

Standing Committee Meeting

April 27th, 2023 at 9:00 am in Admin Boardroom

Present: Scott Fairless, Alexandra Carter, Darcy Lanes, Naminder Sharma, John Hagley, Angelo Sia, Marc Gosselin

1. Grievance 23-02 - Easter Call In

Unifor: Darcy and I talked a bit already, this was a call in that was missed on easter Monday. Supervisor went through list and got somebody further down the list than this guy and this one missed some sweet time, it being a stat.

CPP: We talked... I went to get the handout in the contract book.

Unifor: Page 59 or something?

CPP: So in here we don't talk about difference between journeymen and apprentices. We even talk about specialists like Troy in the dry end for example, but we don't talk about apprentices. In this scenario, they didn't know what was going on and they were scrambling to get this running, so he wanted two journeymen millwrights to look at it. So from that perspective, I don't necessarily agree we're in violation of handout. That being said, I think we could get together between our groups and document the OT equalization. I think it would help clarify some of this stuff and we could work toward making our system better. The other thing I looked into afterward was how are we training supervisors for this. The short answer is that we're not because it's not documented. How do you have the same expectation for all 8-12 supervisors? This doesn't say anything about any type of procedure. You can't itemize everything but some generality. It would make my life better, it would give us better definitions and trades understand expectations better. I don't know what you guys think?

Unifor: I think that's a good idea but, in the meantime, both these call ins have been for the same individual to wrap up these two grievances.

CPP: Other one?

Unifor: Christmas eve one. Same person was on that grievance. That one wasn't exactly the same. There are arguments on that one about carryover and how call ins are done and how people are relieved...

CPP: Oh, that one!

Unifor: Yes, that was Byron too.

CPP: That was a little different though... that was end of shift job continuation.

Unifor: All I'm saying is that the broken system has affected the same individual. The equalization doesn't work very well but in the same vein we've had two missed stat call ins for the same individual. That's how we see it as well.

CPP: I don't necessarily agree with that assessment. I believe he feels he missed. I don't think he should've been called in either scenario. That's the problem, we don't have clarification.

Unifor: The book says once one journeyman shows up, it starts back at the top of the list.

CPP: The handout I have might but the book doesn't.

Unifor: Handout?

CPP: The document I have that maintenance managers have worked on, but it's not an agreed upon document.

Unifor: What's held us up?

CPP: Historically the people involved but I've talked with Warren and John about having this discussion again.

Unifor: I think we need to schedule that meeting.

Unifor: If we feel there are two incidents that are related, it seems like it could be worthwhile to sit down.

CPP: I would say there are probably more than two but we heard about this because Byron pays attention and they were stat days. So I'm more than happy to sit down and discuss. I'm not sure who from the union wants to meet but I'm very open to sitting down and drawing a better box on how we handle this. Even as far as what supervisors have to do and how we handle that. The ops supervisors... I from time to time get a call because they can't get anyone in, so I start calling people. The last time was New Years. Even for me I was on the phone for an hour and a half, and I wasn't even trying to run a mill. Anyway, it's a challenge for the ops guys in both ends. I think there's some things we can do on both sides to make things better. We need to discuss.

CPP: For operations, it's only expectations we need. There just needs to be a directive. Example, how apprentices are called in. We do something similar in operations anyway. We don't go through incumbents and everything when the machine breaks. It'll make it more seamless.

CPP: Yes that's what I mean. That document is how we handle a lot of things in the maintenance department. It's kind of known, but not written down formally.

Unifor: I was thinking we should confirm that from production manager. Is there training for call ins?

CPP: There is a list and you call it, but if you knew you needed two journeymen and if there was some directive to bring people in for training then we'd do that. When I was in there, it was around instrument mechanics. Apprentices aren't your first call when you need something fixed, but they have no concern bringing an apprentice in for training opportunity. We just need expectations. It could be the same kind of thing as machine tender for training purposes.

CPP: They don't need to understand why, they just need to know what to do. A lot of it is kind of understood and is in there but not formal. We should have discussion.

Unifor: Ok.

2. BC Hydro Meeting

Unifor: You had a meeting on contract update? Is there a new contract? Extension update?

CPP: Nothing. That was about forced outages. This one coming up is a maintenance outage so they accepted that. We don't know how they'll accept our request about curtailments about raw materials

Unifor: How long is the contract?

CPP: 2032. 10 years.

Unifor: Ok.

CPP: Maybe more meetings in future, the last meeting outcome was just taking information and then we'll see.

Unifor: So chance of maintenance outage in fall is better than curtailment?

CPP: I'll speak to that, as of right now we have enough fibre to continue to run through September. We start to watch it closer near end of the year. So what that looks like is probably an area shutdown in September as normal. Darcy and I discuss a lot and we know projections change a lot, maybe it's a 1 day, maybe 3 day... that's what we have conversations around right now. It's based on fibre supply.

Unifor: We kind of jumped ahead to fall curtailment then... so it was our understanding was that the March BC Hydro meeting was more about November curtailment? And what you learned about that shutdown. But now you're saying there was a new contract for 10 years.

CPP: The contract was prior to that.

Unifor: This meeting was about what you're allowed to have for shutdowns?

CP: It was about the disagreement about the definition of force measure. They say lack of raw material is not force measure and we discuss. It's with legal teams now. There was no resolution from that meeting.

3. Fall curtailment

Unifor: What is the current plan for that?

CPP: We have our fibre projection showing pretty good through September into October. Late in the year it becomes unreliable but not scary. As of now, the conversations we're having are that we'll be running but we will have an area shutdown. May be same or longer but that will be decided close to the date. As of today, that is the plan.

Unifor: As of today, when you say chip supply gets scarier, can it be expected that we'll see more curtailments?

CPP: I'm reticent to say never, we know that's not true. We're looking at having 20 days on the piles through until late in the year. We have gone through periods where we were changing piles every 3 days. When I say less, we get down to 10 days there. It's like the weather with projections... and we need to see what sawmills do. But that's what we're planning for right now.

Unifor: Ok. Last time we discussed, you talked about slowing down so mill didn't have to go down. Is that still the goal to keep mill operating?

CPP: I'll just throw a comment in. We're talking about more things around how we manage area shuts. In the world where we don't get jerked around quite as much as right now, our plan would be to have 4-5 area shuts per year and a turnaround and PB shut. So looking forward, taking that into consideration, would it make sense to do longer area shutdowns? Lots of those things are on the table. Ideally, it's more cost effective to run faster and take a slightly longer area shut. We're in a different universe now. That's not the world we live in anymore, so it takes planning and forecasting. So that was a long way of saying, maybe we look at slowing down, maybe area shuts, there are lots of options to sell to keep us running and people working.

Unifor: So no layoff in fall?

CPP: That's not the plan. It's part of our thoughts, I wake up every morning thinking about the longevity of this place. Part of your question around rates is there. We have to manage supply, power, pulp, everything. That goes into this. Running for sake of running isn't an option long term. I just wanted to say that so you know it's in our minds when we do certain things. I'm sure it's in everyone's interest. If you ever have questions, you can come see me.

Unifor: Ok. So there was an announcement about Soda Creek, does that affect your supply?

CPP: We've never owned any Soda Creek chips. It was leftovers from what Paper Excellence couldn't move. There are varying amounts we might've got from there. We've been talking about it and we think it'll squeeze Krueger a bit, because I'm pretty sure they're getting chips there on a trade. So Paper Excellence will claw back whatever they had.

CPP: That amount isn't in our projections, if we got it, it would be bonus. But if we don't, it's ok.

Unifor: I think that's all I had on that.

4. September 30 Truth and Reconciliation Day

Unifor: Reconciliation day, September 30 stat, what will that look like?

CPP: I don't know yet.

Unifor: The feds passed it a couple years ago but now so has the provincial government. It went through a few weeks ago.

CPP: If it's legislated then yes.

Unifor: We wanted to have this conversation. You guys will do your research and due diligence, of course.

CPP: Yes that's something we'll need to talk about.

Unifor: Ok so further discussion?

CPP: For sure.

5. Plan for Instrumentation Technician

Unifor: Instrumentation Technician hiring? What is that looking like?

CPP: Finding one, first as all. That's not a fertile field either it seems. Rough and dirty off the top of my head, and we'll need a breakout on this as well, we would look at paying them as probably 4th year apprentice and letter would have requirement that, and rules keep moving on this depending on where they went to school and how much time they have, but you have to get so many hours then you can write your red seal and you're a journeyman. Sometimes depending on your school you can do different amount of hours and challenge the exam. The idea would be a late term apprentice and in their offer letter you'd have X amount of time to complete red seal. Similar to our welder. He had window to get certified. Which he did by the way, he passed.

Unifor: What we were looking for is that this is sorted out, rather than coming to us every time you get an applicant. I think that would include you talking to Skilled Trades BC for their requirements. It shouldn't be that you have to come to us every time there's an applicant. We'd like to see the plan and whether you have apprentices at the time, what the plan would be. Example, how many apprentices you'd have.

CPP: Ok yes. My intention would be to document this as well so we don't have to figure this out every time. So yes it would be documented. The number of apprentices would require some thought so that's why I need to talk to others. We've backed off lately just because we haven't had any other applicants. I want everyone on the same page.

Unifor: The union isn't against you hiring people but having that in place doesn't have to slow your process. We don't want it held up if you're waiting on us for something.

6. Retention Plan

Unifor: Is there a plan yet on worker retention and hiring? We're hearing a lot that everybody is going through same thing and that they're being presented with plans to retain people. Are you doing anything to keep current workers? Something to entice?

CPP: In terms of enticements, there aren't any plans at the moment for something like that. However, we're always trying to retain people through things like engagement.

Unifor: You probably don't want to wait until the blackwater project.

Unifor: We understand you won't tell us right now. But we want to have that discussion at some point. At what point do we do something different?

CPP: Everyone is scared of forestry right now.

CPP: After a while it's a lifestyle choice. It's always more money to work in camp. But it's a different world right now and we're trying to find our way through viability (the entire industry). I can't compete in a bidding war with Trump. It's government decisions so you have a cost benefit balance, and they have to reconcile at some point.

Unifor: Some people worried about the townhall. The leader talked about enhancing people and developing people. Sometimes people like money, but sometimes people might need to be approved for education opportunities as well. Maybe if that was brought to the table for all departments. If you're learning new skills they'd give back a little bit.

CPP: I'm in agreement, that's something I would love to not just talk about but pursue. That's a longer term... I know Nimmi is all over that too. In the short term, we need to find where industry lands and make plans around certainty. I know membership feels uncertainty.

I'm less concerned than I was before but I don't think anyone is positive what it looks like. We should table and when we know what our abilities are then go after it.

Unifor: When the WF corporate leader is talking about enhancing people, we'd love to see him put his money where his mouth is.

CPP: I saw it and I don't remember that... there was a lot around mental health and wellness but I don't recall this part.

Unifor: Just before that he talked about how he sees the company progressing. It was about training and enhancing.

CPP: I thought that was about diversity but anyway...

CPP: We can always do more and better. But it's always our intention to develop and train people so they can do more. That's why we apprentice. That's why Nimmi has people working on 2nd. I have a PF learning how to be a vibe analyst. There's probably more on the maintenance side for courses and training like alignment. I think John what you're alluding to us raising levels of automation and control. That's what we look at. We're looking at simulators for boilers... we don't publicize it or market it but that is how we think. We want the best people and to develop them to the best of their abilities. I think we think in those veins already. Maybe if you see something that would help, we're open to discuss. Our intention is always to build and grow people

CPP: I'm glad to say 5 young workers are working on their 2nds. I encouraged them to go through Power Engineering 101. The unfortunate part is that they're not applying for supervisor position but that's ok. With time...

Unifor: There's always things to learn in your department. You have steam tickets. Fibreline they're always learning in their line of progression because they're always moving up. Maybe it's tools on how to enhance that. You've done that with their training person. All I was asking for was that if Ray Ferris wants people to success and improve, maybe you'd come back and say they're giving us money toward training people. For example, our trades don't know how to do something so we've had contractors doing it. Maybe when you're not using fibreline people for call ins instead of cleaning people. There are always different areas, trying to make this job appealing so people can stay there. We already talked about exit meetings as well because you can learn a lot from people leaving. To take care of this company, it would be good to know why you're losing people. Or why people aren't coming when they're offered jobs. We all want to keep this place going.

CPP: I talked to Power Engineering 101 owner. I want to know what kind of extras they can provide to our people. Few of them are finding it difficult to get their tickets. And we want them to say.

Unifor: Yes we've talked to Darcy about training for Pipefitters as well. There are some areas where we need certifications as well. We'd like to see that happening. It comes together with retaining and bringing people into an industry that isn't seen as desirable.