



*Unifor ACL
(Atlantic Communication Locals)*

*Membership Bulletin
January, 2014
Common Interest Forum Update*

The Common Interest Forum met on December 11 & 12, 2013. The following is a summary of our discussions.

- 1. Business Update:** The competitive offers from Rogers continue. Bell Aliant has been competing with offers to new customers and win backs of gifts-with-purchase (TVs / Playstations / iPads) during certain campaigns and bundle promotions. The Retention Group has been successful in maintaining over 50% save rates of customers intending to leave for a competitor. On Black Friday, Bell Aliant offered a \$400 gift card gift-with-purchase and sales were very successful with this offer. There are price increases across Atlantic Canada in January so a higher than normal call volume is expected.
- 2. Contact Centre Update:** An update was provided. Performance is good across access, customer satisfaction scores and average busy time. The Business side is doing well. The Insight system is installed and currently will handle 70% of orders and by the end of this year it will handle 100%. Other system improvements are required. The company reviewed upcoming changes to some queues and roles with the union.
- 3. JC Update:** The last Joint Consultative Meeting was held on Nov 13, 2013 in Saint John, NB. In addition to the regular updates on CIF, Fibre, Contact Centre, Excessive Hours of Work Trending, Systems Performance & Finance, issues discussed were: **a)** Fibre Op Stock; **b)** Truck Roll Reports; **c)** GPS & speeding; **d)** Storm Line; **e)** Review of Call Out Procedure for Data Operations; **f)** Bilingual Shifts; **g)** WFM Group Issue; **h)** Union Seniority List; **i)** Cost of Medical Forms; **j)** NT On-Line Courses; **k)** Positions in Telesales; **l)** SBQ Overflow; **m)** Surveys; **n)** CST Pool Techs; **o)** Health & Wellness; **p)** Batts System; **q)** Update on Clear Route; **r)** Payroll Dates for Christmas.
- 4. Job Evaluation:** The Job Evaluation sub-committee gave a report to the CIF. The sub-committee met on Nov 5 & 6, 2013. There is a little more work required to be done and we expect to have a full communication early in 2014.

- 5. Provincial Meetings with Employees:** Fred Crooks gave an update on the meetings held with employees over the past few months. He spoke with about 750 members/managers in several workplaces in all 4 provinces. There was a good exchange of information and Fred now has a better sense of how employees are feeling. Employees are worried about the company's commitment to customer service. There is concern for the future. Wages are at the top of everyone's mind. Members are not happy with two tier wages. There is a lack of trust that comes from a lack of information. Fred plans on continuing with these types of meetings in 2014.
- 6. Fibre Update:** An update was given to the CIF members. The build is going well and continues into 2014.
- 7. Contractor FTE's Update:** The target for contractor numbers for the end of 2013 is 90 FTE's. The contractor number will be 90 FTE's by the end of 2013.
- 8. Rural Ratio Update:** The rural ratio between employees doing CST, BST, NT or CT repair work outside of the 10 cities and contractor FTE's continues to be better than the 20:1 commitment.
- 9. Pool Ratio:** The Pool ratio is set at 50% of the combined # of CSTs with reporting centres in the ten cities. The Pool ratio continues to be better than the 50% commitment.
- 10. Workforce Field Management:** The company is working on a process to improve the dispatch process. Trials are currently being carried out with some technicians. There will be further updates in 2014.
- 11. Pool / Term Tech Update:** An update was provided to the CIF members. More information will be available in 2014.
- 12. Part Time Pensionable Service:** The system made some assumptions/decisions which credited some part time employees with more service credit than they were entitled. The company is legally obligated to fix this error. Part time employee's pensions will be affected by as little as \$10/year to as much as \$400/year. The employees affected have been notified.
- 13. IBN Training:** As reported in the last CIF Update, Interest Based Negotiation (IBN) Training sessions have been taking place all over Atlantic Canada for the past few months. Union stewards, committee members, executive officers and managers are invited to attend the joint training which is facilitated by Industrial Relations and the Local Presidents. The sessions are going well. As of Dec 12, 154 members/managers have attended the IBN Training. There are 10 more sessions scheduled for 2014. The feedback has been excellent and we are looking at expanding them to more members and managers.

- 14. Bargaining Year:** There was a great deal of discussion on 2014 being a bargaining year. Unifor ACL requested 'Issues/Bargaining Proposals' from members during November and December. There is a Caucus scheduled for April 9th & 10th where leaders from the 4 Locals will review the Proposals received. This will form the agenda for bargaining. It has been indicated to the union that the company is not interested in continuing with a wage freeze into 2015.
- 15. Project Term:** The company provided the union with a report showing all the project term employees and their location.
- 16. Replacement Rate for Retirement Offer:** In the Retirement Offer MOA dated August 9, 2011, CIF negotiated a replacement rate of 78% of the total number of 'Customer Experience' employees who retired. 'Customer Experience' groups are defined in the MOA. A total of 359 members retired from the 'Customer Experience' groups. Based on a 78% replacement rate, there are 281 members who must be replaced by May, 2014. At the time of this meeting, there were 262 replaced. In December, there were 7 jobs posted with another 12 jobs to be posted in January of 2014. Total posted positions are 281 as required. The requirement may be exceeded by May.
- 17. Pool Tech Vacation:** As reported in the October Update, the CIF discussed the possibility of Pool Techs receiving 3 weeks of vacation after the 2nd year of employment. After taking that away to consider, the company determined that it would be too costly to provide another week's vacation at this time. Adding another week of vacation would require a collective agreement change so we will add it to the list of proposals for further discussion this year.
- 18. Additional Smart Phone Choices:** Today any employee that has a corporate Blackberry, will have the ability to get an Android or Apple device when their smartphone must be replaced. The employee will only be eligible for the base model that Bell Aliant offers at that time. If the employee would like to upgrade to a higher level model (i.e. iPhone 4S to iPhone 5S), then the employee can pay the additional cost to get the higher level smartphone. The company policy regarding who is eligible for a smartphone has not changed.

The next CIF meeting is scheduled for Feb 11-13, 2014.

In solidarity,

Penny Fawcett

Lynn Briggs

Mary Croke

Bobby MacDonald

Steve Howlett

Joyclin Coates