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## Successorship: members are key to success

31 years ago in 1987 when privatization of highways contracts began, the future was unknown and uncertain. Although the last three years has been challenging and uncertain at times as well, we are now entering a new phase of our goal to secure successorship. We must be ready for the challenges ahead.

Part of preparing for the new phase is connecting with the members using a method that works for them, and makes them feel proud to belong to Component 10 and the BCGEU. This involves commitment and work from your component and the BCGEU, but it also involves commitment and work from you.

I am committed to leading the way in facing the challenges ahead of us all, but the best chance of reaching success is with your help and support. All the work done so far has been done by many people that stepped up and took part to represent their members. If you're not yet involved I call on you now to please consider becoming a steward, a committee member when spaces are available, or a local executive member which includes young workers.

As we approach the conclusion of bargaining in the highways sector, the component's focus will be on using the time and resources available to connect with our

members. This will be done through stewards, OH&S committees and labour management meetings to gather information and the concerns of the membership. This information will be used to support some of the directives in the new highways agreements for the annual meetings with the Ministry of Transportation and other parts of the new collective agreements.

Our commitment to the membership is to provide a report similar to the format we used with labour management minutes. Obligations in the new collective agreements will require support by providing the labour management committees training on scheduling meetings, local agenda suggestions, provincial agenda items, supporting OH&S committees, supporting stewards and protecting the rights of the membership.

We will also be holding member-to-member meetings to get out and talk to the membership directly to discuss local issues or concerns around the provincial outlook. These meetings have been extremely helpful to bring issues and concerns to the local chairs and in turn, to the component.

Please speak up and get involved at whatever level you can.

*Rory Smith  
Operational Services  
Component 10 vice president*



## Members land \$20 million contract to refit B.C. ferry

BCGEU workers employed at Esquimalt Drydock Company landed a BC Ferries contract worth \$20 million to refit the Northern Sea Wolf. Expected to be completed by June, the 17-year-old vessel will accommodate approximately 3,500 passengers and 1,200 vehicles each year on a route between Port Hardy and Bella Coola.

Members at Esquimalt Drydock have extensive experience in ship

repair as welders, mechanics, labourers, painters and electricians. Working alongside trades people hired by BC Ferries, our members completed a mid-life upgrade of the Queen of Cumberland in 2016 which now services the Southern Gulf Islands.

We congratulate our members on this great success, and thank them for their hard work to make B.C. ferries safer and more comfortable for the traveling public.

Read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/yc4ms3tl>

## Summer wildfires: the 'new normal' needs new solutions, and fast

If you lived in British Columbia this past summer, no one needs to tell you that we experienced one of the worst fire seasons ever recorded.

Wildfires raged in just about every corner of the province and if it wasn't fire, you likely dealt with heavy smoke for weeks on end. It was nearly impossible to escape unless you left the province.

Our B.C. fire management team – which includes more than 2,000



BCGEU firefighters and highways maintenance workers—along with the RCMP, the military and help from many others from across the globe—finally gained some ground in mid-September when officials felt it was safe for residents, forced out of their communities, to return home.

But this was not without terrible losses including homes and cottages, pets and livestock, wildlife and forests as well as job losses, personal health impacts and financial loss.

It was certainly a year to never forget but what about next season? As of this writing, cooler temperatures in central and northern Cariboo, for example, have kept the danger of fire down. However, there have already been fires in Lytton and if many areas across B.C. don't get enough moisture in the way of snow or rain by the end of spring, wildfire season could shape up once again to be something of a concern for summer 2018.

There are a lot of so-called experts blaming the situation on everything from climate change, the positions of the moon and sun, and Mayan predictions, to the president of the United States. But what's the real cause of worsening fire seasons? Is it a cycle we go through every thousand years or have human activities set this in motion?

I would have to say, and I am playing it safe, that it is a combination of all that and more. We need to come up with solutions to address increasingly destructive wildfire seasons and soon, because the way I see it, our livelihoods depend on it. If you have never thought about it before, now is the time to make your ideas known to everyone you can. What have you seen that's worked, what have you seen that hasn't? Working together we can respond to this challenge and protect our livelihoods now, and into the future.

*In Solidarity,  
Kelly McDonald*



BCGEU members with questions should call BCGEU Direct at 1-888-991-6062 (toll free). Lower Mainland members can call 604-291-6062.



## Staying the course

On June 9th and 10th, 2016, the provincial highways bargaining council mapped out a plan for the future. This included the possibility of bargaining at a main table with the B.C. Road Builders committee to meet the terms set out by the Ministry of Transportation to achieve successorship.

Achieving successorship in each service area provides:

- Seniority, which is your job security, and provides rights to rates of pay, rights to selection of shifts, rights to selection of vacation preference and more.
- Wages that are paid for level of expertise, experience, trade qualifications, shift premiums and more.
- Benefits that are included within the collective agreement such as health, dental, STIIP, LTD, sick days, HSA, special leave, pensions or RRSP and more.
- Rights to have representation for negotiations, grievances, labour management, WCB appeals and more.

Dave Maki and I have been working with local bargaining committees, and the staff assigned, to achieve an agreement for the members they are representing. Each service area comes to the table with concerns from the membership that need to be addressed at those individual

tables, including the provisions of the Provincial Memorandum of Agreement. When we achieve an agreement, it goes to the membership for full review and the ratification process.

Only once we have a ratified deal with the Provincial Memorandum is successorship included for the next round of bidding. Without a ratified deal in place, the request for proposal or bid will go out without successorship.

To be clear, without successorship in place there are some bidders that may be able to bid for the service area without recognizing the collective agreement. However, the current employer would be required by labour law and our certification with them to take on the collective agreement and the employees.

The component and the BCGEU are committed to working hard alongside your committee to achieve successorship, and the best possible collective agreement. We have been steady and consistent in our approach, have listened closely to each of the committee's concerns, and have received positive feedback from most members about the outcome at ratification meetings.

As Dave Maki's report on page six indicates, many deals have been done and ratified. Others are getting close and dates are set for the balance of the areas with the current exception of SA 20 and SA 11 due to expiry dates coming up at a later date. The Request for Proposal in SA 20 will be released 14 months prior to its Ministry of Transportation contract expiration on Aug 31, 2021. SA 11 has yet to be determined.

For those areas that have achieved successorship, congratulations. For the ones that have not finished bargaining, be patient as the rest have been scheduled to get to a bargaining table shortly. The component has supported me and

Dave Maki to be at each table and we are staying the course to complete this round of bargaining.

*Rory Smith, Operational Services  
Component 10 vice president*



## Flagging: the most dangerous job on B.C.'s roads, bridges and highways

A traffic enforcer with 30 years of experience was struck by a vehicle in a construction zone late last year on Highway 6 in Lavington, B.C. It was her 66th birthday.

A west-bound vehicle approached the zone in an area reduced to one lane of traffic on the highway. Despite instruction to stop by traffic control, it appears the driver of the vehicle was unable to stop in time, and hit her. She died of her injuries on December 6th.

To raise awareness of the dangers flaggers face, around 100 traffic control professionals held a rally along Highway 97 to remind people to slow down in construction zones (see photo above).

This accident only confirms how dangerous this work is, and how important it is to obey traffic control signs and speed limits in construction zones.

Our deepest condolences go out to the family and friends of Isabelle, from your friends at the BCGEU.

*In Solidarity, Kelly McDonald*

### UNION MEMBERSHIP IS LIKE A GYM MEMBERSHIP.



**YOU CAN PAY YOUR MONTHLY DUES, BUT IF YOU DON'T SHOW UP OR PARTICIPATE, YOU DON'T BECOME STRONGER.**



## Mental health and wellness in the workplace

Concerns around mental health and wellness are everywhere these days, from public campaigns and awareness days to government programs. But what does mental health really mean? I bet you've heard more than one person ask this question.

The Canadian Mental Health Association says "mental health means feeling good about who you are, having balance in your life and in your thinking, and responding constructively to life's highs and lows."

In recent years, concern over mental health issues in the workplace has grown and is now being addressed by the Workers Compensation Board, labour unions, employers and insurance carriers alike due to its prevalence:

- In any given year in Canada, one in five people experience a mental health or addiction problem.
- One in three Canadians will experience a mental health problem in their lifetime.

- Depression is the top cause of disability world-wide.
- In any given week, 500,000 Canadians do not go to work due to a psychological health issue.
- Work-related mental health issues cost the Canadian economy \$20 billion per year.

Long-lasting psychological trauma, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) leading to mental health issues, affects more than just soldiers and emergency first responders. It's a concern among Component 10 workers like Canada Line workers, shipbuilders, nursery workers, and highways maintenance workers as well. Being the first to attend to a motor vehicle incident for example can have long-lasting and life changing effects on a worker's psychological health. It requires appropriate intervention to defuse, debrief and follow up with further counselling as needed.

Because mental health issues become more serious if they are not recognized and addressed in a timely manner, it is important to discuss needs for mental health supports at your OHS committee meetings. After all, mental health and wellness in the workplace is as

much of a priority as physical health and safety.

So, take care of yourself first and reach out to those you see may be struggling and could use someone to listen to them. Connecting with others is essential to maintaining positive mental health.

If you have any questions, contact your Occupational Health and Safety Officer at 604-291-9611 or email Wendy Mah at: [wendy.mah@bcgeu.ca](mailto:wendy.mah@bcgeu.ca)

By Wendy Mah

## Sticks and stones... and namecalling *can* hurt you

"It's all fun and games until someone loses an eye." Some of you will remember elders using these kinds of expressions in your childhood. However, phrases like "sticks and stones may break your bones but names will never hurt you" have not stood the test of time. We now know that name-calling, bullying, harassment or pranks can hurt us physically, and create great damage to our psychological safety.

Bullying and harassment is defined as:

*"any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person towards a worker that the person knew or reasonably ought to know would cause the worker to be humiliated or intimidated, but excludes any reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers in the place of employment."*

Many actions that meet the definition of bullying and harassment – such as physically abusing, threatening

*continued on next page...*





## Meeting with the minister

In September 2017, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Claire Trevena, introduced members of Component 10 to the House. The members were gathered in Victoria for a component executive meeting being held in the capital.

The following is an excerpt from the Hansard minutes:

*Hon. C. Trevena: I am very pleased to introduce today 12 members of the highway maintenance executive of the BCGEU who are in the gallery.*

*We have with us Scott Bumphrey, Danny Campbell, Stephan Rayson, Rory Smith, Fred Street, Darren Feltren, Kelly McDonald, Mike Turley, Dave Maki, Walter Chernoff, John Cantlon, Earl Haward, Curtis Biech and Frank Anderson.*

*They represent diverse parts of this province. They and the workers that they represent maintain our highways, roads and bridges across the province. The safety of all of us, because we all use the roads, depends on their local and regional expertise. I'd like to thank them for the work that they do, and I hope that the House will make them very welcome.*

*'Sticks and stones' continued from page 4...*

abuse, or making offensive jokes about someone – would be obvious to any reasonable person. Posting a 'rant' about a co-worker on Facebook or other social media would also be offensive and is considered bullying and harassment.

Sexual harassment in the workplace is also far too commonplace. Every day we hear about another incident of sexual harassment in the media, often from people in positions of power such as directors, politicians, actors, news anchors or supervisors.

Sexual harassment includes suggestive remarks, sexual jokes, compromising invitations, verbal abuse, visual display of suggestive sexual images, leering, whistling, patting, rubbing, unwanted physical contact, outright demands for sexual favours, and physical assault.

Employers, supervisors and workers must all take reasonable steps to discourage and prevent workplace bullying and harassment. This includes creating policies and procedures – sometimes called

"Respectful Workplace Policies" – to address bullying and harassment in the workplace, as well as providing orientation and training to workers around what is acceptable, and what they can do if they experience or witness bullying and harassment.

Some work sites have formal complaint processes while others have more informal processes. If a worker witnesses another worker being subjected to bullying or harassment, this must be reported and the procedure for reporting must be in writing.

If you are bullied/harassed:

- Ask the person to STOP. If you are not comfortable challenging the bully/harasser/prankster, talk to your supervisor or a steward.
- Keep a written record of incidents and action taken to resolve the matter.
- Use the informal or formal process at your worksite.

**The employer must investigate and respond to the complaint.**

The BCGEU has trained facilitators who can come to your site and offer anti-bullying training. Please contact [OHS@bcgeu.ca](mailto:OHS@bcgeu.ca) for more information.





## Chair report

It has been a really busy ten months. So far, I have been at nine bargaining tables and we have 18 ratified agreements.

These include:

- Emcon - 2,3,9,12 and 18
- Mainroad - 4 and 6
- Y.R.B. - 10,19,22 and 23
- Argo - 8 and 15
- Capilino Highways - 5
- J.P.W. - 13
- I.R.L. - 16
- L.D.M. - 24
- Nechako - 26

Two areas, V.S.A. 14 and I.R.L. 17, had tentative agreements turned down by the members. See Rory Smith's report on page three for remaining tables—Emil Anderson 7 and Mainroad 1—that have more bargaining scheduled in April and May. The remaining two areas with dates scheduled are C.R.S.S. 20 and L.D.M. 28 where bargaining starts in April.

**Story ideas and comments for the Comp-Ten Report can be submitted to [comp10report@bcgeu.ca](mailto:comp10report@bcgeu.ca)**



Being at five tables where the employer walked away was one of the toughest things to watch, but there is a time and place for the committees to stand up for what they know their members deserve.

I'm very proud of the committees that have had the courage to watch the employer leave, knowing the concerns of the members in their area. This is the most important part of bargaining.

Service Area 20 is the last to expire in 2021 and no dates are scheduled at this time to start bargaining.

It has been a great experience for me over the last three years to

**"Working with Dave has been a pleasure over the last three years. His commitment to detail and his ethical approach to the needs and concerns of the membership is second to none."**

*-Rory Smith*

represent the bargaining committees as your chair. I have been able to meet many members around the province, most of whom were very thankful and grateful for the job I was doing for them. This has made it all worthwhile.

*In Solidarity, Dave Maki*



**SAFETY  
FIRST**  
**SAFETY IS  
EVERYBODY'S  
JOB**



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## Bargaining update: PRT Growing Services

Bargaining for a renewed agreement with PRT Growing Services commenced in November 2017 and the parties have met a number of times so far this year. Wages and benefits continue to be priority issues for these members, as well as job security, promotional opportunities and union membership.

There are three areas of this collective agreement that disallow workers from joining the union and PRT is not interested in correcting this flawed language. Their wage offer was minimal, with little improvement to access to health & welfare benefits for our members. We had no choice, but to seek direction from the membership on job action.

In February, following a series of rousing membership meetings in every area, the bargaining unit voted 93% in favour of strike action. The employer requested we meet again to continue bargaining.

Bargaining resumed on March 26th in Kelowna, with the employer providing a counter proposal to the monetary package they tabled in February. The bargaining committee was expecting and hopeful to see some major lifts to the minimal wage increases the employer had offered, as well as some improvements on other significant non-monetary issues.



"We were disappointed with the package they offered us" stated Jan Brewer, Bargaining Committee Chairperson. "It's not a deal we can accept."

Discussions continued for most of the day and into March 27th, at which time the employer requested additional time to consider the union's demands. The employer indicated they had not made their final monetary offer so the union agreed to meet with the employer again on April 10th. The bargaining committee remains strong and focused on getting a fair and reasonable deal.

Component 10 represents members at PRT Growing Services nurseries in Vernon, Armstrong, Harrop, Campbell River and Prince George.

*In Solidarity, Lindsay Buss  
Staff Representative, Negotiations*

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## YMPE Increase for 2018

The Canada Revenue Agency has announced that this year's maximum pensionable earnings (YMPE) is \$55,900 for 2018. This is an increase of \$600 from 2017. The basic exemption amount remains at \$3,500.

Canada Pension Plan (CPP)  
contribution rates for 2018 will

remain at the current 4.95 per cent each for employees and employers. As a result of the increase to the YMPE, the maximum employer and employee contribution to the CPP will increase to \$2,593.80 each this year.

Under reforms to the CPP, contributions will begin rising gradually in 2019 to 5.95 per cent for employers and employees by 2025.

*Laura O'Neill*

I encourage all workers to look at their collective agreements to see how they can also be part of the BCGEU Pension Plan if not already enrolled. The normal formula for a temporary or auxiliary employee to join the BCGEU plan is that the employee must have worked two consecutive years and reached the threshold of 35 per cent of the "year's maximum pensionable earnings" (YMPE) in each of those years. (Two consecutive years means that you were not terminated, but it's okay to have been laid off as you are still an employee on layoff.) Once qualified you will be required to make your portion of the contribution and the employer will make theirs. This is done for you by payroll. All you have to do is sign up!

*Kelly McDonald*





## WORDSEARCH – COMPONENT10CERTS

A	P	W	H	I	Y	N	F	X	Y	O	J	Z	A	E
T	I	W	I	V	P	E	A	E	Q	H	F	A	R	F
K	X	M	A	N	I	Y	T	M	B	D	H	O	J	T
L	N	E	R	R	D	I	I	C	U	L	S	F	T	C
Z	H	S	Q	E	B	Z	G	I	D	I	H	B	N	F
W	T	B	E	T	H	S	U	B	O	H	C	H	S	Z
X	G	B	S	D	T	T	E	N	H	C	T	Z	E	Z
Y	O	O	F	O	A	R	O	X	Q	R	I	R	H	D
N	R	M	D	L	K	L	B	P	H	Q	D	I	C	G
F	S	N	O	W	O	Y	B	Z	Y	B	H	B	N	J
S	S	E	R	T	S	O	Q	V	I	H	Y	I	A	J
A	I	S	V	E	P	U	D	F	C	I	K	W	L	T
T	L	D	U	A	K	Y	O	I	E	L	D	Z	A	X
C	L	I	M	B	I	N	G	J	N	D	D	G	V	Z
F	F	G	M	N	F	A	F	P	P	G	E	C	A	B

### WINTER AWARENESS:

AVALANCHES  
 BLADES  
 CLIMBING  
 DITCH  
 EROSION  
 FATIGUE  
 FLOODING  
 FROSTBITE  
 HEAVY  
 HYPOTHERMIA  
 ICE  
 SNOW  
 STRESS  
 WIND

## Component 10 Executive



Front Row L-R: Frank Anderson (staff), Rory Smith (VP)(1004 chair), Dave Maki (Bargaining Council Chair)(1008 1st vice), Darren Feltren (1004 1st vice), John Cantlon (Treasurer)(1010 chair), Kevin Staneland (1008 chair), Earl Haward (Recording Sec) (1012 chair), Mike Turley (1007 acting chair)

Back Row L-R: Kelly McDonald (1st Vice) (1006 chair), Dave Johnson (1009 chair), Lana Vincent (2nd Vice) (1003 chair), Geoff Michalewicz (Young Worker) (1005 YW), Danny Campbell (1002 chair), Fred Street (1005 chair)

Missing: Curtis Biech (1011 chair), Scott Bumphrey (1001 chair)

*Note: this photo was taken in 2017. An updated photo will be published in the next newsletter to reflect changes to the component executive.*

Story ideas and comments for the Comp-Ten Report  
 can be submitted to [comp10report@bcgeu.ca](mailto:comp10report@bcgeu.ca)