

# Director's Report to the 70<sup>th</sup> Prairie/Northwest Territories Regional Council

April 26, 27, 2013 - Marriott River Cree Hotel, Enoch, Alberta



Submitted by Director, Bonnie Pratt

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## Priorities for 2013 Identified by the Board of Directors

### 1) Environmental threats to Unions:

The first Board meeting of the year, January 25 – 26 was preceded by an intense two day strategic planning session to set Board priorities for 2013. The planning session featured three high profile labour activists from Canada, the United States, and Australia. Canadian Labour Congress President Ken Georgetti and Professor Richard Hurd of Labour Studies, Cornell University, attended in person to address the Board while John Vines, retired CEO of APESMA (Association of Professionals, Engineers, Scientists and Managers, Australia) spoke to us via video conference. The speakers presented 'environmental scans' on current and likely future political environments for unions in Canada. The overarching theme was Bill C-377 which Parliament passed in December as well as the anticipated direct attacks on the RAND formula referred to by American state governments as "right to work". The discussions took place in the context of the American & Australian experiences. More and more states including Michigan have enacted right to work legislation. Board members then discussed stakeholder expectations and strategic challenges and even in this difficult environment, opportunities. They then identified key strategic objectives and determined actions to be taken, primarily by staff, to prepare operational plans to implement these objectives. Further details will be provided when concrete actions are identified.

### 2) Cost cutting measures.

The Finance Committee has projected a \$4.4 million deficit for 2013. The magnitude requires actions to be taken. Such deficits would quickly lead to financial challenges at a time when we are trying to react and counteract the political threats we are aware of. This requires resources. Both the operations and member participation will, of necessity, be impacted. This is not a sustainable deficit and the board moved quickly, sought input from staff, members, to identify areas where cost savings, cost cutting could be achieved without negatively impacting our ability to represent our members. The dependence on our activists and conscientious stewards to assist in member representation and member support cannot be overstated. The most significant cost savings, outlined in the February 21-23, 2013 President's Report on the website; include travel; of necessity, some member participation and staff activities were impacted. The Board were remain vigilant in ways to contain and reduce costs. The quantum of the deficit is not sustainable and will seriously hamper our efforts to be proactive in the political environment. Should the Rand formula be successfully attacked, it will increase our financial challenges.

For the coming year, the Board of Directors have agreed on two board strategic objectives:

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- 1) Work with partners in the labour movement and in particular with the Canadian Labour Congress, the National Joint Council and other collaborations to support the rights of labour and the threats imbedded in government decisions, advance our mutual concerns about government's decisions that negatively impact the labour movement.
- 2) Initiate actions we need to take to prepare PIPSC to survive and thrive in the face of anti-union forces in government and society. These include research and membership surveys to provide current and in depth understanding of the needs of our members and what they expect from us. As part of the research, research best practices for the representation and members services of professionals working in the public service.

Both objectives will require a concerted effort to engage and mobilize our members so that we act in unison. The Board has affirmed that our core activities remain member representation and collective bargaining. All our efforts and activities will recognize our current reality of cost constraint.

A secondary objective of the blue sky and strategic planning sessions included scrutiny of AGM policy and procedures with a view to improving the conduct of our business

## Governance of PIPSC:

In the past several years, the Institute has completed two significant exercises: a corporate reorganization leading to an amended reporting structure. A reclassification of staff positions was also undertaken to ensure that staff positions were properly grouped and salaries were consistent and appropriate relative to one another. In 2012, a President's Task Force on Governance was struck and a ½ day at the February Board was devoted to the subject. This includes a review of the current full-time and part-time elected positions for effectiveness, efficiency, key roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors as well as best practices and the relationship of permanent employees of the organization versus elected officials. The Board sets goals and the staff executes them.

## Governance of the Region:

The Regional Council is the governing body of the Region. All members are entitled to attend. Only delegates will be entitled to make motions or resolutions and to vote. By a majority decision of the delegates, this Council directs programs and activities within the Region, reviews the disbursement of Regional funds, considers any matters brought before it by Branches, and submits proposals and recommendations to Institute national bodies.

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This Region is tied for third place in terms of total membership (active, retired, rand). The National Capital Region has 30,500 members, Ontario has 7,500 and the Prairie/Northwest Territories Region is tied with Quebec at 6,075.

## Regional Representatives on National Committees of the Board of Directors for 2013:

Name of Committee	Chair	Region Representative
By-Laws and Policies Committee	Sean O'Reilly (Director, NCR)	Robert Trudeau
Elections Committee	Mark Muench (AFS, NCR)	Zahir Ahmed
Executive Compensation Committee	Al Ravjiani (Director, Ontario)	Bonnie Pratt
Finance Committee	Del Dickson (Director, NCR)	Gary Farnsworth
Human Rights in the Workplace	Bonnie Pratt (Director, Prairie/NWT)	Lars Christensen
Member Services	Yvon Brodeur (Director, Quebec)	Nancy McCune
Science Advisory Committee	Kofi Crentsil (Director, Advisory Council)	Gino DiLabio
Working Group on Consultation	Glenn Maxwell (CS, ON)	-

## Steward Training Courses Scheduled:

- 1) Basic Steward Training – maximum 20 participants. *Note that if registration is significantly below 20 new stewards, in the interests of fiscal responsibility a decision whether to cancel the course will be made by the Regional Training Committee.*
  - Spring – June 6, 7, 8 Edmonton, Alberta
  - Fall – TBD
- 2) Regional Labour School May 23-25 Gimli, Manitoba

## Work Force Adjustment ('WFA'):

PIPSC was seen to be a leader amongst bargaining agents in preparedness for WFA. Sources of funds were identified and secured for training, educational materials and staffing needs. This subject matter is readily found on the home page with links to various resources including updates, steward response teams and relevant documents. PIPSC is maintaining its state of readiness until the next federal budget is dropped to determine if any adjustment has to be made to the services currently offered.

## 2013 Stewards Council:

The Council will be held at the Crowne Plaza, Edmonton, September 27 -28, 2013. There is currently no cap on the number of stewards that may attend; however, stewards must register by the deadline. Please watch the website for registration details. A reminder will also be emailed.

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Prairie/Northwest Territories Regional Executive Meetings Scheduled (based on cost reduction decisions there will be budget provided for only five meetings this year):

February 2

April 6

Sept 14

November 2

December 7

Branch AGM's in the Region held and scheduled:

January 17      Winnipeg and Southern Alberta

January 31      Calgary

February 20    Edmonton

March 27       Regina

April 13        Lacombe/Red Deer



Railroad Tracks and Grain Elevator on the Prairie • A WorldWeb.com Travel Guide for Hanna, Alberta.

<https://encrypted-tbn2.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcT5bnyzKrklU4gllwzhhrMilfMGxbyvWeh78U1mBvihg6t2Wbu39w>