



Company trying to introduce multi-skilling / dual trades in Kemano.

One of the jobs that the Company posted on August 15 was for a Kemano Electrician, who would also be trained and work as a Systems Operator.

The Union's position on this posting is that this newly created job is one that combines two recognized trades in the plant. The Union considers this to be multi-skilling, or a dual trades job. The Union is opposed, and always has been, to the Company creating any job that part of the job requirement requires a member being live filed into the position having to hold dual trades. The Union is aware of members in the plant that hold more than one trades ticket, but are live filed and working in only one of those trades.

Job Evaluation is the avenue the Company and Union uses, to determine work load and rates of pay found in A, B, or C seniority groups when the Company changes job duties.

Plant trades, T seniority, do not use the Job Evaluation system, as each apprenticeship trade has its own governance board, the ITA provincially, and the Red Seal Program nationally, that sets each trades training standards and demarcation lines. For non-apprenticeship plant trades in the plant, like the Power Engineers, and Kitimat/Kemano Power System Operators their training and certification requirements have, in the past been established and negotiated through the plant Joint Skilled Trades Committees and/or during regular CLA bargaining.

During 2007 contract negotiations on March 17, 2007 the spokesperson for the Company's negotiations committee told the Union negotiations team, "I don't believe there is any intent on the Company side to move towards multi-trades." This response came from a Union question about a future modernized plant here in Kitimat and if it was the Company's plan to combine trades, like in the Quebec plants. Because of this Company response, the Union didn't include trade demarcation, or job ownership, demands in 2007 bargaining. With the Company now appearing to abandon their 2007 position, this Union will be looking at bringing demands to the bargaining table in 2012 establishing trade's demarcation language into the CLA.

The Union was first told by the Company of this Kemano Electrician / System Operator job on August 8th. One of the four remaining Kemano System Operators is retiring in the next two months; another one is eligible next year.

The Company believes that the combination of the Electrician/Kemano System Operator jobs is their best option to correct their inaction for not having a realistic manpower plan and trained employees in place to deal with these retirements. The Company also acknowledged and with meetings with Kemano Electricians and System Operators that if the recognized Kemano training procedures are completed, it will be up to 5 years before an employee live filed into this new job will be fully trained to work both positions.

The Union has offered a solution, to immediately deal with the shortage of trained Kemano System Operators: which the Company, has rejected.

First: Repost the job properly, as per the Kitimat/Kemano Power Operations Progression Letter of Understanding (contact the Union hall for a copy) and then have a workable succession plan on having trained Kemano System Operators available to fill vacancies when they happen, not 5 years after a member retires. For the Union this means the posting should be for two positions.

Second: The Union believes there are members in the plant that are trained to the Second or Assistant Operator level in Kemano. On a temporary assignment basis, these members could be used to fill the current manpower shortage in Kemano.

Third: The Company should implement competency based training for the Kemano System Operators position. Area management committed to this in a 2010 second stage grievance answer and it still hasn't happened.

The Union will be challenging this August 15th Job Posting as this is a clear violation of the CLA. The Union is also investigating, based on statements the Company made in 2007 negotiations, if filing a complaint with the Labour Board on bad faith bargaining is warranted.