

Summary of Discussion from WFA Committee Meeting – August 28, 2012

In attendance:

VAC: Keith Hillier, Don Love - Chair, Terry Wiseman, Kim Peters

UVAE: Yvan Thauvette, Kim Coles

PIPSC: Doreen Weatherbie

CAPE: Grant Boland

Discussion Items	OPI for action items
<p><u>1. SERLO Complaints</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don Love updated the Committee on Public Service Staffing Tribunal (PSST) complaints received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4 received, 3 of those withdrawn ○ Exchange of information was almost complete for the remaining complaint ○ Remaining complaint is in Penticton ○ Allegations are that irrelevant information was used to assess the employee during the SERLO process 	
<p><u>2. Terms of Reference for the WFA Committee</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terry Wiseman presented the current TOR for the Committee and requested suggestions for changes. • Changes agreed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Union participation will be expanded to include all unions. ○ Representation will be left open to a “Representative from each union”. <p><u>Action Item:</u> HR will issue an amended draft TOR at the next Committee meeting.</p>	Don Love

3. Alternation

- Keith Hillier confirmed that he has approved four alternations involving CSA's. 3 of the 4 are internal to VAC, and the 4th is between a CSA and an opting employee from another department.
 - Don Love explained that the departmental program has very few employees requesting to be alternates – 9 at the time of the meeting.
 - Doreen Weatherbie asked if relocation would be covered for a CSA willing to alternate in another location. Terry Wiseman confirmed that yes, an alternation could be done with relocation, if no local alternates were available.
 - Doreen Weather explained the case of two CS employees who are willing to alternate but have not been approved by the dept. Keith Hillier suggested she follow up with the appropriate management for those positions.
 - Don Love reiterated that the department's focus for Alternation has been on the needs of Opting CSA's first. Looking forward, the dept is now expanding the program to consider opportunities for alternation at all levels.
 - Doreen Weatherbie stated that the department is refusing alternations without determining if they are qualified. Don Love repeated that VAC must do an analysis of positions to ensure that alternations are appropriate.
 - Doreen Weatherbie stated that as the only dept with a headquarters outside the National Capital Region, VAC is more protected from reductions. Don Love responded that this situation creates an expectation from other departments that VAC will resolve most WFA situations in PEI.
- Action Item: At Kim Coles's request, Keith Hillier confirmed that UVAE will be informed when the CSA alternations are completed.
- Kim Coles asked about a situation where a CSA is attempting to alternate with a PM-02 in Windsor. Keith Hillier confirmed that because of the salary difference, this was outside the limits of Alternation, but that other options are being examined.

Keith Hillier

4. Round Table Items

- Doreen Weatherbie mentioned an upcoming Virtual Career Fair for affected ps employees. Don Love confirmed that VAC is participating in this pilot. CSA's not selected for retention are the department's only participants.
- Yvan Thauvette asked for the status on movement of Case Manager (CM) positions: will there be any reductions to CM's announced in the fall? Keith Hillier confirmed that this is still being worked on. There are too many CM's in some locations, and some will need to be added in others. At the present time, those reductions are being managed through attrition. The mobility of CM's may be an issue.
- Yvan Thauvette asked if reductions were needed, why a CM position was posted with an area restricted to Quebec-Ontario? Kim Coles suggested this would allow that region to move employees to areas where they are needed. Keith Hillier confirmed that if there is no interest from CM's to relocate, the dept will have to go outside to fill needs.
- Keith Hillier explained that employees are aware of the realities of their situation, as their workload in some areas has decreased to half of the standard client count. For example, some offices have 22 case-managed clients, where 40 is the norm.
- Kim Coles explained that members have expressed at a union teleconference that they actually feel overloaded with work. She asked that UVAE be kept informed of where the needs are, and where there is overcapacity. It would be easier to keep members informed and answer questions if they have the numbers of anticipated cuts or SERLO exercises.

Action Item: Keith Hillier confirmed he will provide numbers of potential CM cuts once available.

- Keith Hillier stated that there is no current plan to have another national SERLO process. For CM's, it is likely to be local, where the client numbers have dropped to a level that can't be sustained.
- Kim Coles asked for the results from Donna MacDonald's study into actual reductions.

Action Item: Don Love confirmed he would provide the following numbers:

- How many departures across the department for the fiscal year?
- How many of those were backfilled?
- How many of the departures were from HR?
- Keith Hillier stated that positions are being filled with terms as a rule, and not with indeterminate appointments.
- Yvan Thauvette shared the case of a CSA who was unable to see their results, as the manager was unable to open the document. Keith Hillier asked that any specific allegations or problems be directed to Don Love for review and resolution.
- Yvan Thauvette asked if any contracts related to CSA work have been signed with a service provider. As previously stated, some CSA functions would be gone by November. Keith Hillier confirmed that nothing has been signed at this time.

Keith Hillier

Don Love

4. Round Table (cont.)

- Kim Coles asked if there was still work that was to be reassigned until January. Keith Hillier explained that the first shift from contributions to grants would take place in January, and that Veterans will be informed in late October of the new process. In addition, Health Related Travel to be re-assigned will be phased in, starting in October. Other CSA duties will move in November.
- Yvan Thauvette asked how VIP will be done from November to January. Keith Hillier explained that this work could be assigned to employees scheduled to retire between now and October 2013. Don Love confirmed that as the retirements are staggered over the next year, there is some flexibility to assign them work.
- Kim Coles asked what work would be assigned to employees who accept Option a) and a one-year surplus priority? Keith Hillier confirmed that they would be assigned some CSA duties on a temporary basis. Keith Hillier provided an example that where the number of clients were reduced from 28 to 18, part of the duties would be removed.
- Kim Coles stated that other departments are letting their employees spend full time looking for work. Don Love responded that VAC is obligated under the WFA Directive to provide meaningful work to surplus employees.
- Don Love confirmed that the number of employees on leave without pay who were not provided with their Options is quite low.

Action Item: Don Love to confirm the number of employees who have not been advised if they are to receive a GRJO or their Options.

- Kim Coles asked for confirmation that an employee on leave who filed a PSST complaint was told that they could receive their Options if they withdrew the complaint. Terry Wiseman confirmed that it was the employee who requested to receive their Opting letter, before any complaint was received. The letter was approved by Keith Hillier, and then the employee decided to withdraw the complaint.
- Kim Coles asked if there was any fact behind Pension Adjudicators being re-classified into the NU-EMA category, similar to medical adjudicators. Both Keith Hillier and Doreen Weatherbie stated they had not heard of such re-classification request.
- Kim Coles brought forward a member concern that age-ism factored into the SERLO decisions, and asked that data be provided to confirm or refute this. Keith Hillier stated that the SERLO process was reviewed to ensure there was no bias of any kind, including age bias.

Action Item: Don Love to provide UVAE with the average age of those selected for retention, versus the average age of those selected for lay-off.

- Doreen Weatherbie asked if office closures would impact PIPSC members. Keith Hillier stated that similar to for other employees in those offices slated to close, they may have the opportunity to move with the work to another location. If they are not mobile, they will be subject to WFA.
- Doreen Weatherbie asked if there would be the opportunity for telework. Keith Hillier confirmed that VAC is consolidating the work, and that, in general, work will be done in the remaining offices.

Don Love

Date for Next Meeting

- September 19th, 8:30 AM EDT in Ottawa at the PSAC office for those attending the NLMCC the previous day; 9:30 AM Atlantic time, by teleconference.
- Agenda: 1 hour with possibility of extension.

Don Love