mireille Lycan, Labour Relations Officer, HRB

**Representing Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC):**

Michel D'Aoust, Employment Relations Officer, PIPSC  
 Isabelle Julien, LS Group, PIPSC  
 Susan O'Donnell, Co-President, NRC RO/RCO Group, PIPSC

**Representing Research Council Employees' Association (RCEA):**

Cathie Fraser, President, RCEA  
 Joan Van Den Bergh, Negotiator, RCEA  
 Michelle Lévesque, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President, RCEA

**Guests:**

Keith Blundon, Manager, Learning and Development, HRB  
 David Shane, Director, Occupational Safety and Health Group, HRB  
 Tim Grubb, Executive Director, Security Branch  
 Louis Poirier, PIPSC local representative  
 Jeff Fraser, RCEA local representative

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**84.1 Approval of Agenda**

**Responsible**

The agenda was approved with the addition of the item of TO generic job descriptions added by RCEA (84.9).

**84.2 Minutes of the 83rd Meeting of the JCC**

The RCEA inquired on the timeline for the availability of the JCC minutes on NRC Zone. NRC will speak with the Communications Branch to enquire on the projected date.

The minutes were approved by the parties.

84.3	Follow-up Action Items of the 84 <sup>th</sup> Meeting	
81.5	<p><b>HR Quarterly Reports</b></p> <p>RCEA noted that the statistics provided by NRC concerning workforce adjustment differed from the ones held by the RCEA. The RCEA will provide NRC with their statistics for further review.</p> <p>PIPSC requested a breakdown by job category for the cancelled hiring actions identified in the report. NRC will provide the information to PIPSC.</p>	<p>RCEA</p> <p>HRB</p>
81.8	<p><b>Implementation of Local Labour Management Consultation Committees (LLMCC)</b></p> <p>The proposed pilot of LLMCCs in Montreal (geographically based) and at ICT (portfolio based) were followed up with ICT agreeing to proceed. Further follow-up with the Montreal request will be undertaken.</p> <p>RCEA expressed an interest at HHT to hold LLMCCs. PIPSC brought up the issue of documenting the meetings. Following the pilot exercises, the method of documenting the LLMCCs will be revisited.</p>	<p>HRB</p>
82.7	<p><b>Time recording</b></p> <p>A meeting took place with NRC supervisors to discuss time recording issues. Work is underway to deal with issues surrounding utilization questions including coding and employee perception.</p>	
83.4	<p><b>Workforce Adjustment (WFA) Placements (retraining)</b></p> <p>The RCEA expressed concern over the limited retraining</p>	

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	<p>opportunities for affected employees including a lack of language training and work-related training or education.</p> <p>NRC indicated that the Program Officer, Workplace Effectiveness, will be taking the leading role in tracking the retraining efforts for WFA employees. The officer will be collecting the data and monitoring the retraining rationales given by hiring managers.</p> <p><b>Workforce Adjustment Placements (point of contact)</b></p> <p>Following the last JCC meeting, it was confirmed that the HR Generalist would be the first point of contact for all WFA employees. RCEA raised issues as to the availability of the HRGs due to their high workload. As the employee questions are usually around staffing matters, RCEA requested that the main contact be someone from the Hiring team.</p> <p>NRC noted that the Hiring team is also experiencing a heavy workload and is not structured along portfolio lines. It was suggested that the HRGs are well positioned and usually have an established relationship with the affected employees to be the most appropriate point of contact for these matters.</p> <p>The RCEA requested that NRC identify the HRG as the point of contact on employee surplus letters.</p>	<p>HRB</p> <p>HRB</p>
83.5	<p><b>Delays and impacts on involuntary termination benefits</b></p> <p>The RCEA reiterated that the process for sign off on the termination clearance certificate for employee terminations particularly involuntary terminations of employees creates significant delays in receipt of final payments owing.</p> <p>The RCEA would like some items completed in advance by NRC. NRC agreed to review the process to establish if anything can be done in advance.</p>	HRB
	<b>New Business Arising</b>	
83.6	<p><b>Consultation for new security measures</b></p> <p>Mr. Tim Grubb, Executive Director of Security Branch, provided a presentation (attached) on the new security measures at NRC.</p> <p>RCEA raised the issue of privacy when it comes to the Equifax report received by NRC following a credit check. RCEA indicated that their members were expressing more concern around the credit check aspect of the new measures versus the fingerprint process.</p>	

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	<p>NRC stated that the credit report is not shared outside of the security office other than with the individuals themselves. NRC listed the three items that would be raised from a credit check as being, bankruptcies, amounts owing in collections, or any debt that has not been paid for 120 days. When such issues are raised, an interview is arranged by a member of the NRC Security team with the individual. The individual is asked to explain the circumstances around the financial information received. The Security office then evaluates the risk to the organization.</p> <p>Since the implementation of the new measures, the Security office has conducted a total of thirty (30) interviews (20 contractors and 10 employees). Following the thirty (30) interviews, all individual were granted their security status.</p> <p>PIPSC raised the issue of timing as to why the NRC implemented the new measures early in the thirty-six (36) months' timeframe provided by TBS.</p> <p>NRC stated that departments that had the capabilities to implement the new procedures were instructed to do so as soon as possible. Since NRC did have the capabilities, the measures were implemented quickly.</p> <p>It was noted that a challenge to the implementation of the security measures was being heard at the Federal Court on July 8, 2015 and that this could impact on the issue.</p> <p>On the question of fingerprinting, it was confirmed that NRC is proceeding with biometric fingerprinting through the RCMP to compare against their registry. The RCMP do not retain a copy of the fingerprints – these are destroyed. The original prints that are taken by NRC Security form part of the individual's security file and are retained by the NRC Security Branch screening staff. This avoids the time and cost associated with re-doing fingerprints each time the employee either needs to update their screening/clearance or is applying for a higher clearance. These fingerprints on file are destroyed once the employee ceases to be a member of the NRC.</p> <p>NRC stated that the Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) section of Zone would be updated shortly with more information around the issues raised by employees concerning these security changes.</p> <p>A follow-up meeting will be scheduled with the Security office and the bargaining agents to allow for additional questions to be addressed. The updated FAQs will be sent to the bargaining agents following the JCC meeting.</p>	<p>Tim Grubb</p> <p>T. Grubb</p>

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78.4	<p><b>CTE issues &amp; concerns</b></p> <p>A follow-up document (attached) addressing the concerns raised by PIPSC regarding the CTE process was provided to the JCC members prior to the meeting. It was indicated that an upcoming discussion as part of the “equipping supervisors” series would reinforce the points of clarification or concerns that were raised in the PIPSC document.</p> <p>NRC also indicated that senior management had set an objective of 2% of employee time to be spent on learning and development. In response to a comment from the PIPSC representative that this seemed low, it was noted that this was a target to encourage dedicating time for learning and development. This is not a rigid amount - some employees may spend more than 2% of their time on learning and development while others may spend less than 2%.</p> <p>NRC stated that it plans to offer learning support to supervisors to manage performance issues. It is currently evaluating the Canada School of the Public Service (CSPS) course to see if it meets our needs. The RCEA inquired if there were any plans to review the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) document. NRC representatives indicated that the PIP process and tools can be reviewed as part of these efforts. Following a review of the CSPS offerings and tools, NRC will determine what elements are sufficient and where supplementary resources/tools are needed.</p> <p>NRC stated that there is no plan to centralize the retention of CTE documents during the course of the performance year. Only completed CTE documents (following the performance review) are retained centrally. However; the future plan is to automate the process so that CTEs are completed, updated and stored online.</p> <p>RCEA raised the issue around re-opening the CTE stating that the document was to be “living document” but in documentation received prior to the JCC, it mentions that the CTE should remain relatively stable over the year. NRC clarified that the CTE is considered a living document. Generally, the commitments set out at the beginning of the year should be carried through however, commitments may change in some circumstances and the CTE should reflect the changes accordingly.</p>	Keith Blundon
82.8	<p><b>Stress/Mental Health in the Workplace</b></p> <p>PIPSC requested that this item be placed on the agenda as they considered it to be an important issue. In this regard, David Shane, Director, Occupational Safety and Health Group provided an overview of the training relating to this issue, which he</p>	David Shane

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	<p>attended recently. The training was entitled "Working Minds" and was given by the Mental Health Commission of Canada. He indicated that he was very impressed by the training and would suggest that NRC consider piloting this training to establish if it is the right training for NRC.</p> <p>Union representatives requested a copy of the course outline as well as the opportunity to be included in the pilot training.</p>	
<p><b>84.4</b></p>	<p><b>Overtime</b></p> <p>RCEA representatives stated that they were receiving questions from their members relating to overtime. The questions concerned not knowing who had authority to approve overtime and what was considered authorization to work overtime as well as the requirement to take leave rather than being compensated in cash.</p> <p>NRC representatives indicated that they were aware of some of these issues and indicated that this matter was discussed during a recent supervisor webinar. The discussion was based on the results of a recent NRC Zone e-poll question where 310 employees expressed the view that they did not feel comfortable in claiming overtime. NRC reiterated that the overtime provisions of collective agreements including the requirement for pre-approval were to be fully respected. Any questions or concerns that could not be answered by supervisors should be referred to the responsible HR Generalist for follow-up.</p>	
<p><b>84.5</b></p>	<p><b>New Phoenix Pay System</b></p> <p>NRC will be changing over to the new consolidated pay system in December 2015. The new system called Phoenix will provide pay services to all departments, agencies and Crown Corporations servicing approximately 300,000 employees. The system will represent a significantly more cost-effective delivery of compensation service.</p> <p>NRC advised that a communication plan is being prepared and a small working group will meet regularly to ensure that supervisors and employees are informed of the changes to come. NRC will invite the bargaining units to a consultation meeting on the implementation of the new pay system. As requested by the RCEA, this item will be added to the next JCC to continue discussions on this initiative and to respond to any questions concerning this change.</p>	<p>Joe Grebenc Monique Boissonneault</p>

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84.5	<p><b>Temporary Foreign Workers</b></p> <p>The RCEA raised questions concerning the number of foreign workers hired by the NRC over the last two (2) years and the reasons for the hirings.</p> <p>NRC representatives noted that the hiring of temporary foreign workers is not undertaken very often and is subject to significant justification and supporting documentation including immigration requirements. Given the requirement for significant expertise to deal with these requirements, NRC will be proceeding with a Request for Proposal process to engage the required expertise to assist managers with this process.</p>	
84.7	<p><b>Use of NRC premises/NRC email networks</b></p> <p>In response to a request for an update on this issue, NRC representatives indicated that further discussions are occurring. It was understood that good union-management relationships were important to NRC and that this would be taken into account in clarifying the use of NRC premises and networks. Follow-up will be undertaken with bargaining agents.</p> <p>PIPSC inquired as to whether NRC was monitoring e-mail messages of individual union members for compliance with the policy on the use of NRC premises. NRC confirmed that there was no such monitoring.</p>	Isabelle Gingras
84.8	<p><b>Career Support</b></p> <p>PIPSC requested that a discussion be undertaken on the establishment of a database or registry identifying employee training and expertise to capture the skills and competencies of employees for program requirements. It was agreed to place this item on the next JCC agenda.</p>	
	<p><b>Roundtable</b></p> <p>NRC indicated that a pilot test of the Portal in the green zone will begin during the week of June 15 and June 22, 2015 with employees from AST, KM and HRB participating.</p> <p>PIPSC stated that they would like to see more NRC senior management representation at the JCC meetings. They would like the President to attend one of the upcoming meetings this year.</p> <p>NRC advised that in the context of the ongoing review of the various NRC programs that had been implemented, some NRC programs will likely be coming to an end shortly. This could be</p>	

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	<p>for a variety of reasons possibly related to market changes as well as other developments that might not have been anticipated when the programs were approved.</p> <p>Although programs may end, different programs with possibly similar skill and competency requirements may be identified. Some employees will need to refocus or realign themselves to different programs. There will still likely be some workforce adjustments situations however, consideration will also be given to opportunities for staff retraining to support new programs that are identified.</p> <p>RCEA expressed the view that to date, they are not seeing retraining opportunities being identified for their members and that they need to be able to take on new requirements right from the start, whereas, it appeared that researchers had more time to adjust and adapt to changing requirements.</p>	
<b>84.9</b>	<p><b>Technical Officer (TO) Generic job description</b></p> <p>The RCEA stated that some portfolios may be using the new generic job descriptions for the TO Group. They were under the impression that these were not yet being used.</p> <p>NRC will follow-up with the RCEA on this item.</p>	
	<p><b>Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Next meeting is scheduled for September 10, 2015.</p>	
	<p><b>Meeting adjourned at: 12:17 pm</b></p>	