



NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE BULLETIN - #1

In recent weeks your Negotiations Committee has been meeting to start the process leading up to the completion of a new collective agreement.

As previously communicated, the Local Executive selected the committee from a large number of applications which were received. The committee consists of different members with varying levels of experience, different skills sets and from different areas of the plant.

The members are: CAW 2301 President Ed Abreu, Martin McIlwrath, Chris Melo, Lucas Oke, Cam Wiebe, Gord Klassen, Rick Belmont and Cliff Madsen as the alternate.

The committee kicked off the process with a strategy session involving the local Executive and the Negotiations Committee where we reviewed the events of the last set of negotiations looking for pros and cons in the way we approached things then and how we might do things this time around. We recognize that Rio Tinto is a different company than Alcan with different ways of doing things. One of our goals heading into bargaining is to understand RTA as much as possible both from what we know locally and what we learn elsewhere.

Your committee recognizes the need to communicate effectively during negotiations and to this end we have considered many different ways to make sure the information gets back to you, the members, as well as the people in our area affected by the work we do. In addition to the bulletins you're used to seeing we will be utilizing our union website, our OHS&E and Shop Stewards Councils, Membership meetings and Social Media to make sure the union's efforts are being communicated effectively.

To date we have begun to solicit different information from the company as well as research materials from our CAW National Union in Toronto. Contact has been made with our National's pension and benefits experts to get them working on research (including costing) for potential inroads we will try to make first at our Benefits committee level and failing that at the main table in bargaining. These issues have come primarily from you as members and retirees and have been held by the Union until the opportunity to deal with them arises.

The Negotiations committee has re-worked the traditional questionnaire in some areas in an attempt to give the members a broader view of the potential issues you would like dealt with. In the questionnaire we are asking first for you to comment on changes or problems you would like addressed and then within each of the groups to rank those areas in order of importance from 1 (most important) to whatever the number of items in the group. We would like to stress that if your department hasn't received your questionnaire by now you should call the Union Hall (632-4611) and we will arrange to have them delivered. In addition, please don't hesitate to contact any one of our committee members or the Hall for clarification or to share your thoughts. It's easy to find fault with just about anything if that's what the goal is but we hope that you use the questionnaire in the way it is intended so that we will have meaningful feedback heading into this process.

The time-line heading into bargaining is filled with many different important dates. We have submitted our version of the Protocol agreement to the company and are awaiting their response. The protocol agreement covers many of the procedural

...continued on back

matters that will allow us to enter into negotiations with a basic agreement on how we'll approach things from the start. The committee is meeting as needed for now and will be off full-time as a committee in the near future with face to face bargaining beginning in early May.

As a committee we've been looking at the different factors coming into play and what sort of bargaining climate we might expect this time around. Although there are remnants of the global economic collapse in 2008 during which Kitimat Works experienced direct cost savings measures in addition to the pressures of the market, we are of the opinion that the overall climate is very promising for us here in Kitimat. The company has finally given it's "Notice to Proceed" which will result in their long promised smelter upgrade. This will of course be met with mixed emotions as we see the elimination of many good paying jobs in our community but on the bright side it is a strong show of confidence in the future of Kitimat Works providing long term job security and greatly improved working conditions for our members. Many of the existing pressures on the asset and organization will also be relieved with the new buildings and technology in place.

In response to this your Union started to prepare for the changes in recent sets of negotiations developing transition language to give us standing and input into how we will move from old to new. Since this language was negotiated, things have not gone smoothly as we hoped they would. This time around we will clean up those sorts of issues and once things are all said and done we fully expect that the company will have the same ultimate goals to see our members treated with respect and understanding. We want our members to view the transition and new operation as an overall positive experience. In order for this to happen we will need to get through this set of bargaining with a good collective agreement as the foundation for a better relationship with the company than we've seen in recent years.

You've all heard bits and pieces of what RTA has done in Quebec to workers at Alma. Recent discussions between our leadership and the Union at Alma have confirmed that RTA in their negotiations has put their agenda ahead of a positive working relationship with the workers. Only time will tell if our experience in Kitimat will prove to be similar with RTA but rest assured we are not entering into this set of bargaining looking to erode our members rights or any of our hard fought gains over the years. As stated earlier these are good times from many different points of view putting us in a good position to expect a very favourable outcome from this set of bargaining. Over the next months we are committed to analyzing these very favourable aspects and communicating them to you so that you will have a good understanding of how we see things.

Some of the areas we'll look at are the following:

- Aluminum market condition
- Future aluminum markets and RTA positioning for the future
- Kitimat Modernization Project and what it means to Kitimat operations.
- Potential revenue streams moving from old to new technology
- Environmental benefits tied to KMP such as carbon tax credits
- RTA competitive advantage with Kemano power
- How changes to the asset and reduction of vehicles will benefit RTA

In addition to these topics and others you should expect to see information covering key areas of improvement we will be pursuing. Our goal is to ensure you as members have a full understanding of the issues your Union has been facing as well as the areas we will be looking to make gains.

*Issued by the Negotiations Committee
January 26, 2012*