



*Message from*  
**The AEC**

## Thank you

for having agreed to be a Local Officer of the Public Service Alliance of Canada. Local Officers are the backbone of our union. You represent members in the workplace and provide leadership within the Local and at all levels of the organization. Local Officers are not only the face of our union in their workplaces, you are also the face of our union in the community. As a Local Officer, it is in your power to make our union a living reality.

This Handbook is designed to help you carry out your important work by providing you with an overview of our union and information related to your Local Officer role. This Handbook is a guide and one of the many tools that can assist you in your development as a union activist. Your Component (if your Local is affiliated to a Component) and your PSAC Regional Office can also offer invaluable assistance.

Your union activism and your development as a Local Officer will certainly be enriched by the relationships you build, the issues you take on and the solidarity you help create.

Thank you for contributing your time and effort to our union.

Alliance Executive Committee

Public Service Alliance of Canada

# ***PSAC LOCAL OFFICERS' HANDBOOK***

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# The PSAC TODAY

The Public Service Alliance of Canada is among Canada's largest union. Traditionally, we have represented workers who are employed by Treasury Board and other branches of the federal government. However, over the years we have organized outside our traditional sphere. Today, our members work for the federal public service, federal agencies and corporations, territorial governments and provincially-regulated employers. Members also work for private and non-profit employers, such as casinos, universities, women's shelters and Aboriginal band councils.

PSAC members are constantly at work serving Canadians and their interests. You'll find them from the high Arctic to the Great Lakes, from the East Coast to the West Coast, on the seas and overseas.

The transition to a global economy transformed industrial relations in the late twentieth century. Contracting out, de-regulation, privatization and devolution practices are undermining the trade union problem-solving vehicles of collective bargaining and the grievance procedure. The PSAC is countering by re-enforcing its power at the bargaining table through political lobbying,



Think of a job and chances are there's a PSAC member doing it.

- PSAC members process tax returns in a timely way;
- they maintain campsites in national parks;
- they do research and policy analysis in a wide range of federal and territorial government departments;
- they are the front-line workers that provide health care, education and benefits to veterans, Aboriginal and Inuit people, and persons with disabilities;
- they work to provide protection of human rights, the environment, and food and drug safety for all Canadians;
- they design, develop and maintain our country's infrastructure, including airports, ports, buildings and historical monuments;
- and they are the search and rescue crews on coast guard ships.

Our members also work in battered women's shelters, in casinos, as teaching assistants in universities, in call centers, in diamond mines and in museums.

They include parole officers, commissionaires, firefighters, lighthouse keepers, crane operators, customs officers, immigration officers, clerical and administrative staff, compensation specialists and many, many more.



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direct action, forming alliances with other unions and social justice groups, and organizing new bargaining units beyond the Federal Public Service. As fundamental economic conditions continue to change, the PSAC will continue to evolve to meet the challenge.

Over the years, government emphasis on deficit reduction and downsizing in the public service has eroded the quality of public services. It has

become our responsibility as a union and citizens to stand up for public services and to protest against the loss of public sector jobs. It has become politically necessary as union members to mobilize and join the fight back with labour and social justice movements to preserve and improve the standards and quality of our working and social lives.

## We can do this with effective political action.

Labour's political activism has many forms: talking about politics, staying informed on current political debates, meetings with government and elected representatives to put forward our views, participating in public rallies and demonstrations, campaigning in coalition with like-minded groups, even running for office and supporting specific political parties with which it shares values and policies.

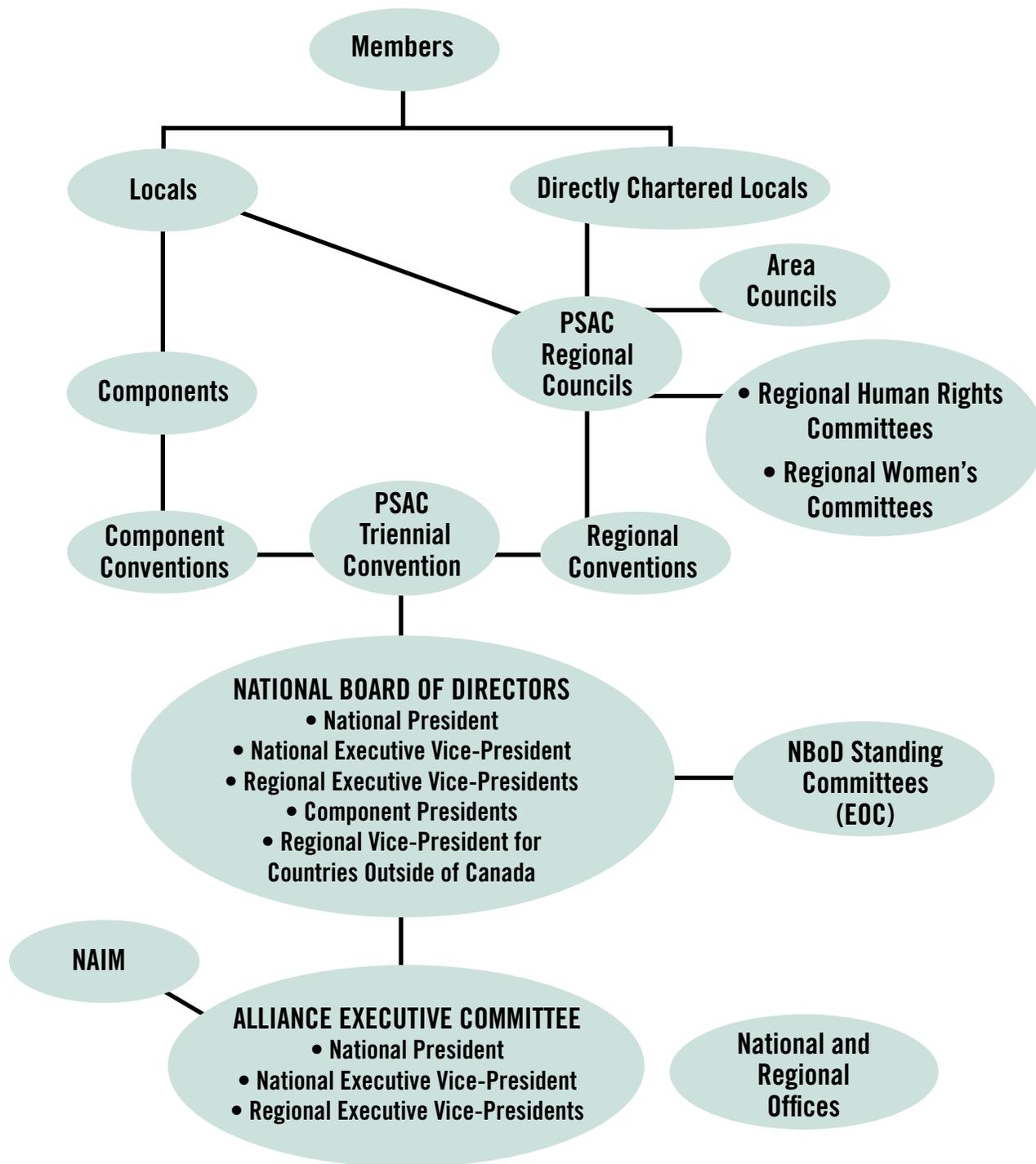
Increasing globalization means that what affects workers in one country also affect workers in other countries. As a result, the PSAC works with sister unions through the Public Services International on a variety of international campaigns, including a pay equity campaign for workers in the public service around the world. This broader understanding of workers' rights has

deepened our union's approach to negotiations and representation. We have adopted an action plan to negotiate and use a Social Justice Fund. Through this fund we increase our activism on international solidarity, anti-globalization and anti-poverty work.

In the meantime, the face of Canadian society - and its workforce - is literally changing. First Nations communities are the fastest growing segment of our population. New Canadians make up 70 percent of our labour force. If we are to change the political landscape, the union movement must be inclusive of all who have the potential to share our vision. Our ability to build a more equitable society will be enhanced if we remain united by common values of respect and justice.

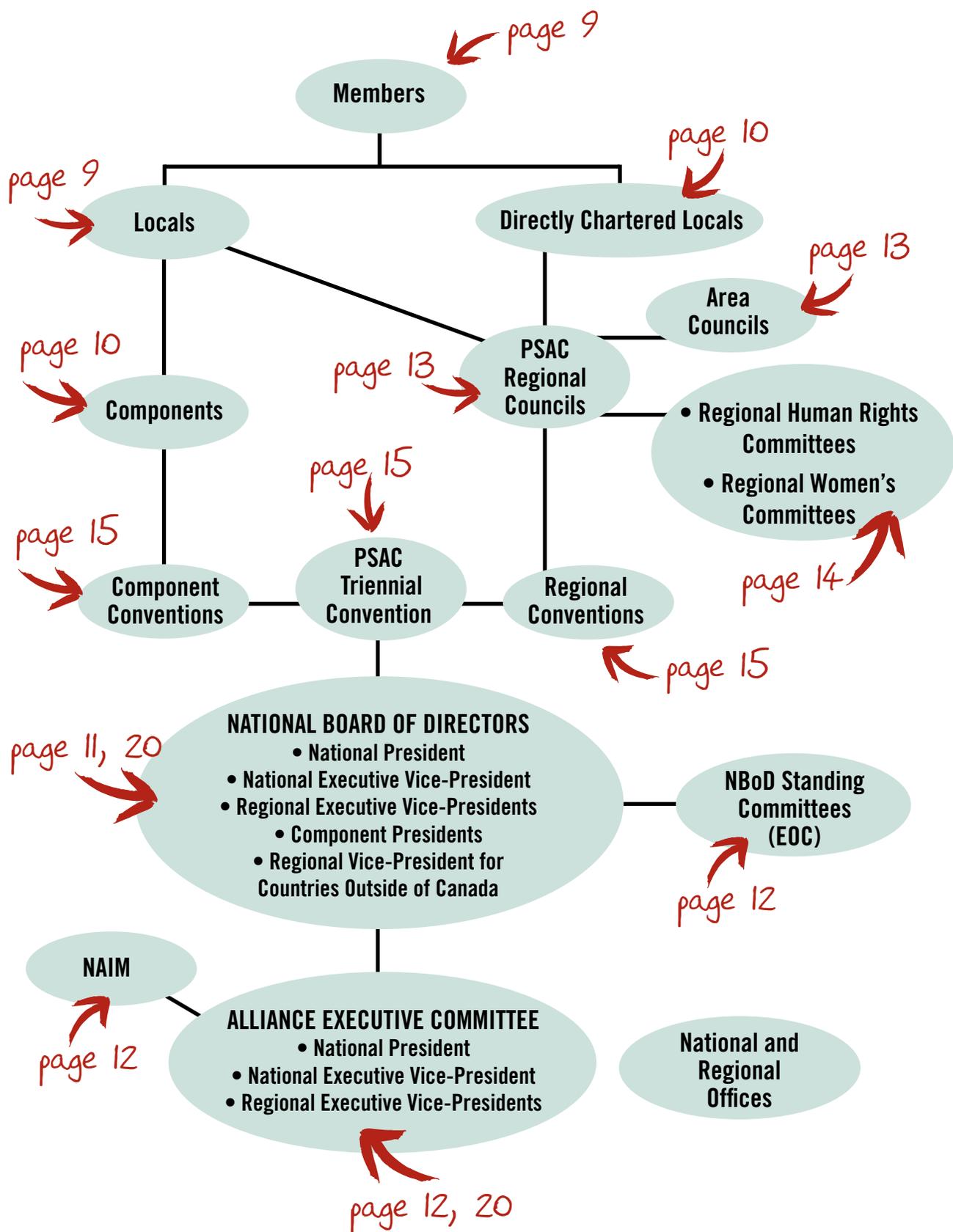


# The PSAC Structure CHART



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# Building our **UNION**

Our union is a house built of people. It's strong as long as our members are active, educated and working collectively. The basic building block that defines the union's strength is the individual member.

## Members

Every time the union is certified in a workplace, we take on responsibility to represent in good faith every individual who is covered by the bargaining unit. Everyone wants to be treated fairly at work and if they see co-workers and colleagues working for dignity and justice as union representatives, even the most sceptical can be won over.

Many of our workplaces operate under the Rand Formula. This means that employees may pay unions dues, but they are not automatically a member of our union, i.e., eligible to vote in elections, attend union courses and events and so on. In order to



become members, they have to join the union by signing a membership card. As a Local Officer, it is part of your role to ensure that workers are afforded the opportunity to exercise their right to become a member of the PSAC.

Some workers may have objections to joining the union, religious or political, but member or not, every worker covered by a PSAC collective agreement has the right to representation and to vote on collective agreements and strikes.

## Locals

Members are organized into Locals, the day-to-day link between the membership and the larger union structure.

*There are two types of PSAC Locals:*

- *Locals that are associated with a Component*
- *Directly Chartered Locals that are associated directly to the PSAC.*

Most locals are chartered to, or associated with, a Component.

Structural flexibility became an issue in the late 1980s as workers from outside the traditional public service began to join the PSAC. In 1991, the PSAC Constitution was changed to provide for Directly Chartered Locals (DC Locals). These Locals are directly affiliated with the Public Service Alliance of Canada and do not come under the jurisdiction of any Component.

DC Local members are employed by a diverse range of private and public sector organizations,

such as gaming corporations, band councils, transition homes and port authorities. The Locals are directly serviced by the PSAC through PSAC Regional Offices. All Directly Chartered Locals have the right to services regularly provided by the PSAC Centre. These services include negotiations, adjudication, education, central research and legal advice, public relations, classification etc. and regular service provided by the Regional Offices.

The authority and jurisdiction of Directly Chartered Locals are spelled out in the PSAC Constitution and By-Laws and most of these are similar to those for Component Locals. For more information on Directly Chartered Locals, consult the PSAC publication "Handbook for New Directly Chartered Locals".

Locals of the Union determine their general course of action in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of the PSAC. Its members elect their own officers at annual general meetings, appoint or elect their own stewards and determine their own portion of the dues structure.

*Whether they're dealing with union education, equity, collective bargaining, organizing, representation, political action, communications, or any of the other myriad activities in which the Union is involved, Locals play a critical role in connecting members to their union and the union to its members.*



## Components

Components are made up of Locals. Originally, Components were organized along departmental/ employer lines. Although that logic generally remains, it is not always the case anymore, given on-going employer reorganization. There are also now three Components defined by geography: the Nunavut Employees' Union (NEU), the Union of Northern Workers (UNW) and the Yukon Employees' Union (YEU).

Component responsibilities are set out in the PSAC Constitution and include

- processing staffing complaints and grievances (up to but not including adjudication);
- assuming responsibility at the workplace level for collective agreements signed by the PSAC covering members within the jurisdiction of the Component, and
- representing its members on matters, such as classification problems and working conditions not already covered in collective agreements.

Under the PSAC Constitution, each Component elects its national officers, selects a national staff and holds a convention every three years. These conventions are held six to twelve months prior to the PSAC Triennial Convention. Component delegates elect officers, set Component policies and select the delegates for the PSAC Triennial Convention. Some Components have regional offices as well as a national office.

Local concerns are generally brought to a Component Regional Vice-President (or the equivalent officer in the Component), who is also responsible for reporting Component concerns back to the Local. Directly Chartered Locals raise their concerns with their PSAC Regional Executive Vice-President.

Only two Components are certified bargaining agents, namely the Union of Northern Workers (UNW), which is the certified bargaining agent for the Government of Northwest Territories and the Nunavut Employees' Union (NEU), which is the certified bargaining agent for the Government of Nunavut. Otherwise, the PSAC is the certified bargaining agent for all other PSAC bargaining units.

The following is  
a current list of Components:

- **Agriculture Union**
- **Canada Employment and Immigration Union**
- **Customs Excise Union Douanes Accise**
- **Government Services Union**
- **National Component**
- **National Health and Welfare Union**
- **Natural Resources Union**
- **Nunavut Employees Union**
- **Union of Canadian Transport Employees**
- **Union of Environment Workers**
- **Union of National Defence Employees**
- **Union of Northern Workers**
- **Union of Postal Communications Employees**
- **Union of Solicitor General Employees**
- **Union of Taxation Employees**
- **Union of Veterans Affairs Employees Union**
- **Yukon Employees Union**

## ***National Board of Directors (NBoD)***

The National Board of Directors consists of the National President, the National Executive Vice-President, the seven Regional Executive Vice-Presidents, the President of each Component and the Regional Vice-President for Countries Outside Canada.

Regional Executive Vice-Presidents represent the interests of Directly Chartered Locals in their respective regions. All of the members of the NBoD are elected at a Component, Regional or the PSAC Triennial Convention, except the Regional Vice-President for Countries Outside Canada. This

officer is elected by the NBoD at the first National Board of Directors meeting after Convention.

Generally speaking, the NBoD is responsible for carrying out the policies and giving effect to the decisions made at the PSAC Convention. It must also represent and inform the membership on all matters and issues which directly affect members. The NBoD must also administer itself, make regulations for the implementation of policies and resolutions passed at Convention and prepare resolutions and recommendations for the next Convention.

## Alliance Executive Committee (AEC)

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The Alliance Executive Committee (AEC) is responsible for the day-to-day management of the affairs of the PSAC. It is also responsible for implementing PSAC Convention and NBoD decisions.

The AEC is composed of the National President, the National Executive Vice-President and the seven Regional Executive Vice-Presidents.

Each member of the AEC is assigned responsibility by the National President for certain national portfolios, e.g. collective bargaining, grievance and adjudication, political action program, education, women's and human rights program, health and safety, finance and so on. Regional Vice-Presidents also have responsibility for matters in their regions, including representing the Directly Chartered Locals, in their respective regions.

## NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEES

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### Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC)

The PSAC Equal Opportunities Committee is a standing committee of the National Board of Directors (NBoD). Component and PSAC equity group representatives sit on this national committee. The PSAC equity representatives, one woman and one man for each group, are elected directly by members of their respective equity groups at their National Conference.

*The principle mandate of the EOC is to provide advice and recommendations to the NBoD on equity/human rights issues. In addition, the EOC:*

- *identifies emerging equity/human rights issues (problems and potential solutions related to our union, to our workplaces and to communities).*
- *develops links and works closely with coalition partners and equity/human rights-seeking groups at the local, regional and national levels.*

### National Aboriginal, Inuit and Metis Network (NAIM)

At the 2003 PSAC Convention, a resolution was adopted that mandated our Union to create a National Aboriginal, Inuit and Métis (NAIM) Network. *The mandate of the NAIM Network is to provide a unified voice for the diverse community of PSAC's Aboriginal, Inuit and Métis members, so that together, members of NAIM can increase their involvement at all levels of our Union, empower each other, and advance their rights within and beyond our Union.*

The Network has established a central 'Circle' of members who meet face-to-face to discuss and identify issues the Union needs to take on. This Circle is composed of the following members:

- Two PSAC members; one man, one woman per PSAC region
- The two elected Aboriginal representatives on the Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC)
- The two Alliance Executive Committee (AEC) officers who have responsibility for NAIM

# REGIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEES

*The more PSAC members work together in their own community, the stronger our union becomes. Locals can participate in a variety of regional committees and forums, working with members from other Components to discuss and take action on common interests and issues.*

*In 1994, PSAC regionalized its structure to complement the Component structure and bring our members closer to their union.*

*Seven PSAC regions (Atlantic, Quebec, National Capital Region, Ontario, Prairies, British Columbia, and the North) elect a Regional Executive Vice-President (REVP) and an alternate. These officers are elected at their respective PSAC Regional Convention.*

*The REVPs are members of the nine-person Alliance Executive Committee (AEC), which runs the PSAC on a day-to-day basis.*

*The other two positions are filled by the National President and the National Executive Vice-President.*

## Regional Councils

Regional Councils are elected within each region based on rules set out by the region. Regional Councils are structured according to the needs of each Region, and bring together activists who provide Regional leadership and political direction on a wide range of issues. Regional Councils can send resolutions to the PSAC Triennial Convention, develop their own by-laws and charge fees for participation.

## Area Councils

An Area Council is the forum for all PSAC Locals in a community to share information and learn from each others' experiences.

Area Councils often take responsibility for the promotion and coordination of PSAC campaigns, political action, broader union or social justice campaigns and the coordination of collective bargaining proposals. National Officers of the PSAC and other union activists can also be invited to this forum.

Area Councils may also organize educational seminars on various topics of interest to the members, stewards and Local Officers in the area. This is invaluable to smaller Locals that may not have significant resources. Area Councils also work with organizations in the larger community and other labour groups.

Area Councils can send resolutions to the PSAC Convention and their delegates can speak and vote at Convention (this is referred to as having "voice and vote").

Locals from at least three Components or DCLs must apply to the Alliance Executive Committee (AEC) to form an Area Council.

For more information on how to set up an Area Council and how it is administered, consult the PSAC Constitution.

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## Regional Women's Committees

*Regional Women's Committees (RWC) were established in the mid-1980s to further address women's equality issues – systemic discrimination and barriers working women face within and outside their workplaces.*

### **Regional Women's Committees:**

- inform and educate women on the political, social, economic, and workplace issues that affect them;
- speak for women with a strong, common voice and advocate policies that promote all women's rights;
- mobilize women to participate in the union and take action on the issues;
- empower women with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to exercise effective leadership;
- support women through a network that links them to each other, to the union, and to the community; and
- work side by side with racialized & Aboriginal women, lesbians, bisexual & transgender women and women with disabilities to advance real equality and make the PSAC an inclusive union.

At least three Components or Directly Chartered Locals must apply to the Alliance Executive Committee (AEC) for a RWC to be formed. Regional Women's Committees are eligible for funding from the PSAC.

Active Regional Women's Committees are entitled to send a delegate to the Triennial National Women's Conference.

All seven PSAC Regional Councils have at least one designated seat for a Regional Women's Committee representative.

The PSAC publication "Women of the Union: The PSAC Regional Women's Committee Handbook" and the PSAC Women's Program web page provide more details on how to establish and run a PSAC Regional Women's Committee.

## Human Rights Committees

Human Rights Committees can be formed by members belonging to equity groups, specifically, members of:

- the Racially visible group composed of racially visible people
- the Aboriginal Peoples group composed of Aboriginal, Inuit and Métis;
- the Access equity group composed of people with disabilities; and
- the Pride equity group composed of gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and/or transgender persons.

Human Rights Committees provide a forum for members of these equity groups to strategize to get rid of the disadvantage and discrimination experienced by these communities in our workplaces, in our society and in our unions. The Human Rights Committees spearhead mobilizing and advocacy strategies. In some regions, a Human Rights Committee may be joined or replaced by committees dedicated to specific issues, namely Racially Visible; Aboriginal Peoples; Pride and Access Committees.

These committees lobby to strengthen human rights legislation, oppose harassment and other forms of discrimination in the workplace, support community human rights struggles and work to increase inclusion and representation in their workplaces and in their union.

At least three Components or Directly Chartered Locals must apply to the AEC to form a Racially Visible, Aboriginal Peoples, Access, Pride or Human Rights committee. These Committees are eligible for funding from the PSAC.

Each PSAC Regional Council has at least one seat for equity group representatives.

The PSAC Human Rights Program web site provides additional details on how to establish a PSAC Regional Human Right's Committee.

# DECISION MAKING AT THE PSAC

The PSAC is a democratic union and is organized in a variety of ways to provide opportunities for members to voice their opinions, concerns, thoughts and to participate in the day to day life of their union.

*Here are some of the decision-making opportunities for union members:*

## *The PSAC Triennial Convention*

The supreme governing body of the PSAC is the PSAC Triennial Convention, which is held every three years. Delegates at the Convention elect the PSAC National President and the National Executive Vice-President, as well as the alternate National Executive Vice-President. PSAC members who are delegates at the Convention also set the policies, direction and budgets of the union for the next three years. A complete copy of PSAC policies is available in the publication “PSAC Policy Papers and Resolutions of Record” and policies are available on the PSAC website [www.psac-afpc.com](http://www.psac-afpc.com)



*Components and PSAC Regions also hold Conventions.  
To find out more about these, contact your Component or your region.*

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## Who attends PSAC Convention?

The Triennial Convention is a delegated convention, which means that union members are elected by other members to represent them. Ensuring that key union decisions are made by a large and diverse group of members is a critical step in creating participatory democracy. The following are delegate categories:

- Members of the National Board of Directors have automatic delegate status to Convention.
- Each PSAC equity group represented on the PSAC Equal Opportunities Committee is entitled to send 2 (two) delegates to PSAC Convention. Delegate status is determined by procedures set out by the Alliance Executive Committee (AEC).
- Area Councils are entitled to elect delegates from among the representatives of their affiliated Locals.

- Locals affiliated with Components elect delegates to represent them at Component Conventions and the delegates at those Conventions in turn elect representatives for the PSAC Triennial Convention.

- Directly Chartered Locals also have delegate entitlement depending on the size of the Local. Larger Directly Chartered Locals (of 100 members or more) elect delegates from their own membership, while smaller Directly Chartered Locals (of less than 100 members) are combined and elect their delegates together.

The number of delegates who will be going to Convention from Components, Directly Chartered Locals and Area Councils is based on a formula which is set out in the PSAC Constitution.

All accredited delegates have full voice and vote. Expenses incurred by the accredited delegates at the PSAC Convention are fully paid by the PSAC.

## CONVENTION PATH : Delegates

### COMPONENT LOCALS

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

LOCAL DELEGATE SELECTED

COMPONENT CONVENTION

COMPONENT DELEGATES ELECTED

NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS DELEGATES

DIRECT CHARTER LOCALS

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

ELECT DELEGATES

PSAC EQUITY GROUP DELEGATES

AREA COUNCIL DELEGATES

PSAC TRIENNIAL CONVENTION

A word about observers to Convention:  
Observers are welcome at the PSAC Convention however, their expenses must be covered by another source. Often Locals will pay these costs. While observers are not allowed on the Convention floor, they can lobby delegates on issues of interest to the membership. Observers also become more familiar with the way the union works, preparing them to take on a more informed role in the decision-making process of the Union.

Convention caucuses are another opportunity for groups with common purposes/interests to come together to discuss issues affecting them, to strategize about how to facilitate their work and to network. Equity, Component and Regional caucuses are a regular feature of PSAC Conventions.

## Other Decision Making Opportunities

There are additional opportunities for membership participation in PSAC decision-making. Locals, Components and Regional Committees also provide opportunities for discussion and decision.

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## How are issues addressed at Convention?

All matters brought before the PSAC Convention have to be written in the form of Convention Resolutions. This makes the decision making work more effective since it focuses debate and discussion on specific recommendations. Resolutions can be submitted by:

- National Board of Directors
- Components
- Regional Conventions
- Area Councils
- Directly Chartered Locals
- National Conferences:  
Women's, Aboriginal Peoples, Racially Visible Persons, Pride, Access and Health and Safety

*Resolutions are simply a statement of a problem (the "Whereas") and a statement of the solution sought (the "Be it Resolved").*

While the "Whereas" is not required, it provides delegates with a better understanding of the reasons for the proposed action. The "Be it Resolved" is a clear and simple statement of the specific action the union will take to address the issue. It is essential that resolutions specify actions that are within the union's jurisdiction, i.e., *actions the union can take.*

### Sample Resolutions

GEN60: **PSAC YOUTH FORUM**  
**ORIGINATOR:** NHWU  
**LANGUAGE OF ORIGIN:** E

**WHEREAS** the youth are the future of the organization; and

**WHEREAS** there are already conferences for health and safety and equity seeking groups; and

**WHEREAS** the PSAC uses conferences as a forum to bring members together, raise awareness and advance causes:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the youth of the PSAC be provided with a forum to network and resolve issues; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** it be fully funded by the PSAC; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** NHWU support this resolution and refer it to the next PSAC Convention in May 2006.

**COMMITTEE**  
**RECOMMENDATION** \_\_\_\_\_ **DECISION** \_\_\_\_\_

## PSAC Convention Committees

Each submitted resolution is given to one of the Convention Committees: Constitution, Finance, Collective Bargaining, and General Resolutions. These committees expedite Convention business.

Convention Committees meet prior to the opening of the Triennial Convention to review those resolutions referred to them. They are able to combine similar resolutions as long as the intent of the resolution is not changed. The Committees are mandated to make a recommendation to the Convention of concurrence (i.e. agree with the resolution) or non-concurrence (disagree with the

resolution) for each resolution. Committees order the resolutions in terms of priority and present the resolutions to Convention for debate and voting. The Committee Chairperson explains the rationale for the recommendation they have made to delegates.

Convention delegates receive a copy of all original resolutions submitted as well as the reports of the Convention Committees. Delegates are able to agree or disagree with either the priority set by the committee for a resolution or the recommendation made by it.

## CONVENTION PATH: Resolutions



## Choosing the leadership - Election of PSAC Officers

The National President, National Executive Vice-President and alternate National Executive Vice-President are elected at the Triennial Convention by secret ballot. All convention delegates are eligible to vote in these elections and any member in good standing, whether a delegate or not, is eligible to run for office.

## *National Board of Directors*

The National Board of Directors (NBoD) is responsible for the affairs of the PSAC between Conventions. While it generally meets three times a year, meetings can be called at any time by the President of the PSAC or on the written request of a majority of officers of the Board.

Usually the NBoD functions on a one vote per member basis. However, if the Chairperson rules the NBoD is about to modify existing policy of Convention, each member of the Board is entitled to cast votes equal to the total number of delegates to which that member's Component or Region, including Directly Chartered Locals, would be entitled at a Convention.

The Minutes of the National Board of Directors are an important source of information. They include the reports of the National President, the Executive Vice-President and the seven Regional Executive Vice-Presidents for their activities between the meetings. You will also find reports of various NBoD Committees, including the Finance Committee, the Standing Education Committee, the Standing Health and Safety Committee, the PSAC Equal Opportunities Committee and other items of importance to the membership. Minutes provide you with some essential information about the position and orientation of the Union on all substantial matters brought before them. They also show the voting record of the members of the Board.

For more information on the roles and responsibilities of the NBoD, consult the PSAC Constitution.

## *Taking Local Issues to the NBoD*

Component Locals are represented at the National Board of Directors by their Component President, Directly Chartered Locals by the respective Regional Executive Vice-President, and the membership outside Canada is also represented by the Regional Vice-President (RVP) for Countries Outside Canada.

Component Local representatives communicate and work with their Component President by going through the Component Regional Vice-President (RVP), who is the voice of Locals on the Component Executive.

Representatives from both Components and Directly Chartered Locals can also communicate and work with the PSAC Regional Executive Vice-President. Regional Councils facilitate direct communication with PSAC executive officers, between Locals in the same region, and provide information on union activities and debates on important issues.

Meetings of the National Board of Directors are open to observers. In order to send an observer, the Local must contact the Component President or the Regional Executive Vice-President.

## *Alliance Executive Committee*

The AEC is responsible for dealing with national questions and issues facing our union. The AEC generally meets monthly and additional meetings can be called by the President of the PSAC.

The AEC functions on a consensus-based model of decision making. Simply put, a consensus model attempts to seek a decision that is consented to by all members of the AEC.

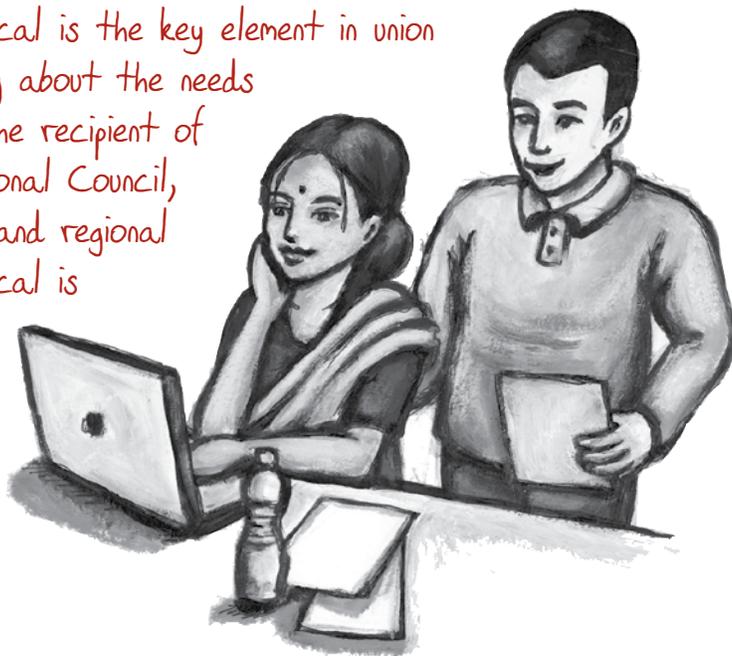
Individual members of the AEC bring agenda items forward for discussion. PSAC members who want to bring forward national issues or questions for discussion by the AEC may do so by contacting their Regional Executive-Vice President.

The minutes of the NBoD include reports from individual AEC Officers.

# THE LOCAL

## The Role of the Local

Whether or not a Local is directly chartered to the PSAC or associated to a Component, the Local is the key element in union work. It is the front line in hearing about the needs and concerns of members and it is the recipient of information from the PSAC, the Regional Council, the Component and/or Area Council and regional committees. But, of course, the Local is really its members – volunteers like yourself who've dedicated time to make the union a reality. The union is only as strong as the commitment of those in the Local, members and officers.



A successful Local is one where members feel connected with our union. It is one where members' concerns are passed on to the appropriate body or individual, or the member is directed to the appropriate source, and where members feel they have a pretty good understanding of what is happening in the union and that it reflects their wishes. Or, if it doesn't, they know how to make their concerns heard.

As a Local Officer, this means the job is often about communication, particularly two way communications. If members don't hear about the positive work being done on their behalf they form impressions about unions from the mainstream media, which tends to not be a great supporter of the interests of working people. In addition, if Local Officers don't seek out and listen to the concerns and views of their members, they are not going to be successful in ensuring that PSAC actions respond to membership needs.

Members may be interested in getting involved in union activities, but only if they know what the union's doing. Some members are keen on pension indexing, pay equity, ending racism, building international solidarity, strike support for other unions (perhaps their partner or other family member belongs), action to support the maintenance and improvement of Canada's social programs or work on political action programs with union and social coalitions.

Communication has, of course, a dynamic effect. As members learn about the union and work with the Local, Local Officers have the opportunity to become more aware of their needs and concerns. It is this interaction at the Local level that helps our union truly respond to the needs of our membership.

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## What Locals do

The Local carries out three important functions at the worksite. It provides workplace representation for those workers covered by PSAC collective agreements (including grievance representation and overall membership representation through union-management fora), it provides political leadership to the members, and it provides direction to the union, by ensuring Local concerns and issues are raised. These functions are necessary to create a strong and effective union presence at the worksite.

Locals have the authority to elect their own officers, adopt By-laws and establish a dues structure to provide the funds required to operate.

Local By-laws constitute the democratic framework within which the Local operates and enshrine the Local's power and authority. They provide guidelines for the protection of the democratic rights of the membership as well as the structure of the Local. Component Locals must not conflict with the By-laws of the Component, where applicable, and all Locals are required to respect the PSAC Constitution. Locals do need to be flexible enough so they can operate in crisis situations (e.g., strikes).

*Locals generally are able to:*

- *Set their own dues rate and establish financial administration procedures;*
- *Elect officers to established positions within the Local;*
- *Conduct their own meetings on a regular and annual basis;*
- *Protect the rights and advance the interests of Local members in the workplace and in the larger union.*

Directly Chartered Locals assume responsibility for collective agreements signed by the PSAC. They also represent members on matters not covered in collective agreements (such as classification and working conditions.)

## Local Officers

One of the Local Officer's most important job is to ensure that the integrity of the union is safe-guarded. This means each worker in the bargaining unit:

- is afforded the right to receive representation before the employer;
- is provided with the opportunity to sign a union card,
- and once they have signed, has an opportunity for input in the affairs of their Union, at all levels;
- has an opportunity for input into the collective bargaining process and all other union vehicles which affect the interests of members;
- has the opportunity for voice, vote and to stand for office within the Local, once s/he has joined the union;
- receives information about the affairs of their Union.

Local Officers also have to ensure that all policies of the Component (Component Locals) and the PSAC (Component Locals and Directly Chartered Locals) are communicated to the membership and adhered to by the Local executive.

Local Officers work with a wide assortment of people. At the worksite, they are in contact with members, supervisors and management. In the Local they work with the other Local Officers, Stewards, PSAC and/or Component Officers and union staff. In their communities, they work with other unions, coalition partners and community groups. Knowing how to communicate and how to listen effectively are indispensable abilities when dealing with people.

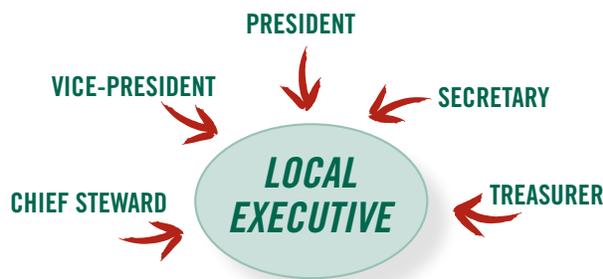
PSAC policies on harassment require a specific role from Local Officers. We all benefit from harassment free workplaces. While the employer is ultimately responsible for this, unions can play a significant role in supporting the creation of harassment free workplaces. These responsibilities can range from initiating informal resolution if you become aware of a harassment incident; appointing an investigation committee and ensuring procedural fairness if a complaint is filed. Details on the roles and responsibilities for Local Officers can be found in the PSAC Anti-Harassment Policy.

## Local By-laws

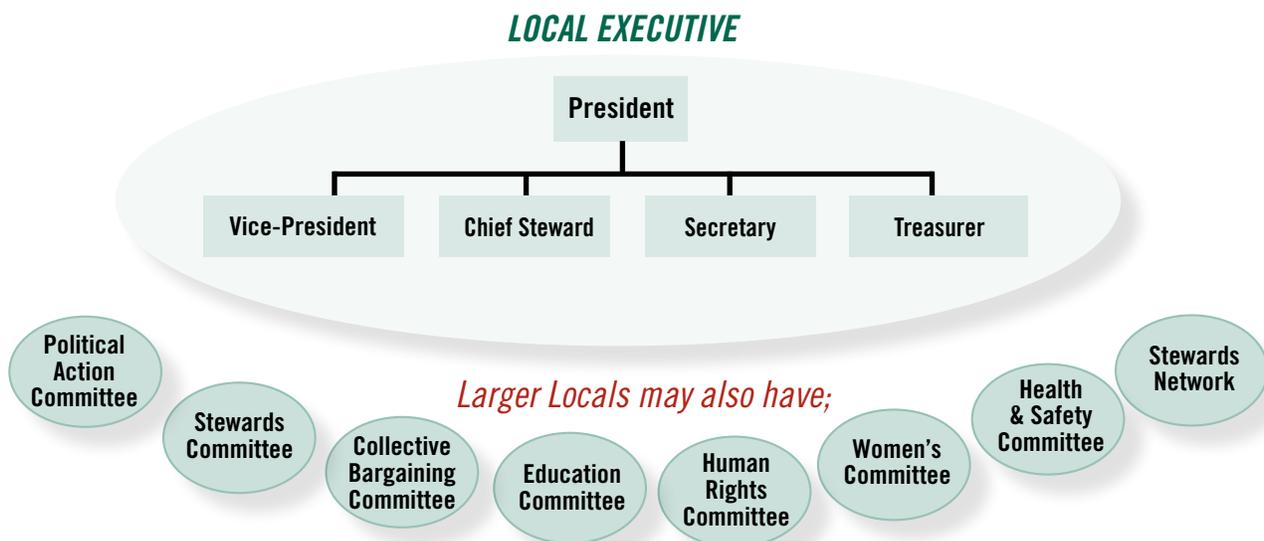
Local By-laws outline the structure required for the Local to operate, including the number and type of Local Officers required. Usually the number of officers is determined by the number of members in the Local and the geographic breakdown. PSAC members are found in a wide range of occupational settings and work locations and, while every Local organization will be similar in structure, they will vary in size and composition.

## Local Structure

Normally the Executive consists of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary and a Treasurer. Local Executives may also have a Health and Safety Officer, an Equity/Women's and/or Anti-Harassment Officer and an Education Officer. The Chief Steward is usually a member of the Local Executive and chairs the Stewards' Committee.



## Sample organization of a Local



# Local Officer Duties

Some of the responsibilities of Local Officers include:

## *The President*

- Is the Chief Executive Officer and coordinates the administration of Local affairs through the other officers and Local Committees.
- Presides at all membership meetings and executive meetings of the Local and is an ex-officio member of all committees of the Local.
- Decides, by application of the Rules of Order, all questions of procedures as chairperson. See Tips for the Chairperson in Section 17.
- Is the chief spokesperson of the Local in its dealings with management.

## *The Vice-President*

- Performs the duties of the President in case of the absence or resignation of that officer.
- Conducts meetings on behalf of the President or assumes the chair when the President vacates it for any reason during a meeting.
- Is responsible for specific portfolios as assigned by the Local.
- Assists chairpersons of committees as required.

## *The Secretary*

- Is responsible for the administrative duties of the Local.
- Records the minutes of all membership and executive meetings.
- Administers all communications emanating from or received by the Local.
- Administers the reports of committees.
- Works closely with the President on all Local matters.
- Maintains a filing system for the Local.

## *The Treasurer*

- Is accountable to the Local Executive for all finances receivable and payable.
- Prepares and submits financial reports to each executive or general meeting.
- Collects and deposits Local funds.
- Carries out other duties as delegated by the Local.
- Alerts the Local about Rand members (dues paying members who have not joined the union) so that they can be signed up.

## *The Chief Steward*

- Recruits Stewards, organizes and chairs the Stewards' Committee/Network;
- Sets up and maintains a communication system amongst the Stewards.
- Advises Stewards and provides guidance and support in specific technical areas.
- Ensures the proper application by management and members of existing collective agreements, arbitral awards, acts and regulations.
- Solves problems related to the organization, maintenance and efficiency of the stewards' network.
- Works closely with all Stewards, Executive Officers, Committees and Component staff.

# Contact Sheet

## President

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Vice-President

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Chief Steward

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Secretary

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Treasurer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## PSAC Regional Representative

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Component Regional Vice-President

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Component Service Officer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## PSAC Regional Executive Vice-President

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_



# Additional useful contacts:

## NAIM Representative

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## EOC Representative

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## District Labour Council

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Cell.: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

# MAKING THE LOCAL EFFECTIVE

It is not possible for Local Officers to become involved in all the activities described, nor is it expected. Opportunities for involvement, where possible, should be available to all members. In this way the workload can be shared, a great deal more accomplished and Local leadership developed. Members also feel they are part of the union if they get to play a role.

One of the challenges faced by those active in the union is the conflict between “union time” “work time” and “home time”. PSAC collective agreements provide for time off for union work. Locals should discuss leave with pay with the employer when union work is beneficial to the employer and/or the workplace.

## The Organizing Model

The organizing model puts membership involvement at the centre of all union activity. Through it, we draw on the knowledge and expertise of all our members and all union resources wherever they are found in the union’s structure. An organizing model at the Local level includes:

- Asking members about issues, concerns and changes they would like to see.
- When developing strategies and plans, always including membership input.
- Mentoring and encouraging members to take an active role in their union.
- Analyzing every problem and situation from the perspective of how it can be used as an opportunity to involve as many members as possible.

There is always enough union work to go around and the organizing model is also important to prevent burn-out by too few people trying to undertake too much work.

If the Local is to fulfill its mandate, it must be properly organized and administered. Members must know where to go for help and who to contact.

If members are to get involved, they must also know what is happening and how they can become active in their Local. It’s critical that members feel they are involved in the decision making process of their union. Here’s is a list of some of the activities members can undertake.

- Local Administration;
- Organizing Executive and General Membership Meetings;
- Working with members to protect their workplace rights
- Committee Work;
- Signing up new members;
- Newsletters;
- Other services provided by the Local, e.g., union counselling;
- Working on union campaigns/activities or working in support of community and social justice events.

# IS YOUR LOCAL EFFECTIVE?

Ask yourself the following questions;

1. Does your Local establish good communications with the members (regular meetings, desk drops, personal contact, etc.)?
2. Does your Local build and maintain a vibrant network of stewards?
3. Does it provide opportunities for members to discuss issues and act on union priorities?
4. Does it encourage wide membership involvement/pride in their Local and their union?
5. Does your Local ensure they are inclusive and responsive to the needs of marginalized workers?



# LOCAL COMMITTEES

Even the most dedicated, hard working member cannot substitute for an active and effective committee. A committee brings more "people power" to a union issue or campaign. Through the collective efforts of many, a greater range of opinions, ideas, solutions and experiences are made available. When a committee consists of informed and concerned union members, it becomes a channel through which ambitious projects can be undertaken.

**T**here are also advantages for the individual committee members. Serving on committees is good leadership training. It enables members to learn about community and union issues while improving problem-solving and communication skills. It also provides opportunities for members to have a say in the affairs of their union.

There are a number of committees that can play a role in building the Local and our union:

**Collective Bargaining Committee**

*EDUCATION COMMITTEE*

**Health and Safety Committee**

**Human Rights/Equity Committee**

**STRIKE COMMITTEE**

*Women's Committee*

**Stewards' Committee**

**Political Action Committee**

*Resolutions Committee*

A Membership Committee can maintain an up-to-date record of all employees within the Local's jurisdiction and contact new employees to sign their membership cards and invite them to play a role in their union.

Other committees may become important as issues from the membership emerge, including everything from international solidarity to rights in the workplace or a hardship committee to assist members.

Committees can vary in size. Some may operate best with a small number of people while in others the more the merrier.



## An effective Committee will have:

- a clear mandate;
- a goal that can be achieved better by a committee than by any one member or existing organization;
- an experienced member to chair the committee;
- a group of members who are interested in the job and the issues the committee has to deal with;
- procedures which are informal, democratic, inclusive and effective;
- discussions involving all members of the committee and resulting in decisions and/or recommendations acceptable to or at least accepted by every member;
- regular meetings which are organized in advance as to the time and place, which are convenient and accessible to all members;
- a secretary with prepared agendas and who will keep appropriate records of the results of the committee's work;
- an evaluation from time to time to see how the committee is getting on with its job, to give recognition for jobs well done, to redefine jurisdiction and priorities, to recruit new members to help and to redistribute workload.

## Committee Reports

It's suggested that Committee reports:

- be written or delivered in the third person (i.e., "The committee discussed X and decided to take the following action.").
  - be in plain language and easy to follow. The issues and recommendations should be clearly laid out.
  - be signed by all committee members or by the Committee chair.
  - be viewed as recommendations. When a report is verbally delivered at a meeting,
- the spokesperson should conclude with the remarks: "On behalf of the committee, I move adoption of the report".
  - should provide a mechanism for dissenting views if this occurs. Minority reports may be submitted after the committee's report has been read and a motion to adopt has been made. They can begin: "The undersigned, a minority of the committee, desire to express their views on the matter".
  - be shared with members.

*A sampling of Local Committees is provided in Section 15.*

# Connecting with the **MEMBERSHIP**

While members can be contacted by desk drop, telephone and email, the best method of communication is direct and personal — members talking to members. It not only stimulates discussion, it is also the technique most likely to engage members in the work of their union. After all, personal connection and mutual trust is easier to establish with people you work with on a daily basis.

One method to establish good communication is a membership contact system.

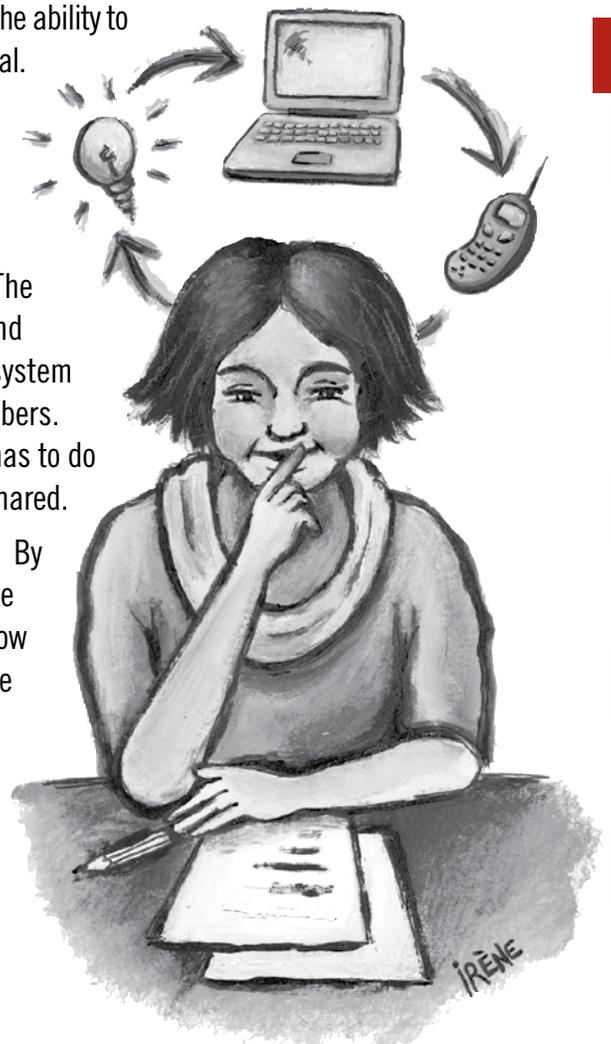
## **What is a membership contact system?**

A membership communications system links Local members, Stewards and Local Officers, ensuring that everyone has up-to-date information and the ability to provide input. Each member is connected to a person in their Local.

Some communications networks are set up as “trees”. In this system, each Executive member provides information to and receives reports from a set number of individuals, for example three stewards. Each of these stewards is then responsible for contacting a set number of members. The Executive is the “trunk”, the stewards are the “branches” and the members are the leaves. The people advantage of this system is the building of trust and relationship between union members. This system also means that no one Local Officer or Steward has to do all the work – the responsibility for talking with members is shared.

Another membership contact system can be via group emails. By collecting home addresses of their members, Locals can create group email addresses and create data base systems that allow Locals to send regular news to their members. Sometimes the email can simply be a reminder to visit a new posting on the PSAC, Region, Component or other union website.

Locals can also set up a web page or blog which members can access to get up to date news on Local news and events. This can be an effective tool for linking members with web sites of other campaigns or with the work of other parts of the union.



## What does a Local do with these networks?

*A Local membership contact system can be used to make all union activities more effective. With a membership contact system a Local can:*

- quickly and thoroughly publicize Local meetings and events, increasing interest and attendance,
- get information to all the members about Local concerns such as collective bargaining, health and safety problems, and issues raised at union/management consultation meetings,
- receive input from the members about their problems and concerns at work so that Local union/management consultation committees,
- health and safety committees, employment equity committees and other committees can better represent the members,
- keep members up-to-date on what's happening in negotiations rather than waiting for management rumours to make the rounds,
- receive bargaining demands from the members so that everyone is involved in the bargaining process,
- alert members to community actions and to issues and campaigns of importance to workers and their families.

## Setting up a membership contact system

*It's helpful to plan how the system will work. Regardless of which one you use, the following steps can be taken.*

1. **Local Analysis:** Every Local is different and, in order to work, the contact system must be organized to the specific structure and membership composition. Although group emails are a keystroke away - certain information is necessary for more personal or focussed contacts. For example, the

work location and contact details of members, number of contacts necessary for an effective system, where and who are your current contacts (Local Officers and Stewards), where and how many new contacts are needed.

### Local Analysis

LOCAL 123 AGRICULTURE COMPONENT				
WORKSITES	Main Lab	Annex	Govt. Bldg.	Field
<u>NUMBER OF MEMBERS:</u>	40	20	5	35
<u>CONTACTS</u>				
NUMBER NEEDED:	4	2	1	3-4
EXISTING CONTACTS:	2 Stewards 3 Local Officers	1 Steward 1 Local Officer	1 Steward 1 Local Officer	1 Steward 1 Local Officer
<u>NUMBER TO RECRUIT:</u>	0	0	0	1-2

2. **Membership Contact Record:** Develop a sample record sheet for contact. If members are being given information, then a simple check-list to ensure all members were contacted is sufficient.

However, if the action requires feedback from members, a more complete report is needed and the results must be given to the person responsible for collecting these results, whether at the Local, Component, Regional or National level.

*Membership contact record*

**Issue/reason for contact: ANNUAL MEETING**

**RESULTS OF CONTACT**

MEMBERS TO CONTACT	RESULTS OF CONTACT		
	WILL ATTEND	WON'T ATTEND	COMMENTS
POL CHAN	✓		
JEAN LEFEBVRE		✓	Time of meeting not convenient as single parent and must pick up children from school
DAVIKA FERNANDO	✓		Interested in agenda item on health and safety
DAVE SMITH		✓	Negative to unions

**ACTION TAKEN:** REPORTED RESULTS TO SECRETARY 12/1/2\_\_

*MEMBERSHIP CONTACT - LOCAL POLITICAL ACTION CO-ORDINATOR'S RECORD*

**Issue/reason for contact: Election Campaign**

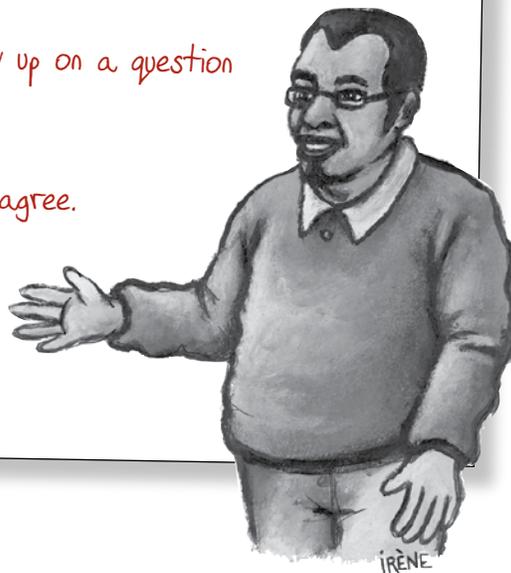
**RESULTS OF CONTACT**

MEMBERS TO CONTACT	RESULTS OF CONTACT		
	NO. OF MEMBERS TO CONTACT	NO. OF MEMBERS RETURNED	COMMENTS
SABINA WASSERLAIF	12	5	Positive reaction to flyer, many said they were pleased to see some union action
JOE PUNJWANI	10	4	No negative reaction — members forgot to bring in cards
PAT McCARTHY	15	5	2 members very negative — Why should unions be involved? Others positive, but not willing to get involved yet
KEN SMITH	4	3	1 member very negative to unions, others positive. One wanted more information and Davika Fernando willing to help.

**ACTION TAKEN:** REPORTED RESULTS TO LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE TO THE AREA COUNCIL

## Tips for speaking with members:

- Find out what really matters to members. Speaking with members involves a lot of listening.
- Speaking with members should not just be about recruiting members to union meetings! Local Officers should also ensure they are taking the time to encourage members to sign up for courses or conferences.
- Members may relish an opportunity to have a conversation on issues that affect them. The Local can host conversations on topics such as childcare, elder care, the environment, the impact of pesticides, Medicare, affordable housing and public transportation.
- Follow-up. If you promised to follow up on a question – make sure you do.
- Accept dissent. Not everyone will agree.
- Engage and model respectful dialogue. Make it fun too – throw in some well placed humour.



3. **Electronic union news:** Consider that electronic or online communication with members is most effective when it consists of useful, concise information sent on a consistent basis. This brief email «newsletter» to your general online membership could include a general update about your activities, snippets from other sources of union information, and other information that your general membership may find useful and interesting. The key about this form of communication is brevity and consistency.

Electronic action alerts for your core activists can also be useful. Keep in mind that only a subset of your general membership can be counted on to regularly respond to action alerts by the Local and these are the members you should try to identify and focus your alerts on. These core activists don't mind getting a lot of emails from an organization because they have indicated they are willing to attend, send letters/faxes and make phone calls when asked.

## Tips for emails:

- Add a space for an email address to every membership form, petition, and response card you provide to your membership.
- Not all members have access to email and those that do may feel so bombarded by emails they may not want to read yet another one. Make strategic use of your emails and ensure your communication strategy considers the alternate format needs of members with disabilities.
- Workplace communication can be monitored by the employer at all times. Local Officers should check with employers before using the employer's equipment to conduct union business.



- Publicize your Local's email address to members. Include it on your brochures, fact sheets and flyers.
- Consider organizing a phone bank to call members for whom you still lack an email address and make this part of an organizing drive.

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# TEAMWORK

## AND SHARING THE WORK

For the Local to function effectively, it's important that Local Officers work together as a team, helping each other out as necessary and splitting up the tasks. Information must be shared among all Local Officers. It is also helpful if each Officer is familiar not only with his or her tasks, but with those of other Local Officers.



**D**epending on the size of your Local, the Executive may also want to consider paying for part-time clerical help. You will then have time to concentrate on other things.

### **Planning and Priorities**

In order to get the work done, it helps to plan out the time spent on union activities and to set priorities. Some Officers find it useful to set aside some time every day to do union tasks.

Locals might find it useful to set time aside on a regular basis to have a working meeting. This has several advantages besides the fact that you are not working alone. The job gets done with many union brothers and sisters. You talk union with other interested members and friends. As activists discuss developing issues and actions, a spirit of

solidarity grows. If these sessions are held regularly, members get to know about them and may drop in. Have jobs ready to be done, envelopes to stuff, phone calls to make, notices or signs to make.

Locals usually have the ability to set their own priorities, but sometimes outside issues or events overtake time schedules, for example helping a sister Local on strike, preparing for the Component or Regional Convention, organizing around negotiations, holding a ratification vote meeting or participating in a municipal elections campaign. It's useful, however, for the Executive to sit down together, list the Local's activities, set priorities and work out a plan of action. Even if issues or events arise, a plan like this can provide long-term guidance.

## Tips for conducting a successful general membership meeting

1. Have an agenda that responds to the needs of members;
2. Start on time;
3. Ensure the meeting time is well known and convenient to all the membership and that the meeting place is accessible;
4. Organize on site childcare if required or reimburse for child care expenses. Ensure that required accommodation measures (to facilitate the participation of members with disabilities) have been organized.
5. Plan an informal event as part of the meeting — guest speaker, a film, a panel discussion or simply an opportunity to gather and chat about current issues and priorities of the PSAC or the broader social justice movement.
6. As chairperson, understand that your role is to conduct the meeting impartially using lots of common sense. You are not only dealing with the business of the meeting but also with people's feelings, emotions and concerns.
7. Minimize the reading of administrative reports and correspondence by having typed copies of reports, minutes, and summaries of correspondence prepared whenever possible for the membership to read before the meeting;
8. Use PSAC Rules of Order with lots of common sense, and remember that a meeting is also a collective of people.

## Meetings

It's common to hear unionists complain that they spend most of their lives at meetings! And there's some truth to this. Local By-laws generally call for a minimum number of general membership and executive meetings and there are provisions for special meetings under certain circumstances.

Locals shouldn't hold meetings as an end in itself, though. Meetings are an important venue for problem-solving and decision-making at the Local as they allow information to be shared, discussed and agreement to be reached.

But, meetings can be frustrating if they are not run efficiently. Here are some tips to make Local meetings effective and relevant to the interests of members.

### Executive Meetings

Local By-laws generally specify when Executive meetings should be held. In order for the meeting to run smoothly, establish and circulate an agenda to participants prior to the meeting.

The President or, in his/her absence, the Vice-President chairs these meetings. All decisions and recommendations arising from the meeting should be recorded in the minutes by the Secretary.



Don't hold the meeting unless there is quorum. (Local By-laws specify a certain number or proportion of Local Officers that are required to hold an official meeting. This is called quorum.) Instead, reschedule the meeting to a time when Officers are available. This doesn't preclude those present having an informal discussion about Local issues, but decisions cannot be made.

### Committee Meetings

Committee meetings are usually called to assign activities, discuss and complete the committee's tasks and mandates. Committee members will also prepare committee reports for submission to the Local membership and/or Executive. While these meetings are not formal in nature, they should still have an agenda, a chairperson and someone to take notes and record the decisions of the group.

### General Membership Meetings

Local By-laws will usually require two types of general membership meetings — regular or monthly meetings and the annual general meeting.

These meetings are an essential part of the Local's activity. They provide:

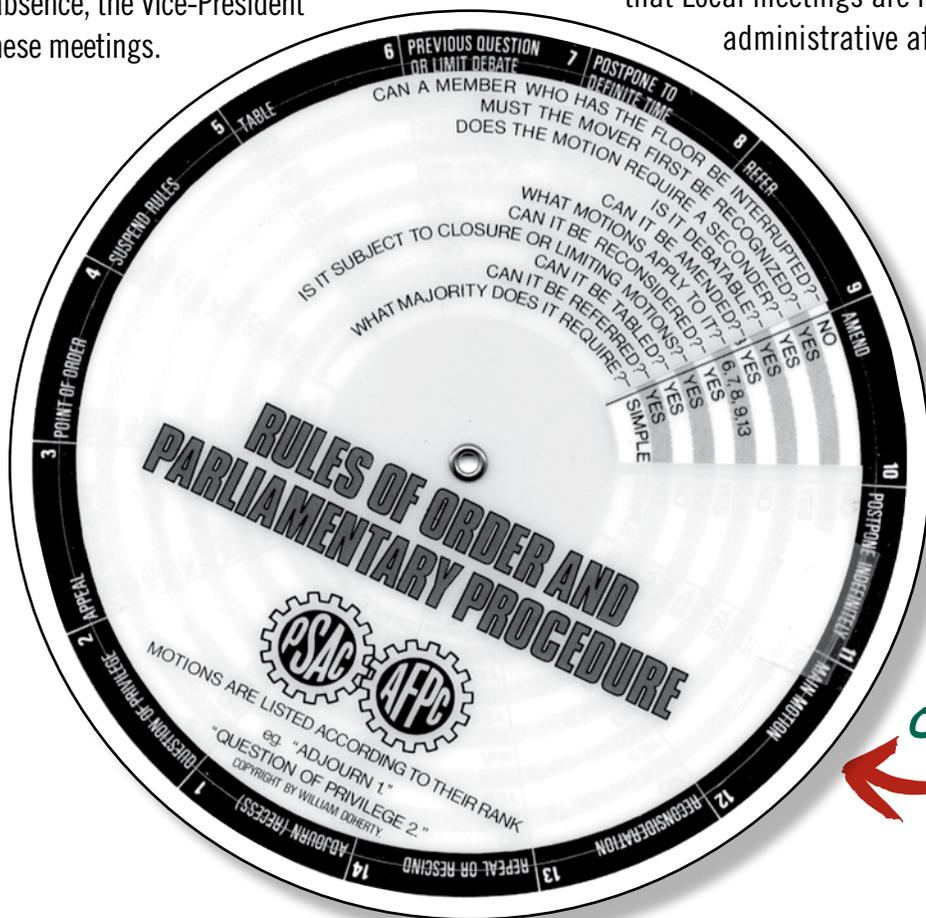
- an opportunity for the broad membership to provide direction to the Local Executive;
- an opportunity for the Executive to account for their decisions before the members;
- a democratic forum to discuss issues of major concern;
- a forum to conduct elections; and
- an opportunity for members to obtain information and provide their views.

Just as the PSAC Triennial Convention is the governing body of the union, Annual General Meetings are the governing bodies of Locals.

General membership meetings are formal. All members in good standing must be given notice that the meeting will be held. There is an agenda and formal minutes are taken. The President or, in his/her absence, the Vice-President chairs these meetings.

Because these meetings are formal, it's helpful to apply the PSAC Rules of Order. The Rules are intended to safeguard democracy by allowing everyone an opportunity to speak in an organized way. As some members may not be familiar with Rules of Order, they should be explained before the meeting is formally called to order. Introduce Rules of Order gradually and explain them briefly as they are being used. Remember, Rules of Order should facilitate discussion, not stifle it! Consult the Tips for the Chairperson found in Section 17.

Minutes are taken and all decisions recorded by the Secretary. Locals often invite a guest speaker or plan a social activity to follow the formal part of a general membership meeting. This practice can be an excellent way of encouraging attendance at meetings and in providing opportunities to continue discussion of broader union issues. Speakers or events can ensure that Local meetings are not dry, boring, administrative affairs.



Rules of Order

# ADMINISTRATING

## THE LOCAL

The administration of the affairs of the Local is the responsibility of the Executive Committee.

It is the Secretary, however, who is tasked with the administration.



### Minutes

Minutes are meant to provide a record of decisions, actions, participation and other useful information.

They should indicate:

- the type of meeting (regular, executive, special, annual);
- the date, time and place of the meeting;
- who chaired and who took minutes;
- the names of the other officers who attended;
- how many members attended;
- the adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting;
- summaries of reports provided;
- all motions (names of movers and seconders, whether carried or defeated);
- summary of important issues discussed, even if there were no decisions made;
- information about elections (who elected, by acclamation)
- time of adjournment;
- and be signed by the Secretary and the Chairperson.

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The minutes include all the business that is transacted (i.e., decisions, recommendations, general discussion on issues) at a meeting, but it should not include every word that is said. For example, if a controversial issue is discussed, the subject matter can be identified and the remarks on highly controversial issues may be recorded as “strongly held views were expressed”.

Everyone on the Executive, but particularly the Secretary, should be able to refer quickly to any item of a previous meeting. Keeping a Minutes Book (and an electronic file), with a copy of all the previous minutes, will help to facilitate this task. The Minutes Book can include minutes

of regular membership meetings, the annual meetings, the executive meetings, as well as minutes of committee meetings.

When an election is held in the Local, record in the minutes the names of all those members who are elected as officers or to committees. If a candidate or candidates are elected by acclamation, record this. After an election, advise the PSAC Regional Office and your Component (for Component Locals) of the names, addresses and phone numbers of the new executive as soon as possible.

### Sample of Report on Local Election Results



**LOCAL:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Name and Number

Component (where applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**LIST OF OFFICERS ELECTED** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

*Please use home addresses or e-mail for distribution purposes.*

OFFICERS	NAME	ADDRESS	TEL. WORK/HOME	E-MAIL
President	_____	_____	_____	_____
Vice-President	_____	_____	_____	_____
Secretary	_____	_____	_____	_____
Treasurer	_____	_____	_____	_____
Chief Steward	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other Officers (indicate title of office)	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____

## Sample of Covering Letter for Annual General Meeting Minutes



ADDRESS:

DATE:

Dear: PSAC Regional Office and/or Component

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

In accordance with Section 10 of By-Law 7 of the Agriculture Union, Local 16 held its Annual Membership Meeting on Thursday, November 18, 2040.

Reports were received from the officers, the annual election of officers was held and other items of the Local's business were considered.

Attached are copies of the Report of the President, the Executive list, the Minutes of the Annual Membership Meeting and the annual audited statement of the finances of the Local.

In solidarity,

(Signature)

Secretary

Attach.(4)

c.c. Regional Vice-President

## Correspondence

### Preparation of Correspondence

General correspondence can be paper or electronic and includes administrative material sent to the Component (for Component Locals), the PSAC Regional Executive Vice-President, the employer and outside organizations. This includes, for example, changes of address, election results, minutes of general membership meetings and

minutes of labour-management meetings. It can also include letters or e-mails reflecting decisions, such as specific motions, excerpts from the minutes of the executive or from the general membership meetings. Finally, correspondence can request information or feedback.

Locals also receive a wide variety of correspondence (both paper and electronic). It might include computer printouts, cheques, minutes of Component executive meetings, e-mails and Component newsletters. It also includes correspondence from the PSAC Centre, such as National Board of Directors' Minutes, the Union Update, Our Union Voice tabloid, newsletters, campaign publicity and correspondence from Regional and Area Councils. The correspondence received can also include information from the Federations of Labour, if the Local is affiliated, the Canadian Labour Congress and other outside organizations. The employer may also send correspondence.

Not all correspondence will be mailed. There is a growing reliance on e-mail communication.

Correspondence directed to the Component is usually sent to the Regional Vice-President of the Component. Directly Chartered Locals send comparable documents to the appropriate PSAC Regional Executive Vice-President and to the PSAC Regional Office for their information or required action. The annual financial statement of Directly Chartered Locals should be sent to the PSAC National President.

## ***Processing Correspondence***

When a document or an e-mail is received, the Secretary needs to determine whether it will be acted upon by the Executive Committee, a Standing Committee or the General Membership.

### ***EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:***

Correspondence to be dealt with by the Executive Committee can be placed in a file folder or forwarded to the Executive Committee meeting for recommendations, action and/or circulation. This is then recorded in the Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting. A notation, for easy reference, can be made on the letter indicating the date and a reference to the minutes containing the action to be taken.

### ***STANDING COMMITTEE***

- The correspondence to be dealt with by a Standing Committee is forwarded to the Committee chairperson. The chairperson should be asked to alert the secretary to the Committee's recommendation(s) prior to the date set for an up-coming meeting of the Executive Committee. Again, a notation can be made on the letter or in the e-mail indicating the date and a reference to the minutes containing the action to be taken.

### ***GENERAL MEMBERSHIP***

Correspondence to be handled by the general membership can involve:

- Correspondence already actioned by the Executive Committee and requiring ratification by the membership and/or information
- Correspondence that requires action by the Local's general membership. Usually, the Executive can and will make recommendations to help the members deal with the subject.

### ***Correspondence Log***

In order to control Local correspondence, a record should be kept of all the correspondence received and actioned. This record should include:

- . from whom it was received,
- . the date of correspondence,
- . the date received,
- . the subject dealt with,
- . to whom the correspondence was referred and the date given to the recipient (e.g., Committee Chairperson, Local Officer),
- . the final disposition of the correspondence (i.e., recommendation or action taken, including a reference to relevant minutes and the date the action taken), and
- . the location where the correspondence is filed or stored and the document's reference number or file name.

If this information is at the Secretary's fingertips, reports at Executive and General Membership meetings will be much easier.

The most important reason for the Correspondence Log is to track follow-up. In cases where the Local initiates action, it is very important to keep a record of what happened or did not happen. The credibility of the Local before the members and its ability to get results often depends on following-up.

Note that sometimes correspondence will require more than a one-time action to be completely addressed.

## Files

The Local needs to keep files of all correspondence, including copies of letters or e-mails prepared by the Secretary and other officers.

While it is not practical to list all the possible file subjects, the most important ones are:

- . files for each Local committee,
- . audit reports and financial statements;
- . grievances;
- . minutes; and
- . newsletters, bulletins and other information.

With experience, you will know when files need to be maintained for specific items and when other files of a more general nature are most useful.

An efficient filing system is a simple one. Simplicity also ensures that everyone in the Local can locate information quickly. Here are some suggestions to help you set up a filing system.

## Tips for Secretaries Filing

1. Use the clear subject heading for each file.

### Sample subject headings:

- a) Membership;
- b) Grievances;
- c) Education;
- d) Collective Bargaining;
- e) Health and Safety Committee;
- e) Steward Committee.
- f) Women's Committee
- g) Human Rights Committee
- h) Political Action Committee
- i) Area Council
- j) Regional Council

2. Remove outdated documents from your current files on a regular basis. These may either be destroyed if the material is no longer relevant or placed as dead files in storage.
3. Keep all your files together in one place, preferably in a cabinet or desk drawer that can be locked when the files are not in use.
4. Keep grievance files confidential.  
REMEMBER — All documents on the grievance file are confidential and must not, under any circumstances, be made available to anyone, except authorized officers on the Local Executive, with the Component, PSAC Centre Staff or PSAC Regional Offices.

# Financial Administration

The Treasurer is the union officer responsible for the financial administration of Local funds. It is essential that careful records be kept of all financial dealings.

All Locals under Component jurisdiction are required to provide the Component with a financial statement at least once a year. Directly Chartered Locals must provide the PSAC National President with an audited statement of receipts and expenditures annually.

## Example of Completed Receipt Specimen Only

**DATE:** September 22 **20 07**

**RECEIVED FROM** John R. Knight

Fifteen xx / 100 DOLLARS (\$15.00)

**FOR** ticket purchase - Labour Day Film Festival

**BY** Signature

**TREASURER**  
Local Name and Number;  
Component (if applicable).

## Example of Completed Cheque Specimen Only

**DATE:** September 3 **20 07**

**PAY TO THE ORDER OF** Rabble **\$ 50.00**

Fifty xx / 100 DOLLARS

291-3448 Signature President

**ACCOUNT NO.** Signature Treasurer

(Donation to  
alternative media)

Name and Number of Local: \_\_\_\_\_

Component (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

## Suggested Monthly Financial Statement

**Name and Number of Local:**

**COMPONENT:**

**MONTH:** JANUARY 20\_\_

Cash Book Balance, December 31, 20\_\_ \$157.83

**RECEIPTS**

Local dues (30 members) \$60.00

Refund, parking 8.40

**\$68.40**

**EXPENDITURES**

Coffee, Stewards' Training Course \$8.00

Purchase of posters 16.74

Stationery supplies 7.52

Bank Service Charge 1.00

**\$33.24**

Excess of receipts over expenses \$35.16 \$35.16

Cash book balance, January 31, 20\_\_ \$192.99

Bank balance, Jan. 31, 20\_\_ \$200.51

Less outstanding cheque No. 3 7.52

Cash book balance shown above \$192.99 \$192.99

Petty cash on hand, January 31, 20\_\_ \$12.75

(Signed)

Treasurer



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# Suggested Annual Financial Statement



**LOCAL: Name and Number**

**COMPONENT:**

**YEAR:** JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 20\_\_

Cash Book Balance, December 31, 20\_\_ \$619.03

**RECEIPTS**

Local share of members' dues	\$720.00
Bank Interest	13.23
	\$733.23

**EXPENDITURES**

Preparation of notices and bulletins	\$15.43
Postage	24.00
Audit Fee — 20__	15.00
Contract ratification vote expenses	9.60
Telephone charges	28.00
Courses expenses	98.00
Donations	55.00
Stationery	15.00
Area Council membership	12.00
	\$272.03

Excess of receipts over expenditures	\$461.20	\$461.20
Cash book balance December 31, 20__		\$1,030.23
Bank balance, December 31, 20__	\$1,095.23	
Less outstanding cheque	15.00	
Cash book balance as above	\$1,080.23	\$1,080.23

Approved

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_ President

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_ Treasurer





# EXAMPLES OF COMPUTER PRINTOUT: printout and summary (charts)

Note: New samples of computer print-outs should be requested from Membership Administration.

PROGRAM: MSSB0600

REPORT: PSA00301R PAGE: 995



## PUBLIC SERVICE ALLIANCE OF CANADA/ALLIANCE DE LA FONCTION PUBLIQUE DU CANADA

Public Service Alliance of Canada  
Alliance de la Fonction publique du Canada

33 - 20219 Bursted Report Page: 1

COMPONENT/ELEMENT	33	UCTE	/UCET	MEMBERSHIP LISTING/ETAT NOMINATIF	- SOURCE	2	FEB/FEV	2006					
LOCAL/RGN/RATES	20219	VANCOUVER		.35+0.888900	16.63		2.00	0.00					
NO. F/P	NOM DU COTISANT	--N.A.S.--	151	BARG	CLASSIF			CURR					
PAYLIST	M E M B E R N A M E	--I.A.N.--	PSACID	R	GROUP	/LEVEL	SALARY	-PSAC--	-COMP--	-LOCAL-	-MISC.-	DEDN	EXCEPTION

FULL TIME INDETERMINATE														
DF0	9320	66	MEMBER	AX8408781	000001	61201	SCDED02	41640					0.00	TO C: 34 20219
DF0	9320	66	MEMBER	I AX2557428	000002	61202	SCERD03	43140					0.00	TO C: 34 20219
DF0	9600	66	MEMBER	AX0518728	000003	61201	SCDED02	41640					0.00	TO C: 34 20219
DF0	9000	66	MEMBER	AX6238828	000004	61205	SCSTD03	43248					0.00	TO C: 34 20219
DF0	9330	66	MEMBER	AX7948319	000005	61201	SCDED02	41640					0.00	TO C: 34 20219
DF0	9940	66	MEMBER	AX4777166	000006	61205	SCSTD03	43248					0.00	TO C: 34 20219
DF0	9940	66	MEMBER	AX5281936	000007	61205	SCSTD03	43248					0.00	TO C: 34 20219
DF0	9940	66	MEMBER	AX0483114	000008	61201	SCDED02	41640					0.00	TO C: 34 20219
DF0	9940	66	MEMBER	AX4128364	000001	61202	SCERD03	43140					0.00	TO C: 34 20219
*****														
FULL TIME CAS > 3 MONTHS														
DF0	9940	66	MEMBER	AX4447452	527295	-	61201	SCDED02	41640				0.00	TO C: 34 20219

## Reading the Membership Listing Computer Print-Out

In general, the computer print-out provides the Local with some necessary statistical information such as the number of members in the Local, as well as the total dues paid to the Local, to the Component and to the PSAC by the members of the Local.

The Computer print-out is the main tool to be used by the Local, to verify the accuracy of its membership and to ensure that each employee who should be paying union dues is in fact paying. If there are some discrepancies, the Local is to inform the Component (who will in turn ask for Membership Administration's assistance if need be) or in the case of a Directly Chartered Local, the Membership Administration section of the PSAC.

The print-out also indicates which members are still Rand, therefore alerting the Local as to which member has not yet signed an Application for Membership Card with the PSAC.

*The computer record of membership is divided into two sections:*

- *The first section provides fourteen (14) columns of information. Column 1 is the first column on the left hand side of the print-out headed by the title Paylist No. Columns 2 to 14 follow consecutively left to right.*
- *The second section provides a summary and totals of the information provided in the first section*

**"CURR DEDN"**  
**"XX TIMES OUT"** **"PAYLIST"** **"MUD HOURS CHG"** **"XX TIMES OUT"**  
**"MUD CLASS CHG"** **"MUD BUD CHG"**  
**"I.A.N."**



## Details Section

### “PAYLIST”

For Treasury Board, CPC and other bargaining units which are paid by DPWGS, the payroll is composed of the Department code (3 digits), the payroll number (4 digits) and the Pay office number (2 digits).

The department code is used by the system to validate the combination Component/Department.

The payroll and pay office codes are used by the check-off clerks to assign members to the proper local.

The pay office number identifies the DPWGS pay office from which the member is being paid.

They are as follows:

- 08- Halifax
- 22- House of Commons
- 25- Montreal
- 31- Canada Post Corporation
- 34- Toronto
- 36- NCR
- 62- Edmonton
- 66- Vancouver

### “MEMBER NAME”

Member's surname, the initials (up to three) follow the surname.

### “I.A.N.”

Is a seven-digit number with two letter prefix (AX for DPWGS, NV for Nav Canada) which is a unique internal agency number used by the employer for dues deductions. The system will recognize a member either by this IAN or by the PSAC ID.

### “PSAC ID”

Is an identification number given by the PSAC membership system to a new member (Rand or Full). This number is unique within PSAC and the system will recognize a member by it. This is the number printed on PSAC membership card and PIF's.

### “R”

- “R” indicates a Rand Deductee;
- “S” indicates that membership has been revoked either voluntarily or otherwise;
- “F” indicates the member is Full.
- “N” indicates the member is not expecting any mailing from PSAC

### “BARG GROUP”

Is the five-digit bargaining group code, also called Bargaining Unit Designator (BUD). Bargaining groups are those for which the PSAC is the Bargaining Agent. Some of the entries may have blanks in this area, indicating that we have not yet been advised of the member's correct BUD number. For example GLT is BUD 60300, the last two digits indicate the sub-group (e.g. 60313 GLT-Pipefitting.)

### “CLASSIFICATION/LEVEL”

Identifies the classification and level of the member.

## **“SALARY”**

The salary is the first step of the salary scale of each classification, and it is the salary used to calculate correct monthly dues.

## **“PSAC”**

PSAC, and the figure above it, is the monthly PSAC dues rate. In the column, it is the PSAC's portion of dues, as distributed by the system.

## **“COMP”**

COMP, and the figure above it, is the monthly deduction for the Component dues. In the column, it is the Component's portion of dues, as distributed by the system.

## **“LOCAL”**

LOCAL, and the figure above it, is the monthly deduction for the Local concerned. In the column, it is the local's portion of dues, as distributed by the system. Since Locals may set their own deduction rates, this may vary from zero on up or it could be a percentage rate.

## **“MISC”**

MISC, and the figure above it, is a fourth distribution on monthly dues which is used by some Components for regional council dues.

## **“CURR DEDN”**

Is the current union dues deduction from the member for the month of the report.

## **“EXCEPTION”**

Is the area provided to print exception or error messages. See “Exception Messages”

(V-1.2), for a list of these.

## ***Exception Messages***

### **“NEW DEDUCTEE”**

The member is paying dues for the first time and we had previously received a Payroll Identification Form (PIF) from the pay clerk.

### **“NEW DEDUCTEE - NO PIF”**

The member is paying dues for the first time and we had not previously received a PIF.

### **“REINSTATED”**

Member starts paying dues again after being deleted or auto-deleted.

### **“AUTO DELETED”**

When a member does not pay dues, he/she will appear as “times out” until a designated number of months (established by the Components), and they will appear as auto deleted for one month and will not appear on subsequent month reports.

### **“DELETED”**

Manual deletion of a member.

**“FR C:01”** - Member transferred from Component 01

**“To C:99”** - Member transferred to Component 99

**“Fr L:XXXX”** - Member transferred from Local XXXX

**“To L:00001”** - Member transferred to Local 00001

For the effective month of transfer, the “FR” and “TO” messages will appear in the respective Components check-off books. The following month, the member will appear only in the “TO” Component and/or Local with no message.

**“FR S:2/TO S:3”**

**“FR S:3/TO S:2”**

Member went from a Source 2 employer (employees paid by DPWGS or CPC or NAV Canada) to a Source 3 employer (other than DPWGS or CPC or NAV Canada), and vice versa.

**“WRONG COMPONENT”**

When our system reads the information on the MUD (monthly update data provided by DPWGS or CPC or NAV Canada tape), it will try to validate the department code and the Component match. If not valid in our system, the member will get that message and his/her name will appear on a “wrong Component” report indicating that a transfer has to be done.

**“XX TIMES OUT”**

Indicates the number of months for which we have not received dues for the member.

**“NAME CHANGE”**

Indicates a name change. A new plasticized card will be sent to that member if the member is Full.

**“WAS TIMES OUT”**

Indicates that a member who had not paid dues the previous month(s) starts paying again.

**“CHG CLASSIFICATION”  
“CHG OF HOURS /  
CHG DEPT. / CHG BUD”**

Indicates a manual change to the classification, the hours of work, the department and/or the BUD.

**“MUD CLASS CHG”  
“MUD HOURS CHG”  
“MUD DEPT CHG”  
“MUD BUD CHG”**

Indicates the classification, the hours of work, the department, or the BUD have been changed further to information received on the MUD tape (received from DPWGS).

**“PENDING”**

Indicates that the financial transaction(s) for this member appear on the Pending report. On the Pending report, we see all the transactions which were not expected by our system - e.g.: unauthorized refund issued by the pay office. These transactions will be adjusted to the Component’s rebate via Final dues distribution report (previously called Adjustment Sheets) which is sent monthly to the Components.

**“PSAC RATE CHG”**

Change to the PSAC dues rate

**“COMP RATE CHG”**

Change to the Component dues rate

**“LOCAL RATE CHG”**

Change to the Local dues rate

**“MISC RATE CHG”**

Change to the Regional dues rate

**“CLASS. RATE CHG”**

Indicates a change to the classification salary, actioned by Membership Administration

## **“MDUE (X)”**

Indicates multiple dues deductions and the multiple is based on calculations made by our system.

## **“UNAL D 10.00”**

Indicates that the member was overdeducted \$10.00 of dues. For Source 2 members, the system will issue a refund on the next change tape, unless there is also the message “no auto refund”.

## **“SHT D 10.00”**

Indicates that the member was under deducted \$10.00 of dues. For Source 2 members, the system will pick-up arrears in the next change tape, unless there is also the message “no auto arrears”.

## **“RAND NOW FULL”**

Indicates that the member signed an application for membership card and his/her status has been changed to Full. (The “R” has been taken of the “R” field.)

## **“DEDN = RFND”**

The member was both deducted and refunded the same amount of dues in the same month.

## **“NO AUTO ARR/ NO AUTO REF”**

Means that the system will not automatically pick-up arrears or issue refunds. We get this message when the member is in the unallotted local (XXXXX).

**“Post A 10:00”:** received arrears of \$10.00 which were expected by the system.

**“Post R 10:00”:** received a refund transaction of \$10.00 which was expected by the system.

## **“MUD NOT FOUND”**

For Source 2 members not appearing on the MUD tape submitted by DPWGS or CPC.

## **“NEW MUD RECORD”**

Member appears for the first time on the MUD tape submitted by DPWGS or CPC.

## **“SUSP. NOW RAND” “SUSP. NOW FULL”**

Indicates that the member’s membership suspension is over and he/she was given back the status he/she had before the suspension occurred.





# IT'S A MOVEMENT!

A collective of workers is more successful than an individual at fighting for gains in the workplace. Along the same vein, the collective voice of many unions in solidarity is more powerful than one union advocating for workers' and human rights in Canada and the world.

It is along this principle of labour solidarity that the PSAC has made itself part of the larger Canadian and international labour movement through its affiliation with national and international labour organizations.



## District Labour Councils

District Labour Councils, which are part of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) structure, are the voice of labour in the community. District Labour Councils operate at the municipal and/or district level. Like the provincial/territorial federations, they seek to promote and advance the economic and social welfare of workers and secure legislation that benefits all workers, but at the community level. District Labour Councils also co-operate to support such activities as organizing drives or difficult strike situations. Through these Councils, labour can act in a united program on political action and community affairs.

The procedure to affiliate with a District Labour Council is similar to the procedure for affiliating with federations, but there is one important difference. Locals have to pay affiliation dues out of their own funds. Each District Labour Council has its own constitution and sets out its own dues.

Once affiliated, Locals are entitled to send representatives with full rights to participate in the District Labour Council's affairs.

*You can find out about your District Labour Council by visiting the links section of the Canadian Labour Congress website at <http://canadianlabour.ca>*

Example of resolution



**BE IT RESOLVED THAT Local \_\_\_\_\_**  
**[of \_\_\_\_\_ Component] of the**  
**Public Service Alliance of Canada affiliate**  
**with the \_\_\_\_\_ Federation of Labour**  
**effective \_\_\_\_\_.**

## Provincial and Territorial Federations of Labour

At the provincial or territorial level, CLC unions act together through a federation, financed and run by representatives of unions within the province or territory. These federations lobby the provincial/territorial legislatures for better laws on labour relations, workers' compensation and social services which are under the authority of the province/territory. Political action, organizing drives and strike support are sometimes sponsored by federations. Some have full-time staff to assist in research, education and in processing workers' compensation and employment insurance claims. Some publish handbooks to assist union officers and stewards in advising their members on ways to obtain the various services available. These are invaluable resources to our smaller sister unions.

Most constitutions of provincial and territorial federations of labour have no provision for an "en bloc" affiliation of all of the members of a national or international union in a province or territory. It is up to union locals to make their own decision to affiliate. Such being the case, PSAC Locals are asked to place a resolution (regularly moved and seconded) before a general meeting of the Local.

The effective date of such affiliation should be the beginning of the month following the month in which the resolution is approved. If the Local membership approves such affiliation, the Provincial/Territorial Federation of Labour dues will be paid by the PSAC Centre. Please note that if the Local membership, for any reason, decides not to affiliate with the Federation of Labour, the dues that would have been paid to the Federation will not be rebated to the Local.

Some members may not see a need to affiliate with a federation. The Local Executive should ensure that an opportunity for full consideration by the membership is provided. Many matters of concern to the PSAC membership are matters of provincial/territorial jurisdiction, for example, education, community services, welfare, medical and health programs and hospital service. Labour organizations should be involved in these areas, as they directly affect our members who are also citizens and members of a community, and it is the provincial/territorial federations of labour that take the lead in responding to these issues

When an affiliation resolution has been dealt with at a Local General Meeting, please advise the Executive Office of the PSAC of the outcome. If the decision is to affiliate with a federation of labour, the Executive Office will need to have the names and addresses of the Local Officers and the total number of members of the Local in order to assess the appropriate dues payment. The contact information will be forwarded to the respective federation of labour.

Once affiliated, the Locals are entitled to participate in the decision making process of the federation by electing representatives on the executive and on committees and by sending delegates to the conventions. Locals are also entitled to take advantage of all the services provided by the federations.

## Canadian Labour Congress

In 1956, two Canadian labour centres, the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) and the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL), merged to form the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). The PSAC affiliated with the Canadian Labour Congress in 1967.

Today, the majority of national and international unions in Canada are affiliated with the CLC, and it includes 12 provincial and territorial federations and 137 district labour councils. It represents 2.5 million unionized workers.

The CLC promotes decent wages and working conditions and advocates for improvements in health and safety laws. They lobby for fair taxes and strong social programs, including childcare, Medicare and pensions. They lobby for and develop job training and job creation programs. They struggle for social equality and to end racism and discrimination, and they work to strengthen solidarity between workers in Canada and other countries.

In Ottawa, the National Officers of the CLC lobbies the federal government to form or strengthen legislation that benefit working people and their families. The CLC's Education Department conducts dozens of union institutes, workshops and seminars across Canada each year. Departments covering organizing, research, communications and other union activities provide services in their respective fields.

The CLC represents Canadian workers at many international conferences and events. They represent our interests at the International Labour Organization, the United Nations agency which seeks the promotion of social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights.

*Locals are strongly encouraged to become active in CLC activities. The CLC holds a biennial convention, and Locals can send delegates to participate in the decision-making process at the national level. For more information about the Canadian Labour Congress, visit [www.clc-ctc.ca](http://www.clc-ctc.ca).*

## INTERNATIONAL UNIONS

**Public Services International (PSI)** unites public sector workers in more than 600 trade unions in over 140 countries. Twenty million women and men in a variety of public service jobs are members of PSI.

For nearly 100 years, PSI has fought for public services through its activities and campaigns, its regional structure, its association with other international organizations and its work on priority issues. PSI is an officially recognized non-government organization (NGO) for the public sector within the **International Labour Organization (ILO)**, a United Nations agency that develops and promotes international labour standards.

The **International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)** was created in 2004 in order to globalize union solidarity and build stronger links between the actions of national and international trade union efforts to protect rights and freedoms of workers world wide. This Confederation replaces the **Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)**. The ITUC has 304 affiliated organizations in 153 countries and territories on all five continents, with a membership of 168 million.

The ITUC has close relations with the Global Union Federations and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC), working together through the Global Unions Council.

The ITUC works closely with the International Labour Organisation. It maintains contacts with several other UN Specialised Agencies.

## Partners in the Struggle

The PSAC must work with others if we are to be effective in the long-term in defending the interests of our members. To find allies, we need to build bridges to like-minded people and organizations outside the PSAC. So, at many levels, we get involved in coalitions. As a Local Officer, you can support this work by staying informed about issues of concern and fight back strategies.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

—Margaret Mead

### *Here is a brief list of some of the coalitions your union has endorsed;*

The **Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA)** is a dynamic coalition of over 75 Canadian women's equality-seeking and related organizations. FAFIA's mandate is to further women's equality in Canada though domestic implementation of its international human rights commitments. [www.fafia-afai.org](http://www.fafia-afai.org)

The **Canadian Health Coalition** continues to defend Canada's public healthcare system against erosion and privatization. Founded in 1979, the coalition includes unions and organizations representing seniors, women, students, consumers and health care professionals across the country. [www.healthcoalition.ca](http://www.healthcoalition.ca)

**Common Frontiers** is a small multi-sectoral working group which confronts, and proposes an alternative to, the social, environmental and economic effects of economic integration in the Americas. [www.commonfrontiers.ca](http://www.commonfrontiers.ca)

The **Council of Canadians** is comprised of over 100,000 members and more than 70 Chapters across the Canada. It lobbies Members of Parliament, conducts research, and runs national campaigns aimed at putting some of the country's most important issues into the spotlight: safeguarding social programs, promoting economic justice, renewing democracy, asserting Canadian sovereignty, advancing alternatives to corporate-style free trade, and preserving the environment. [www.canadians.org](http://www.canadians.org)

**Egale Canada** advances equality and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-identified people, and their families, across Canada. [www.egale.ca](http://www.egale.ca)

**Fair Vote Canada** supports a change in the electoral system in Canada from the current "winner take all" system to one based upon proportional representation. [www.fairvotecanada.org](http://www.fairvotecanada.org)

**The National Anti-Poverty Organization** is a coalition of low-income groups across Canada fighting poverty and homelessness on a variety of fronts. [www.napo-onap.ca](http://www.napo-onap.ca)



### A word about alternative media:

It's important that Local Officers scan the context under which members work and live. This means keeping up to date with the news of the day. Given the increasing concentration of media ownership (four newspaper chains control the vast majority of daily newspapers in English Canada and two control the vast majority of French media), Local Officers should also ensure they consult sources of alternative media. The PSAC website link section includes a link to Rabble and to LabourStart.

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# LINKING

## THE LOCAL

Locals can and should become actively involved in activities of the PSAC, their region, their component, their community and the labour movement. Here are examples of how to do so:

### **PSAC Activities**

- Participate actively in PSAC campaigns through the Area Council or Political Action Committee, the Component or Regional Councils, the Regional Women's Committee, the Human Rights Committee and other specific regional Equity groups.
- Support PSAC and other union picket lines.
- Develop briefs, papers, research, motions, and bargaining demands to be presented through the National President of your Component or your Regional Executive Vice-President for Directly Chartered Locals.
- Send observers to the National Board of Directors.
- Send delegates, observers and resolutions to PSAC Conventions (via proper channels).
- Participate in Area Councils.
- Participate in Regional Councils.
- Support national calls for solidarity.
- Actively participate in coalitions.
- Send delegates to Regional and National Women's Conferences, Equity Conferences and Health and Safety Conferences.

### **Component Activities**

- Meet with the Component Regional Vice-President to keep him/her up-to-date on Local activities and positions.
- Send delegates and observers to Component Bargaining Committees.
- Send delegates and observers to Component Conventions.
- Submit resolutions to Component Conventions.
- Appoint representatives on Component Committees.

### **PSAC Regional and Area Councils**

Regional and Area Council activities provide fora where all PSAC Locals, including Directly Chartered Locals, from the same region can meet, exchange views and work together on important issues. These bodies also coordinate PSAC campaigns in the region. For the Local, these activities can also offer a window into the community and the rest of the labour movement.

- Join the Regional and Area Councils.
- Send delegates and observers to Regional and/or Area Council meetings.
- Get involved in political action campaigns.
- Send Local members to educational seminars.
- Get involved in community affairs and social justice campaigns.
- Connect with what's happening at the Federation of Labour (provincial/territorial) and the District Labour Councils.
- Meet and correspond with the PSAC Regional Executive Vice-President on issues of interest to the Local.

## ***District / Municipal Labour Councils, Provincial / Territorial Federations of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress***

Union members reflect the communities in which they live and work. Tapping into the civic concerns of our members allows us to overlap and mutually reinforce activism at both the union and community level.

These organizations provide a forum for unions affiliated with the Canadian Labour Congress to have their voices heard in the community and at all levels of government, as well as to facilitate coalitions in direct action around the interests of workers and issues of social justice.

- Make sure the Local is affiliated to the Federation of Labour and the District Labour Council.
- Send delegates and observers to general membership meetings.
- Submit resolutions and motions to DLC, Federation and CLC fora.
- Send delegates and observers to Conventions.
- Get involved in committee work.
- Send Local members to educational seminars.
- Get involved in campaigns, rallies and “days of protest.”
- Get involved in strikes by other unions by providing solidarity support and financial aid.

## ***Community Activities***

- Work with social justice groups.
- Sit as representatives of labour on community organizations, such as school boards, women's groups, Amnesty International and Co-ops.
- Participate in municipal/provincial and federal elections.
- Encourage Local members to support fundraising activities for charitable and voluntary organizations.

## ***International Solidarity***

The PSAC believes that unions must be a force for building a more just and peaceful world. We are part of the fight to eliminate poverty and social injustice around the world. We do this because it's the right thing to do. We also do this because poverty and social injustice undermine the economic and social security of PSAC members, as corporations and governments play workers from one country against another in a relentless effort to lower wages and workplace and environmental standards. You can help by:

- visiting websites that support campaigns and/or provide up to date information on what's happening with globalization issues
- connecting with community organizations who are fighting globalization
- connecting with the District Labour Councils and Federations of Labour
- taking courses offered through the union and/or community and social justice groups

# RESOURCES

## Local

### Lists and Contact Information

- PSAC Membership computer print-out or membership cards
- Stewards list
- Local Executive members
- Local Committee members

### Minutes

- Local Executive meetings
- Membership meetings
- Stewards Committee meetings
- Local Union-Management Meetings
- Local Committees

### Reference Documents

**Local By-laws:** Defines the structure and working of a Local. Questions about the Local organization and policy are best answered with facts in front of you. DCLs should review the Handbook for New Directly Chartered Locals.

**Grievance Files (Confidential):** Provides some insight into management's interpretation of the contract and how to improve contract language.

**Collective Agreements:** Keep updated collective agreements of all the groups represented in your Local.

**Collective Agreements from other Unions:** This can help the Bargaining Committee to do its research and justify contract demands.

**PSAC Anti-Harassment Policy:** An important tool in knowing how to deal with member to member harassment complaints.

**Employer Directives and Policies:** These are issued by management and may be specific to the workplace.

**Labour Legislation:** Keep the labour legislation relevant to your bargaining unit(s).

**Union or Social Justice Group Newsletters and websites:** Ensures that Local Officers have a grasp on the "bigger picture" which affects the lives of our members.

## Component

### Lists and Contact Information

- Component Executive Members
- Component Committee Members: Those in which the Local is involved.
- Resource People: In the Component.

### Minutes

**Component Executive Meetings:** A record of the Component's position on issues facing the members, this is also where a Local can follow-up on action requested of the Component.

**Component Convention Minutes:** Records the decisions adopted by the Convention.

**National Labour-Management Meeting:** These provide information on what issues are common to Locals across the country.

**Component Committees:** Those in which the Local is involved. Keep the minutes on hand.

### Reference Documents

**Component By-laws:** For Locals which come under the jurisdiction of Components. This is where you will find, for instance, how many delegates your Local is entitled to send to the Convention.

**Component Regulations:** Not all Components have Regulations. Regulations often provide information on procedures, for example the procedure to become a member of a Component Bargaining Committee.

**Component Newsletter:** Keep this information plus other Component literature and publications on hand.

**Component Resolutions of Records:** These are resolutions adopted by the Component Convention, which give a general orientation and/or instructions to the Component National Executive.

**Component Committees:** Those in which the Local is involved. Keep the terms of reference, publications and correspondence on hand.

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# PSAC Regions

## Lists and Contact Information

Regional Council Members: Council members usually are assigned a geographic area for which they are the representatives

Council Committees: Most Councils have a sub-committee process (e.g. education sub-committee)

Area Council Executive Members: Keep on hand the name and contact details for the chairperson in addition to the meetings schedule.

Regional Women's Committees

Regional Human Rights Committees

## Minutes

Regional Council Minutes: Includes reports, activities and decisions of Council meetings.

Area Council Minutes: Includes activities undertaken by the Council.

PSAC Committees: Those in which the Local is involved. Keep the minutes on hand.



*Essential resources are the PSAC, Component, Region and Local websites. The PSAC website is found at [www.psac-afpc.com](http://www.psac-afpc.com) and it has links to other union sites.*

*Resources are also available from other unions and from the community. Universities, colleges, city libraries, radio stations, cable television stations, your provincial and federal constituency office can all be useful resources in your work as a Local Officer. Most communities also put out a catalogue of all the services it offers its population. For a minimal sum, the Local can have ready access to a number of important and free services.*

# PSAC

## Lists and Contact Information

National Board of Directors Members

Resource People: At the PSAC headquarters and at the PSAC Regional Offices.

## Minutes

PSAC Convention Minutes: These record the decisions adopted by the PSAC Triennial Convention.

National Board of Directors' Minutes: Include the reports of all members of the Alliance Executive Committee and the activities of the Branches under their jurisdiction.

## Reference Documents

**PSAC Constitution:** This governs the PSAC.

**PSAC Regulations:** Usually contain procedures to be followed in the implementation of policies, e.g. Regulation 15 on collective bargaining.

**PSAC Regulation 15:** This Regulation explains in detail the procedure and time-limits of the process of collective bargaining.

**PSAC Policies and Resolutions of Record:** Policies establish the main orientation of your union on issues of concern to the membership and Resolutions of Record give a general orientation and/or instructions to the PSAC Executive.

## PSAC Rules of Order Booklet and the Wheel

(a reference tool about the rules of order). These are available for a minimal fee from Stores at the PSAC Centre, 233 Gilmour Street, Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0P1.

**PSAC Publications:** Includes a variety of documents, including the Union Update, Our Union Voice, Collective Bargaining Updates, Biographies of PSAC Executive Officers, PSAC Organization and Functions, and a Glossary of PSAC Acronyms Information on PSAC scholarships awarded every year. PSAC booklets on a variety of topics are regularly published, in addition to being posted on the PSAC website.

# PSAC Centre

Together with the staff, the AEC constitutes the PSAC Centre and directs matters of concern to the whole membership, such as negotiations of collective agreements, membership organization, education, equity programs, health and safety and public relations. The PSAC Centre is made up of six Branches. These are:

## *The Executive Office Branch which is responsible for:*

- political activities both internal and external
- assistance to the National President, the National Executive Vice-President and the Regional Executive Vice-Presidents
- executive office section

## *The Regional Offices Branch which is responsible for:*

- organizing
- regional offices (24 offices, at least one in every province and territory)
- regional education
- **national strike co-ordination**

## *The Membership Programs Branch which is responsible for:*

- women's and human rights
- equity
- health and safety
- work reorganization
- pensions
- disability insurance
- communications and political action
- national education
- language services
- mail distribution centre
- print shop

## *The Collective Bargaining Branch which is responsible for:*

- representation for grievance adjudication,
- arbitration and alternate dispute resolution
- classification and equal pay
- negotiations and National Joint Council
- library

## *The Finance and Administration Branches*

are responsible for human resources, finance, membership administration, financial accounting, purchasing and stores, central records management and information technology.

There are **24 PSAC regional offices** spread out among every province and territory. There is a regional office in most major cities in Canada. The staff of the Regional Offices is there to provide union education and technical advice on workplace problems and assist activists and Locals in their mobilizing efforts. They also coordinate campaigns and organize new groups of members. Some regional staff negotiate collective agreements and provide advice and guidance to Locals on matters pertaining to workers' compensation appeal boards and arbitration panels.

In addition, there are staff in Ottawa who provide important support to the national leadership and administer the national organization. Staff in Ottawa includes labour law experts, researchers, media specialists, and various program specialists.





# USEFUL CONTACTS

## Reaching the PSAC:

Public Service Alliance of Canada  
233 Gilmour Street  
Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 0P1  
(613) 560-4200



Public Service Alliance of Canada  
Alliance de la Fonction publique du Canada

## Regional Offices Bureaux régionaux

### North/Nord

[www.psnorth.com](http://www.psnorth.com)

#### Iqaluit

Tel./Tél. : 1-866-268-7097  
or/ou (867) 979-7430

#### Whitehorse

Tel./Tél. : (867) 667-8887  
or/ou (867) 667-2331

#### Yellowknife

Tel./Tél. : 1-800-661-0870  
or/ou (867) 873-5670

### British Columbia/ Colombie- Britannique

[www.psnbc.com](http://www.psnbc.com)

#### Victoria

Tel./Tél. : 1-866-953-1050  
or/ou (250) 953-1050

#### Vancouver

Tel./Tél. : 1-800-663-1655  
or/ou (604) 430-5631

### Prairies

[www.psnac.com/prairies](http://www.psnac.com/prairies)

#### Calgary

Tel./Tél. : AB/NWT only –  
AB/TNO seulement  
1-800-461-8914  
or/ou (403) 270-6555

### Edmonton

Tel./Tél. : AB/NWT only –  
AB/TNO seulement  
1-800-814-3948  
or/ou (780) 423-1290

### Regina

Tel./Tél. : 1-877-890-3575  
or/ou (306) 757-3575

### Saskatoon

Tel./Tél. : 1-800-992-3033  
or/ou (306) 244-3033

### Winnipeg

Tel./Tél. : MB only/MB  
seulement –  
1-888-578-6897  
or/ou (204) 947-1601

### Ontario

[www.psnac.com/ontario](http://www.psnac.com/ontario)

#### Thunder Bay

Tel./Tél. : MB/ON (northwest/  
northeast) only – MB/ON  
(nord-ouest/nord-est)  
seulement  
1-800-355-0794  
or/ou (807) 345-8442

### London

Tel./Tél. : 1-800-366-0539  
or/ou (519) 659-1124

### Toronto

Tel./Tél. : 1-800-354-9086  
or/ou (416) 485-3558

### Sudbury

Tel./Tél. : 1-800-354-9134  
or/ou (705) 674-6907

### Kingston

Tel./Tél. : 1-800-355-0783  
or/ou (613) 542-7322

### National Capital Region/ Région de la capitale nationale

[www.psnac-ncr.com](http://www.psnac-ncr.com)

[www.afpc-rcn.com](http://www.afpc-rcn.com)

### Ottawa

Tel./Tél. : (613) 560-2560

### Gatineau

Tel./Tél. : (819) 777-4647

### Québec

[www.afpcquebec.com](http://www.afpcquebec.com)

#### Montréal

Tel./Tél. : 1-800-642-8020  
or/ou (514) 875-7100

#### Québec

Tel./Tél. : 1-800-566-6530  
or/ou (418) 666-6500

### Atlantic/Atlantique

[www.psnac.com/atlantic](http://www.psnac.com/atlantic)

#### Moncton

Tel./Tél. : 1-800-788-8555  
or/ou (506) 857-4220

#### Charlottetown

Tel./Tél. : NS/NB/PEI only –  
N-É/N-B/I-P-É seulement  
1-800-409-3184  
or/ou (902) 892-5481

#### Gander

Tel./Tél. : 1-800-663-7744  
or/ou (709) 651-3727/8

#### St. John's

Tel./Tél. : 1-888-904-4357  
or/ou (709) 726-6453/4

#### Halifax

Tel./Tél. : 1-800-839-6661  
or/ou (902) 443-3541

Through membership,  
we are all stronger.  
Nos membres, c'est notre force.

[www.psnac-afpc.com](http://www.psnac-afpc.com)

# Components of the PSAC

## **Agriculture Union**

(613) 560-4306  
[www.agrunion.com](http://www.agrunion.com)

## **Union of Environment Workers**

(613) 736-5533  
[www.uew-ste.com](http://www.uew-ste.com)

## **Canada Employment and Immigration Union**

(613) 236-9634  
[www.ceiu-seic.ca](http://www.ceiu-seic.ca)

## **Union of National Defence Employees**

(613) 594-4505  
[www.unde-uedn.com](http://www.unde-uedn.com)

## **Customs Excise Union Douanes Accise**

(613) 723-8008  
[www.ceuda.ca](http://www.ceuda.ca)

## **Union of Northern Workers**

(867) 873-5668  
Toll Free: 1-877-906-4447  
[www.unw.ca](http://www.unw.ca)

## **Government Services Union**

(613) 560-4395  
[www.gsu-ssg.ca](http://www.gsu-ssg.ca)

## **Union of Postal Communications Employees**

(613) 560-4342  
<http://upce-sepc.psac.com>

## **National Component**

(613) 560-4364  
Toll Free: 1-800-663-6685  
[www.nationalcomponent.com](http://www.nationalcomponent.com)

## **Union of Solicitor General Employees**

(613) 232-4821  
[www.usge-sesg.com](http://www.usge-sesg.com)

## **National Health and Welfare Union**

(613) 237-2732  
Toll Free: 1-888-545-6305  
<http://nhwu-ssbe.ca>

## **Union of Taxation Employees**

(613) 235-6704  
[www.ute-sei.org](http://www.ute-sei.org)

## **Natural Resources Union**

(613) 560-4378  
[www.nru-srn.com](http://www.nru-srn.com)

## **Union of Veterans' Affairs Employees**

(613) 560-5460  
[www.uvae-seac.ca](http://www.uvae-seac.ca)

## **Nunavut Employees Union**

(867) 979-4209  
Toll Free: 1-877-243-4424  
<http://neu.ca>

## **Yukon Employees Union**

(867) 667-2331  
[www.yeu.com](http://www.yeu.com)

## **Union of Canadian Transport Employees**

(613) 238-4003  
[www.ucte.com](http://www.ucte.com)

For more information on the Canadian labour movement, members can visit the CLC website at <http://www.clc-ctc.ca> and or call (613) 521-3400.

# A SAMPLING OF LOCAL COMMITTEES

## Collective Bargaining Committee

PSAC Regulation 15 of the Constitution governs the process of collective bargaining in the PSAC. This regulation stipulates that Locals *shall* establish a Standing Bargaining Proposal Committee. The objective of the committee is to ensure members can provide input into the bargaining process and that they are kept aware of activities in this process. Undoubtedly, an informed membership can be more readily mobilized.

In order to meet this objective, the Local Bargaining Committee may engage in the following;

- Prepare bargaining proposals based on a review of membership experience under their collective agreement. A good way to do this is to keep a contract clause book. This book is a record of all the clauses in the collective agreement which have been sources of problems, i.e., complaints, grievances, arbitration/adjudication cases. It allows the committee to quickly identify which clauses are problematic, how they should be modified and why. It will also help the delegates on the bargaining committees at the Local, Component and the PSAC level argue in favour of the change.
- Request and receive bargaining proposals from members.
- Submit bargaining proposals to the Component, the Regional Executive Vice-President or to the Negotiating Committee.
- Keep informed and share information with members on the status of the bargaining process and key issues/priorities. The sources of information available to the Collective Bargaining Committee include delegates at the respective bargaining committees and on negotiating teams, the PSAC Regional Office, the Component national office and the PSAC website. In addition, both the PSAC and the Component publish up-dates (newsletters and on the web) on the status of negotiations for all the groups who are in negotiations.
- Know who is where and to what bargaining unit they belong (the Treasurer has this information). When a tentative agreement is reached and it is time for ratification, the committee will need to distribute the ratification kits and ensure that all the members in good standing are able to exercise their right to vote on the tentative agreement.
- The committee should keep a copy of the appropriate legislation and PSAC Regulation 15 which explains in detail the internal bargaining process.
- Once a new collective agreement is signed, committee members should become familiar with any changes and ensure their members become familiar with their new collective agreement.

## Education Committee

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The PSAC offers a wide range of union courses through the PSAC Regional Office, from basic introductory courses, lunch time or evening sessions on various topics, to advanced courses offered on such topics as representation skills, local officer training, political action, anti-oppression and health and safety.

Union education is often a first experience for our members to view their workplaces and their communities differently. The Local Education Committee plays an important role in promoting these courses to the membership and matching members with the course that suit their needs. The committee can also identify the learning

needs of the Local membership for educational purposes and communicate these to their Regional Council education representatives.

### **Alliance Facilitators (AFs).**

Alliance Facilitators are PSAC activists whose primary role is the development and delivery of union education to other union members. Interested members who are committed to delivering union education receive training through the PSAC Facilitators Training Program. These education activities can vary in length from one hour to one or more days, depending on the subject matter and the needs of the Local members.

## Health and Safety Committee

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Locals can establish a Health and Safety Committee for members who are interested in participating in workplace health and safety issues. These committees can also play a role in ensuring health and safety matters are assessed from a union perspective.

As well, under the Canada Labour Code, Part II, every employer who normally directly employs 300 workers or more is required to establish a Joint Health and Safety Committee with the union. The purpose of the committee is to ensure that health and safety issues are addressed by the employer. This joint committee can be very powerful since its decisions and actions could have a considerable impact in the workplace.

The Joint Health and Safety Committee has a number of duties, including:

- to participate in the development of health and safety policies and programs;
- to consider and expeditiously dispose of matters concerning health and safety raised by members or referred to it by a workplace committee or a health and safety representative;

- to participate in the development and monitoring of a prevention program that also provides for the education of workers in health and safety matters;
- to monitor data on work accidents, injuries and health hazards, and
- to participate in the planning and implementation of changes that might affect occupational health and safety.

The Committee also has certain powers, such as requesting from an employer any information it considers necessary to identify existing or potential hazards with respect to materials, processes, equipment or activities in any of the employer's workplaces. The Committee also has full access to all government and employer reports, studies and tests relating to the health and safety of workers in the workplace.

The PSAC Regional Office and/or the Component should be contacted for advice and help in setting up and keeping the Health and Safety Committee operating effectively. For more information on these Committees, go to the PSAC website ([www.psac-afpc.org](http://www.psac-afpc.org)).

## Human Rights Committees

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The objective of these committees is to address discrimination, to educate members on human rights issues and to promote and seek the implementation of employment equity or other human rights measures in their workplaces. The work of this committee can also be critical to the Local's success in building an inclusive union.

Many workplaces may be subject to the requirements of employment equity legislation which may set out a role for unions.

Many have not always seen the labour movement as an historic ally in the struggle for human rights and equity. Many unions, including the PSAC, have undergone immense change as its membership mobilized around issues of gender, race, disability

and sexual orientation. As a Local Officer, you can support human rights work.

Locals may have one human rights committee, or members may choose to create committees for each of the equity groups.

Human Rights Committees often collaborate with other organizations such as the Provincial Federations of Labour, the Canadian Labour Congress and community organizations.

Human Rights committees should be encouraged to provide input to and possibly representatives on other Local committees, such as the Collective Bargaining Committee, the Labour-Management Consultation Committee and Joint Employment Equity Committees.

## Labour-Management Consultation Committee

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Labour-Management or Union-Management Consultation Committees provide an opportunity for union and management representatives to engage in free, frank and meaningful dialogue on issues that confront or may confront either one or both parties.

These Committees can discuss any matters except those which would lead to altering or changing the intent of a collective agreement. Typical subjects may include: scheduling of annual leave, internal communications, rescheduling of shifts, working conditions, training programs, change in employer policies and programs, recreational programs, parking and flexible hours.

Local Officers are required to attend these meetings and provide facts relating to particular problems or subjects which affect all the membership of the Local. When a problem affects the membership in a specific work area, the steward assigned to this area should be included

in the meeting as a resource person or as the union representative. The steward in the area is usually the best resource person to draw on in such cases. Familiarize yourself with the internal operation of Labour-Management Consultation Committees at all levels: local, regional and national. You should also ensure you are familiar with legislation or policies which govern consultation in your workplaces (Public Service Labour Relations Act; Employment Equity Act).

The importance of informing the membership about the issues discussed at these meetings and their outcome cannot be over-emphasized. This will enhance the credibility of the union and the effectiveness of the Local.

Some Local Officers may be involved in setting up a Labour-Management Consultation Committee or resurrecting one. Assistance and training can be requested from the Component or the PSAC Regional Office.

## Political Action Committee

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Political Action Committees have become very important as union members experience the harmful impact of government reorganization and policies. These policies have rolled back negotiated pay settlements; caused major job loss; undermined job security through downsizing, contracting out and privatization and undermined the public service. Whether or not members work for the Federal Public Service, all stand to be affected by decisions made about important public services such as employment insurance,

immigration, environmental protection and international trade. Political Action Committees allow the union to work toward improving these policies and to work with others in the community who are concerned about and/or affected by these changes.

The membership contact system can come in very useful for this committee. It permits spontaneous dialogue between members, allowing them to ask questions and express opinions about the topic being canvassed.

## Resolutions Committee

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The Local must be organized if it is to have meaningful input into the decision-making process of their union. One way to ensure Local and membership formal input into the Union is by way of resolutions.

In the case of Conventions, Locals under Component jurisdiction first send their resolutions to their respective Component Convention for debate and for recommendations. All recommended resolutions which affect the whole membership and which come under the Union's jurisdiction are then forwarded to the PSAC Centre to be classified and printed, referred to the appropriate Convention Committee for recommendations and onward to the Convention for debate and vote by the delegates.

Directly Chartered Locals also form a Local Resolutions Committee and resolutions are forwarded directly to the PSAC Centre, referred to the appropriate convention committee and prepared for presentation to Convention.

While writing resolutions is important, it is not the only function of a Local Resolutions Committee. The Committee may undertake to:

- talk with members about resolutions;
- review the Resolutions of Record PSAC publication and speak with their Components, Regions to determine the status of previously adopted resolutions;
- provide leadership in the Local by ensuring that Local delegates to Component and PSAC Conventions, as well as alternates and observers, are provided with the opportunity to meet and discuss strategies; and
- encourage delegates, alternates and observers to attend education activities such as a Convention Procedures or a Speaking to the Issues course to obtain the information and skills that they require in order to do a good job at conventions;

## *Stewards' Committee/Network*

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A member's first contact with their union is likely to take place when she/he feels that they have been disrespected in their workplace. The objective of this committee is to provide stewards with an opportunity to discuss grievances and problems that have arisen over the interpretation of collective agreements and to work with members to resolve complaints.

Stewards' Committee meetings also provide an excellent educational forum to understand union policies, discuss how to implement PSAC

Campaigns, and the impact of labour legislation and recent adjudication/arbitration decisions. Committee members are also in a good position to prepare a report for the Local negotiation committee on needed contract improvements.

Having an effective Stewards' Committee can prove invaluable to the Local, in the organization of the Local, in providing services to the membership and in planning strategies and actions to counteract management's tactics. This Committee can also assist the Local in responding to the obligations flowing from PSAC Anti-Harassment Policy.

## *Strike Committee*

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The right to strike can be part of the collective bargaining process for all units under the conciliation route. While the Local Strike Captain is responsible for conducting a strike at the Local, Local Officers provide both leadership and support to the organizing committees necessary to ensure the success of the strike.

One of these committees is the Local Strike Committee. This committee will usually be composed of the Local Executive and the Chairpersons of the strike committees. The main

function of the Strike Committee is to keep the Local members informed and unified in the strike action.

Other committees can also be set up to help the members on strike in your Local. The PSAC publishes a strike manual which outlines the PSAC strike administration policy, the strike program, strike committees, as well as the PSAC Regulation on emergency funds.

As Local Officers you should be familiar with the contents of this manual and you are also urged to attend all special strike courses and seminars.

## *Women's Committees*

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These Committees provide a forum to ensure that workplaces and Locals are inclusive and responsive to the needs of working women.

Women's Committees often collaborate with other organizations such as the Provincial/Territorial Federations of Labour, the Canadian Labour Congress and community organizations.

These Committees provide critical input to other Local committees, such as the Collective

Bargaining Committee and the Labour-Management Consultation Committee.

Women comprise over half the PSAC membership. Creating and supporting structures that provide a forum for women members in PSAC Locals so that they can collectively frame and organize around their issues recognizes the labour movement's commitment to respond to the needs of all of its members.



# OUR PSAC HISTORY

It's important to have a sense of the PSAC history. We are a product of many challenges, struggles and victories. Our history is truly fascinating! Read on!

## 1966

The Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) is formed through the amalgamation of the Civil Service Federation, the Civil Service Association of Canada and 14 national affiliates with a membership of 110,000 and holds its founding convention.

## 1967

Bargaining begins for our first certified groups.

## 1968

The first collective agreements are signed under the Public Service Staff Relations Act (PSSRA).

## 1970

PSAC negotiates pension increases for retired federal public sector workers, and the Union of Northern Workers is formed.

## 1971

The first PSAC strike takes place against Defence Construction Limited.

## 1972

The union ventures into a federal election campaign for the first time, asking party leaders Prime Minister Trudeau (Liberal), Robert Stanfield (Conservative), David Lewis (NDP) and Réal Caouette (Social Credit) questions related to federal public sector legislation and bargaining and publishing their replies. Weekend “workshops” for members, the union’s early education courses, are piloted and launched. Topics include collective bargaining, handling grievances, PSAC’s structure, policies and plans for the future, how to conduct a meeting and ways and means of increasing membership participation.

## 1973

The union negotiates unpaid maternity leave for specific periods of time for Administrative Support and Administrative and Foreign Service categories and wins the right to carry-over vacation leave for federal public sector members.

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**1974**

PSAC designs and delivers its Union Development Program, an advanced education program that serves as a model for other unions. The union also achieves full pension indexing protection for federal public sector members.

**1975**

The first contract clauses that provide PSAC members with advance notice of technological change are negotiated. Women in the federal public sector acquire equal pension benefits.

**1976**

PSAC wins a major red-circling grievance resulting in \$3-million in back pay for members. “Rug-ranking” is abolished in the union’s agreement for the Secretarial, Stenographic and Typing (ST) group agreement. The union elects Aileen Manion, the first woman to be one of PSAC’s five full-time national officers and establishes its Equal Opportunities Committee with a mandate to address women’s issues.

**1977**

PSAC files its first equal pay for work of equal value complaint under the Canadian Human Rights Act on behalf of the Library Science group.

**1978**

The union successfully fights Bill C-28, an attempt to destroy collective bargaining in the federal public service.

**1979**

PSAC signs its first contract that provides realistic scheduling of flexible hours and files an equal pay for work of equal value complaint for female-dominated sub-groups in the General Services group.

**1980**

The female-dominated Clerical and Regulatory (CR) bargaining unit goes on strike for the first time and achieves paid maternity leave and a family-leave package among other gains. PSAC wins equal pay for work of equal value for Library Science (LS) group in a complaint settlement.

**1981**

The mandate of the PSAC Equal Opportunities Committee is expanded to include all equity groups. An equal pay for work of equal value complaint is filed for the Hospital Services (HS) group.

**1982**

The union reaches a settlement in the General Services pay equity case after the complaint is referred to a Human Rights Tribunal.

**1983**

PSAC holds its first PSAC national health and safety conference and files a pay equity complaint against Canada Post.

**1984**

The union begins its “Black Paper” campaign that succeeds in bringing federal public sector workers under the health and safety provisions of the Canada Labour Code. A pay equity complaint is filed on behalf of members in the Clerical and Regulatory (CR) group. The Women at Work course is launched.

**1985**

PSAC launches the “Shoddy Air” campaign for fresh air for workers in sealed buildings and holds its first national women’s conference and first conference on the North. The Joint Union/Management Initiative (JUMI) study on equal pay for work of equal value to be conducted in the federal public service is announced.

## 1986

The first Master Agreement with Treasury Board is signed for 39 bargaining units. The Agreement includes a dental plan, a no discrimination clause, improved maternity leave and protection against sexual harassment. A PSAC campaign for labour rights for Parliamentary workers that started in 1981 finally succeeds when the Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act is adopted, paving the way for the unionization of workers on Parliament Hill.

## 1987

The first national bargaining conference is held that sets negotiations priorities for 39 bargaining units. Bargaining is organized into seven Tables and a Master Agreement. The union obtains vision care and hearing aid benefits for federal public sector members. PSAC is the first union in Canada to provide a direct political voice for women as the second national women's conference sends resolutions directly to the triennial convention. The Supreme Court rules that it is the employer's responsibility to provide a harassment-free workplace. It is the culmination of a long fight by Bonnie Robichaud and PSAC.

## 1988

The PSAC triennial convention adopts a comprehensive human rights policy. The union wins 100% employer payment of dental plan premiums for federal public sector workers. Following a strike and arbitration hearing, nursing aides at Deer Lodge (Winnipeg) achieve pay equity with orderlies.

## 1989

A multi-group contract is settled with Treasury Board that includes guaranteed training for employees declared surplus and 15 weeks' separation payments in addition to severance. The union files a pay equity complaint for members working for the Government of the Northwest Territories.

## 1990

PSAC obtains national rates of pay for the Ships Crews (SC) group and equal pay for work of equal value folded into the Hospital Services (HS) agreement after a strike and back-to-work legislation. The union wins a ground-breaking re-definition of "spouse" to include same-sex relationships in our agreement with the Yukon government. The first PSAC Members with Disabilities Action Committee and the first Racially Visible Action Committee are formed. The union conducts PSAC 2000, a nation-wide investigation into public service morale that involves 22 hearings and produces a working alternative to the management-inspired PS 2000.

## 1991

PSAC carries out the largest national strike ever conducted by a single union in Canada. The union negotiates major post-strike improvements in federal public service job security affecting contracting-out, privatization and devolution. After a seven-year court battle, the Supreme Court upholds PSAC's challenge and removes restrictions on political activity by most federal public sector workers except for deputy heads. The triennial convention adopts a policy on AIDS and HIV and holds its first human rights forum.

## 1992

A PSAC campaign wins reinstatement of the pay equity adjustments for Library Science (LS) group members that had been cut off by Treasury Board. The International Labour Organization upholds PSAC's position and condemns the Conservative government's abuse of the right to free collective bargaining as a result of the 1991 national strike. The union negotiates a travel insurance policy that recognizes same-sex spouses.



## 1993

The Supreme Court agrees with PSAC that the federal government can't contract out work and then lay-off the workers who had previously performed the work. The union holds

Access '93, the first national conference in Canada for union members with disabilities. PSAC initiates a joint conference with management for over 200 racially visible and Aboriginal federal public sector workers in Nova Scotia.

The union releases ground-breaking research results stemming from a two-year telework study and negotiates an employer-paid union education fund at Canada Post. PSAC successfully negotiates with Confederation Life to ensure that members with disabilities, otherwise in good health, will be approved for life insurance coverage. The Member Instructor Program is launched and later becomes the Alliance Facilitators' Network.

## 1994

PSAC begins the development of a regional structure by phasing-in the creation of seven full-time Regional Executive Vice-President positions, replacing the existing four National Vice-President positions.

## 1995

PSAC holds its first Unity conference for racially visible and Aboriginal members, the first of its kind in the labour movement. The union conducts its "In the Public Interest" campaign and cross-country hearings publicizing the cost of public service cutbacks.

## 1996

PSAC wins the support of and becomes the bargaining agent for over 1,100 Teaching Assistants at the University of Western Ontario. Almost 16,000 federal public sector members list their priorities in response to the union's first collective bargaining survey.

## 1997

PSAC approaches the Canadian Labour Congress to hold a joint Pride conference and allocates \$25,000 to assist members to attend the conference. PSAC members occupy a Canada Employment Centre in Halifax for 122 days and succeed in keeping over 10 offices open across Canada. The union is certified to represent Casino Regina workers and subsequently signs a first collective agreement and is recertified as the bargaining agent for workers at the new Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

## 1998

A Canadian Human Rights Tribunal awards pay equity to current and former PSAC members in female-dominated bargaining units. PSAC negotiates spousal union leave for gay and lesbian couples at Museum of Science and Technology, the National Gallery, the Canadian Museum of Nature, Canada Post Corporation, Burnt Church First Nation and the Saskatoon Airport. The union's case (Akerstrom) against a Treasury Board plan to institute a separate regime for "same-sex partners" is upheld.

PSAC negotiates a new Workforce Adjustment (WFA) agreement that is appended to its contracts with Treasury Board. As an appendix, the new WFA remains part of the agreement when thousands of Treasury Board workers are transferred to CFIA, CCRA and Parks Canada.'

## 1999

PSAC reaches a settlement with Treasury Board that results in a pay-out of approximately \$3.5 billion in retroactive pay equity adjustments and interest for over 200,000 current and former members in Treasury Board bargaining units. Racially Visible, Aboriginal and Disability representatives on the PSAC's Equal Opportunities Committee are elected at their respective conferences. The union signs a partnership agreement with the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples. PSAC joins other federal unions and retiree groups and files a Statement of Claim in the Ontario Superior Court against the federal government's arbitrary removal of the \$30-billion surplus in federal public sector pension plans.

## 2000

Nycole Turmel is the first woman elected as the PSAC's National President. The union negotiates 10 federal workplace child-care centres and breakthroughs in elder care and maternity-related re-assignment or leave with pay with various employers. PSAC makes organizing a key priority and hires full-time organizers. The union files a Statement of Claim in Federal Court seeking pay equity for members working for separate employers.

## 2001

PSAC wins the vote to represent workers at the Parks Canada Agency after four bargaining units are amalgamated. PSAC is also recertified to represent workers at the new Canada Customs and Revenue Agency.

Following selective strike action in a series of "Workless Wednesdays", PSAC negotiates employer funding for a joint study on how to improve the status and job security of term workers. The study results in an employer policy giving term workers indeterminate status after three years' continuous employment. The union also negotiates funding

for the Joint Learning Program, a joint union-management training initiative.

Regional pay zones are reduced from seven to three in negotiations with Treasury Board and from seven to two with Parks Canada. The union negotiates annual pay increments for part-time workers with various federal employers. A joint PSAC/Treasury Board study on the issue of "captive time" for Table 3 members leads to the negotiation of additional compensatory leave for members who travel over 40 nights per year on the job. PSAC is the first union in Canada to negotiate a combined full-year of maternity/parental leave allowances in our public sector agreements.

In another first, Canadian artists support the PSAC members striking at the National Gallery of Canada and the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography by contributing to the "Picket Signs by Artists" event. The union wins three days to observe cultural activity for members at Weeneebayko General Hospital.

## 2002

PSAC negotiates a \$250,000 payment by Canada Post to start-up a union-administered child-care centre in New Brunswick. Together with other federal public sector unions, PSAC jointly hosts the Public Services International Congress in Ottawa which launches a global campaign in support of pay equity.

Commissionaires represented by PSAC in Victoria, the Islands and the Yukon ratify their first agreement while new Commissionaire units are organized in other regions. The union negotiates a pay equity settlement worth \$50-million to workers of the Governments of the Northwest Territory and Nunavut Territory.

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## 2003

The Social Justice Fund is launched and the Hay River Housing Authority is the first Local to negotiate employer contributions to the Fund. PSAC members at Gander airport conduct the longest strike in Canadian airport history. The union holds its first national Pride conference which also elects its Equal Opportunities Committee representatives and elects its first openly gay and lesbian executive officers and the first Aboriginal executive officer.

A joint PSAC/Treasury Board pay study shows many operational workers at Table 2 are being paid less than market rates, leading to special pay adjustments negotiated in 2004 averaging 8%.

## 2004

PSAC concludes negotiations for 120,000 members with an unprecedented level of coordination and membership communication during a 57-day strike against Parks Canada and strategic and general strike action against Treasury Board and the Canada Revenue Agency. The PSAC National Aboriginal, Inuit and Métis (NAIM) Network is established to provide a unified voice for this diverse community, to empower each other and advance their rights.

The union wins the right to represent over 1,400 Teaching Assistants and other students employed by the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) and successfully negotiates an agreement within eight months. The union is also certified for workers employed by BHP Billiton, the first unionized diamond mine in Canada.

## 2005

PSAC signs an agreement with the Dene Nation to jointly explore work-related and labour relations issues facing Dene workers. One out of every four workers in the northern territories is a PSAC member. PSAC's 22-year-old pay equity complaint against Canada Post results in a Human Rights Tribunal award of a minimum of \$150-million in adjustments and interest. For the first time, the seven PSAC Regional Executive Vice-Presidents are elected by delegates at their respective regional triennial conventions.

## 2006

After a three-month strike and a "dirty diamond" campaign against BHP Billiton, the largest mining company in the world, PSAC members at the Ekati mine in the Northwest Territories win their first collective agreement. At the 2006 triennial national convention, delegates elect a new national president John Gordon and adopt a major policy and plan to defend quality public services. PSAC organizes the Nishnawabe-Aski police officers, the largest First Nations police force in North America. For the first time, five thousand PSAC members in the federal public service are surveyed as part of the development of bargaining and political strategy. The union achieves another pay equity victory in negotiations with the Canadian Museum of Nature and launches a new leadership training program for PSAC national leaders.

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# Tips For The Chairperson

## **CALL TO ORDER:**

- Chairperson says “Order, please! I now declare this meeting of (name of PSAC Local/ Component) open”.

## **ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS:**

- The Secretary will call the roll of Officers so that all may hear. (Officers are responsible for the ongoing leadership of the Local and should set an example by their attendance).
- Secretary calls roll, naming each Officer in turn: “President, Vice-President(s), Secretary, Treasurer, Chief Steward, etc. “
- Secretary will enter the names of Officers present and absent in the Minutes.

## **ADOPTION OF AGENDA:**

- An agenda is put before a meeting by way of a motion (moved, seconded, amended if applicable, and adopted by the meeting). The agenda should be prepared in advance of the meeting (usually by the Secretary or the President) after consultation with the Executive Committee. It should be distributed to all members in attendance at the meeting, or posted in the front of the room where all can see it.
- Chairperson says “You have before you the agenda for this meeting. I will now accept a motion.”
- A member of the Executive (usually the

Secretary) moves acceptance of the agenda; this motion is usually seconded by another member of the Executive.

- Once adopted, the agenda is used as a guide by the Chairperson during the meeting.

## **READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:**

- Choose one of the following options:

Chairperson says “The Secretary will please read the minutes of the last meeting.” Secretary stands while reading and makes sure all the members in the room can hear.

*Or*

Chairperson distributes copies of the minutes of the last meeting and provides a few minutes for members to review them.

- Chairperson says “Are there any errors or omissions in the minutes?” (pause) “If not, the Chair will accept a motion”.

NOTE: If there is a correction to the minutes, a simple majority vote of the meeting is necessary to make the correction. Business referred by the minutes to this meeting should be taken up under unfinished business at that point on the agenda (see “UNFINISHED BUSINESS”).

## **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

- Chairperson says “The Treasurer will make her/his report on the financial condition of the Local”.
- Treasurer makes the report and moves acceptance.
- Chairperson says “You have heard the Treasurer’s report and she/he has moved acceptance.”

“The motion has been seconded.”

“Are you ready for the question?(at which point participants vote on the Treasurer’s report)”

## **COMMUNICATIONS AND BILLS:**

- Examination and recommendation of all bills should be made by the Executive prior to the meeting. Letters should also be read by the Executive (prior to the meeting) and recommendations prepared. Letters requiring action (to join something, to give something) must be read to the meeting with a recommendation by the Executive Committee to the meeting.
- Chairperson says “Are there any letters or bills?”
- Secretary will reply accordingly.
- Chairperson says “You have heard the recommendation of the Executive Committee to pay \$\_\_\_\_\_ to (give name) for (specify what). Do I hear a motion to pay?”

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- Reports should be in writing. Ask the person making the report to come to the front of the room while reporting. Most committee reports should be short, snappy and to the point. The purpose of the committee is to make plans to present to the membership for approval. The report need only contain sufficient detail so that the members understand the content.
- Chairperson says “Will the Chairperson of the \_\_\_\_\_ committee make her/his report.”
- Committee Chairperson reads the report and moves its adoption. Another committee member will usually second the motion.
- Chairperson says “The report is open for discussion”.

NOTE: The Chairperson of the committee reporting should remain at the front of the room (to respond to questions, provide more information, etc.) until the report has been adopted by the meeting.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- Unfinished business are items that have been before the Local already, either from “new business” at a previous meeting or from earlier in the present meeting referred to this position on the agenda.
- Chairperson says “Is there any unfinished business?”
- Secretary will provide the Chairperson with the items (if any) which should now be brought to the attention of the meeting.

- Chairperson announces each item in turn, requests a motion on each one and, when duly seconded, invites discussion by members. When all items have been disposed of the...
- Chairperson says “Is there any further unfinished business?”
- Hearing no reply, the Chairperson will close the “Unfinished Business” item and move on to the next item on the meeting agenda.

## **NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS:**

- Chairperson says “The next item in the order of business is the nomination and election of Officers”.
- The Chairperson will read out and review the rules for nominations and elections (see PSAC Rules of Order booklet, and Component and Local By-Laws).
- The Chairperson will turn the meeting over to the person who will conduct the nominations and elections. This is usually the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee.

NOTE: Nominees must be members in good standing. Nominees must express their willingness to serve and perform the duties if elected. Elections will be decided by a simple majority. Elected Officers are expected to set an example by their attendance at meetings; the Oath of Office should be administered to all Officers immediately before taking office.

*OATH OF OFFICE: “I (state your name) having been elected an Officer of the Public Service Alliance of Canada, solemnly declare that for my term of office I shall abide by and uphold this Constitution, fulfill the duties of such office, will maintain and uphold the dignity of the Union and will always keep confidential all matters concerning the affairs of the union that are brought to my attention.”*

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- New business is that which is brought up for the first time at a meeting. It may come from recommendations in the various committee reports, from letters, bills or from any member on any subject.
- Items will be brought up (if any) and the Chairperson will deal with them by applying normal rules of order i.e., dealing with each item as it is moved and seconded by the members.
- Chairperson says “We will now deal with any new business”.

## **ADJOURNMENT:**

- Chairperson says “Having completed our business, I declare this meeting adjourned.”

Or

- Chairperson says “Having reached the time for adjournment specified in our Local By-Laws, I declare this meeting adjourned”.
- A motion to adjourn will be considered if neither of the above circumstances has occurred.

# Consensus Decision-Making

## Definition of Consensus:

Consensus has been achieved when everyone in the meeting can honestly say the following four statements to every other person:

1. I believe you understand my point of view.
2. I believe I understand your point of view.
3. I believe the decision has been made in an open and fair manner.
4. I am willing to support the group's decision, whether or not it is my preference.

## Steps in Reaching Consensus:

- Rounds will be done for each key decision (see "Levels of Consensus" below).
- In the event a decision cannot be reached by consensus, we will decide to:
  1. continue the discussion in the current meeting and push back other items;
  2. table the item for further discussion in a future meeting and identify any further information people will need to facilitate that discussion;
  3. refer the item to committee for further discussion and formulation of recommendations, or to another arena for resolution;
  4. declare that there is no consensus and decide to:
    - a) continue with modified goals or objectives
    - b) disband
    - c) Seek assistance to reach a resolution.

## Levels of Consensus:

During a round, each person indicates where they are with respect to the decision being proposed:

1. Fully support.
2. Support with reservations.
3. Acceptable.
4. Will not block it, can live with it.\*
5. Need more information or more discussion (identify what information is needed, how it will be obtained and when)\*\*
6. No, cannot accept it.\*\*\*

\* Any response at #4 or above constitutes consensus.

\*\* indicates that consensus may be possible with more information or discussion.

\*\*\* indicates a fundamental disagreement.



# Active Listening

The goal of active listening is that the person speaking not only sees that someone is listening, but also feels listened to.

- Give non-verbal cues: nod, make eye contact, don't fuss with distractions (twirling pens, rustling papers).
- Acknowledge: verbalize your concern ("that must be really hard", "I can certainly relate to what you are saying").
- Paraphrase / summarize: check in to make sure you understand what's being said by repeating it in your words and seeking confirmation.
- Ask open-ended questions – something that cannot be answered with a yes or a no.
- Be Informed: gather as much information from the speaker as possible.
- Respond: by offering options, not advice.

# The Art of Asking Good Questions

- Ask questions to clarify.
- Ask questions that deepen the conversation.
- Ask questions that draw people out.
- Ask questions that seek common ground.
- Ask questions that help the speaker become more specific.
- Ask questions that give choices, which help the person responding explore contradictions or complexities.

# Team Building

## ***What is a team?***

A team is a group of individuals brought together in order to accomplish a task that cannot be effectively or efficiently completed by an individual. This group may be temporary or long term in nature. The length of time that the team will be together has a great effect on the ability of the individuals to work together. A team may contain individuals with various areas of interest or expertise in order to accomplish the assigned task/s in the most efficient and correct manner.

## ***Why are teams important?***

When trying to complete some tasks, teams may be more effective than an individual.

They offer the ability for individuals to get to know their team members and develop working relationships. Teams allow organizations to develop a strong culture that incorporates the needs and expectations of all of its members.



## ***Team dynamics and characteristics***

Group members may exhibit verbal and non-verbal behaviours that you should be aware of while working with them. Observing these behaviours can help you to understand their points of view, their desires, and their abilities.

Many groups have established roles and norms for the members of their groups.

Groups may establish or need to establish decision-making procedures.

To work in a team effectively, it may be necessary to take into account how each individual member works best. Some work best in singular tasks alone, while others work best in groups. How the tasks of the group are delegated may depend on how each individual in the group works.

## ***Task and goal orientation of the team***

A strong working relationship between members of a team allows for high quality work. This results in the best possible results, through proper team collaboration. Sometimes, the job is entirely too large for any individual to complete alone.

# Dealing With Difficult Group Dynamics

Some common issues and what to do about them

## Prevention:

- The best way to avoid difficult group dynamics is to acknowledge the possibility, and anticipate situations where they might arise. Any group that plans to spend some time together discussing issues, making decisions, and working together, should develop some group guidelines, or a group agreement for meeting process and/or decision-making.
- It is important in a group setting that participants take responsibility for identifying a group dynamic problem when it takes place. This means a shift in focus from the issue at hand, to looking at the process for dealing with the issue.

Before choosing “what to do”, the group needs to analyze the situation then fit their solution to the specifics of the situation. The following questions may help.

## For example:

- one person will speak at a time
- we will all listen actively to each other
- we will be respectful of each other
- we will attempt to use consensus in all our decision-making, etc.

### 1. WHY IS IT HAPPENING?

(What do the signals indicate?)

### 2. IS THIS A GROUP OR AN INDIVIDUAL ISSUE?

### 3. WHO AND WHAT NEEDS OUR ATTENTION?

### 4. WHAT ARE OUR OPTIONS

## Problem-solving:

- Despite best efforts to create a respectful and productive environment, difficulties are likely to surface. Periods of misunderstanding and frustration are normal when a group is under pressure and dealing with difficult issues in what can sometimes be a tense and political environment. After all, the group does consist of individuals with different styles of working and different experiences to bring to the table.
- now!
- a little later... maybe?
- what option might we choose (and why)
- what option will we not choose (and why)
- how can we promote group responsibility for naming and addressing this problem?
- prevention (for next time)

# Template for Speaking Notes

## *Opening paragraph*

- outlines the topic or main point of the presentation
- provides an overview of the content of the presentation
- captures the theme of the presentation with a powerful statement or question

## *Body*

- A series of paragraphs which flow from the opening paragraph supporting its main point in a logical order. For example, you can build on your topic with some background or history, add some information that supports the theme of your topic, and present an update on the status of your topic to date. Be sure to let your audience know what, if anything you want them to do, to support the topic being presented.
- These paragraphs should contain examples and facts to build support for your topic.
- There should be a minimum of three supporting ideas/themes that build on the topic of the presentation.
- When flowing from one idea to another it is important to use a transitional sentence so the audience understands the shift from one topic to the next.

## *Concluding paragraph*

- briefly summarizes the main points of the presentation
- reiterates the objective of your presentation and what you want from your audience
- makes concluding remark(s)

# Tips for Effective Meetings

The following tips can be used as guidelines for running effective meetings.

- Be punctual, start the meeting on time even if everyone is not in attendance.
- Someone needs to be responsible for chairing / facilitating the meeting (more formal meeting in which “rules of order” are being followed will require a “chair” while less formal meeting can simply be facilitated; the group should collectively decide on the approach to be used at the beginning of its mandate).
- Someone should be responsible for taking minutes of the meeting.
- Meetings should be planned with a clear agenda which is reviewed at the beginning of the meeting and includes who is responsible for each item and duration allotted for each item.
- Participants should have an opportunity to submit agenda items either prior to the meeting or at the beginning of the meeting.
- Information necessary for discussion at the meeting should be circulated ahead of time.
- The chair / facilitator is responsible to keep the meeting focused on the agenda.
- The group should agree to the duration of the meeting before business is conducted; the chair / facilitator should keep to this group commitment.
- Participants should have a clear understanding about how information will be shared in the meeting, by whom, and when there will be opportunities for discussion and decision-making.
- Discussions should allow for a range of opinions to be shared respectfully.
- For decision-making a predetermined process (majority, consensus, etc) should be agreed upon.
- Decisions should be documented and a record of responsibilities made.
- Meeting process should be assessed at the end of each meeting, checking in with all participants with a view to making any necessary improvements.
- The room should be set up in a manner that is appropriate for the group: small group discussions may require a round table set up; larger presentation-type meetings may require a theatre-style set up with a front podium and rows of chairs.



# Tips for Taking Concise Notes:

## **Skills of good note takers**

Good note takers have the following skills: good listening skills, and knowledge of note taking techniques.

## **Note taking methods**

**Sentence Method** - Write each thought/issue in a full sentence. Each new sentence should be on a new line. This is a method for those who are quick writers.

**Point Form Method** – write each thought/issue in point form on a new line. This ensures key issues are documented but is less demanding on the note-taker.

**White Spacing** - Leave a 1 inch to 1 1/2 inch column on the left side of your note pad. Use this space to identify who is speaking, add information about a concept or the speaker, and summarize concepts as they become clear, and so on.

**Use different symbols, colours, fonts, etc. to highlight your notes.** For instance – each new topic could be written in capital letters, underlined, and numbered; all decisions could be highlighted or boxed in red ink; a large red box (for checking when follow-up is completed at a later date), could be inserted before each issue requiring action or follow-up. Whatever system you choose, make it one that is consistent, easy to remember and easy to incorporate into your notes.

## **Capturing information**

Be sure to **title and date** each set of notes you take.

Write the **full names** of each party attending a meeting and/or the names of speakers, guests, resource persons, etc at the top of the page for each new session.

Do not write verbatim notes. Capture **key discussion items, contentious issues, decisions, and follow-up items** in your notes.

If there are portions of a discussion that you missed, indicate this in your notes so that you can follow-up with someone else later.

## **Accuracy**

Review your notes **as soon as possible** after each meeting/session. You may want to incorporate additions to your notes to **ensure they will be fully understood at a later date**. Alternatively, you could re-write/type your notes, weeding out unnecessary information and ensuring all relevant information, decisions, and follow-up are clearly captured.

# Tips for Presenting and Speaking at Meetings

**Know the room.** Be familiar with the place in which you will speak. Arrive early, ensure it is set-up so that everyone can easily see and hear you, and where possible, each other. Make yourself accessible to the people you are speaking to. If applicable, set up a table with support materials in advance of the meeting and put posters up that reinforce your topic.

**Know the audience.** Consult with the meeting organizer in advance to familiarize yourself with who will be in attendance; classification breakdowns, gender and equity representation, work environments and particular issues at the workplace that may effect discussion at the meeting. Tailor your presentation to the group of members you will be talking with. Use language, examples and stories that make sense to your listeners. Know what level of experience they have with your topic. Relate your topic to what they care about.

**Know your material.** What do you want to accomplish by speaking to this group? What key information do you want to provide? Decide on a few main points you want people to remember. Repeat them often. Say them in different ways. If you use numbers or statistics, interpret them or make them part of a story so that they are meaningful.

**Organize your speaking materials in point form.** Make sure there are clear spaces between each point, and that your written materials are in large print so you can find your place after looking up to engage with participants. Have all support documents copied in advance and organized for distribution or display.

**Practice your presentation** so you are not dependent on your notes all the time.

**Know your limitations.** If you are asked to answer a question or explain something you are not sure of, be honest. You can follow-up after the meeting. If the question/issue is not related to your presentation, let people know where they might be able to go for assistance – don't get caught up in non-related issues.

**Build democracy into your presentation.** You are there to share important information with a group of members. Focus on the points you want to make not how you look making them. Allow time for questions and discussion. Acknowledge and address concerns raised by participants, where possible. Try to integrate membership input into your concluding statements so they know they have been heard. Don't take offence, and always remain calm and in control of your emotions.

**Set the mood.** Don't tell your audience how to feel. Show them through your words, your body language and your enthusiasm and commitment to the issue(s). Use stories, memories and examples to bring out that feeling in them.

# Tips for Developing a Strategy

## ***Be clear about your issue***

- Name it
- What are we building for?
- What other gains can be made in the process?

## ***Identify your goals***

**Short Term** – What do we want to accomplish right now? What is achievable? What is the minimum we can accept in the short term?

**Mid Term** – Are we trying to gain new ground or protect what we already have? What can we anticipate in the mid term that will help us meet our long-term objectives?

**Long Term** – What does this mean; what period of time are we looking at? What specifically are our long term objectives? What is the minimum we can accept in the long term?

## ***Possible allies / anticipating the opposition***

- Who's on our side?
- Who's not?
- Who's a fence sitter?
- Why?

## ***The message:***

- Who are we trying to speak to?
- How will we frame our message to garner support and be successful?
- Is positive media coverage critical to our success?
- If so, how do we achieve it?
- How can we respond to anticipated opposition?
- What is our message to our supporters? To the fence sitters?

## ***Assessing the situation:***

### ***Openings***

- What opening or opportunity exists now that makes this a good time to take action?
- How long is this window of opportunity open to us?
- If we don't take advantage of this opening now, when will we get another chance?
- Are we (or our group) the leader on this issue, or are we joining a larger struggle?
- Are we reaching out to groups who could be standing with us?

### ***Possibilities***

- Are we trying to defend what we have or gain new ground?
- Can we turn the tables and put our opposition on the defensive?
- Can we force them to defend an indefensible position?
- Is our issue ambitious enough?
- How will we measure our success?
- Who else does this issue touch? How do we involve them?
- Who amongst those with power and influence over our issue(s) might be convinced to help us influence others?
- Do we need total support to achieve our goal?

*Building Activism Course - CAW*



# Six Practical Tips on How to Lobby Your Elected Official

## 1. Establish your agenda and goals.

- Know what subject you are going to address. Don't overload with issues -- stick to no more than two or three.
- Decide what you would like to get out of the visit, i.e., a commitment to vote for your issue, leadership on the issue, or you may decide the visit is simply informational.
- Allow time for small talk at the outset, but not too much. Remember, it's your visit.
- If it is a group visit, decide who will start the discussion and put your agenda on the table.

## 2. Listen well.

- Much of lobbying is listening, looking for indications of the elected official's views, and finding opportunities to provide good information.
- If you are meeting with a "silent type," draw her/him out by asking questions.
- If you are confronted with a "long-winded type," look for openings to bring her/him back to the point.

## 3. Be prepared, but don't feel that you need to be an expert.

- Most elected officials are generalists, like many of us. Do your homework, but don't feel that you need to know every little detail of an issue. Air personal feelings and experiences where appropriate. Relate the concerns of your friends and members of the community.

- Know when to admit "I don't know," and offer to follow up with the information.
- Be open to counter-arguments, but don't get stuck on them. Don't be argumentative or confrontational.

## 4. Don't stay too long.

- Try to get closure on your issue. If you hear what you had hoped for, express your thanks and leave. If you reach an impasse, thank her/him, even if disappointed, and say so. Leave room to continue the discussion at another time.

## 5. Remember you are there to build a relationship.

- If the elected official is good on an issue you've been involved in or has supported your position in the past, be sure to acknowledge your appreciation during the course of the visit.
- If the opposite is true, think of the phrase, "No permanent friends, no permanent enemies." Some day, on some issue of importance to you, s/he may come through. In the meantime, your visit may prevent the official from being an active opponent. In other words, you may help to turn down the heat on the other side.

## 6. Follow-up is important.

- Be sure to send a thank-you note after the visit. If commitments were made in the meeting, repeat your understanding of them. If staff members were present, write to them too. They can often be important allies.

Source: Common Cause 1989

