



# BULLETIN

*Kitimat Smelter and Kemano Power Operations Workers*

## STATE OF THE UNION

Sisters and Brothers,

To say that we are living in challenging times would be an understatement. Your Union has taken a very measured approach to working with the Company in response to COVID-19. We believe that the agreements that we have made are in the Memberships' best interest. However, we are constantly monitoring the situation to see where we can make improvements for your health and safety. One of the items that is a hot topic is the COVID-19 temporary shift changes that were put in place for certain maintenance crews. The initial concern was for person to person transmission of the virus between potential asymptomatic carriers, basically cross-contamination. Even though it appears that this control is not being followed as it was originally intended, with certain groups not being completely segregated, it is an important control. We have taken the position that in order to remove an important control, it must be replaced with another important control. We are currently reviewing replacement control proposals at the time of this bulletin.

### Union Hall

The Union hall will remain closed to the public until we have all the controls in place to best protect our office staff and members from COVID-19. It has been an interesting trial and error challenge, but we have been able to provide our members with full services and representation throughout this pandemic, mostly by electronic means.

### Grievances

We have done a lot of work on resolving the massive backlog of grievances that have been in the system for a number of years, through the Relationship Improvement Agreement that we signed last year, but unfortunately in the meantime there has been many more violations of our CLA that requires our attention. In addition to the curveballs that 2020 keeps throwing at us, the Company has terminated a number of our members at an alarming rate. We will of course provide representation for these members through the grievance procedure based on the merits of their cases. Last week we had our first arbitration via the video platform, Zoom. It was a very important case that will have to continue in February. The Zoom medium is challenging, but effective.

### Initiatives in Progress

We are working with the Company on two separate documents. The first document is a Letter of Agreement that would bring back a modern version of the old Correction of Unsafe Acts process. The second document is a Letter of Agreement that promotes a respectful workplace. For us a respectful workplace must apply to everyone in the workplace, not just hourly employees and must include respect for our CLA.

## Aluminum Tariffs

As I am sure that you are aware the US Government announced that they were planning to impose aluminum tariffs on Canada again. We are pleased to announce that the plan to impose these tariffs has been withdrawn. We are happy with the coordinated effort between Labour, Government and our Industry to combat these tariffs so far. We say so far because there isn't a mechanism in place yet to guarantee that this won't happen again.

## 2021 Bargaining

While we were organizing sending out the negotiation's surveys last Spring, we were derailed on that proactive approach by COVID-19 and the surveys had to go on the backburner. At the time of this bulletin we are still well ahead of schedule and we are pleased to announce that for the first time our negotiation's surveys will be available to members only, as a fillable document online. This will help respect social distancing requirements. In order to protect the integrity of this process, we have password protected the survey area of our website. All you have to do is call your Union hall for the password and then go to [www.unifor2301.org](http://www.unifor2301.org) and you should easily be able to navigate the process. Remember, every member should fill out the general survey and only Skilled Trades members should fill out the Skilled Trades survey. The surveys will be available online until October 30, 2020.



*Your Union at work!*