



## BTS ONTARIO BULLETIN – APRIL 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Brothers and Sisters,

We are writing this update to share with you some of the things that have been going on over the past few weeks, while we continue to deal with the realities of the COVID-19 Pandemic. As a Committee, we are on a number of conference calls daily, dealing with issues from Health and Safety to workload projections, etc. while trying to ensure our members continue to have a reliable income.

As a regular function of the LRC Committee, we review with Work Force Management, the 8-week work schedules prior to each release. The Company can then explain why they scheduled a particular way; usually citing Bell Canada's forecast as the main driving force behind what we see in the field. As a Committee we went through this process with the Employer on Friday April 24<sup>th</sup> 2020. It was clear from what we were seeing that we were going to have questions from members, regarding the Company's decision to maximize weekend coverage, along with heavy scheduling of the 6 x 4 shift for RFT employees, all while our RPT members continue to struggle with lack of hours around the province.

Our Committee, like many of you, found it to be unsettling that during the COVID-19 Pandemic and while the workload is currently 31% below regular forecast, we would see this type of scheduling hitting the field. The Company attributes this to customers requesting weekend appointments, over other days of the week, a point that we feel should not be a driving factor right now since most of the world is home or working at home. We have suggested; by controlling the customer appointments, we feel the high weekend scheduling could be avoided. Unfortunately the Company does not share our view on this. The Company additionally stated that they were dealing with significant WBP time being paid during the week due to no workload, which we also feel could be managed better by placing more control on scheduling of the workload when appointments are taken, which again they do not share our views. It is the position of this Committee that you complete all shifts scheduled by the Employer and do not take time off at your expense when workload forecasts fall short.

As stated in past communications, taking time off to go home earlier or to take a Saturday or Sunday off when the workload is under the anticipated forecast certainly helps the Company save money in wages by offloading it on to you the member. However, this will negatively impact you as employees with regards to RRSP and DPSP contributions, which overtime could have long term impact on your retirement savings. It will also do nothing to curb this type of scheduling in the future, if we continue to facilitate Company requests to cover workload short falls at our expense.

As a Committee we would suggest that if you have any concerns with respect to your new 8 week schedule, you take your concerns to your Manager to identify issues or to simply convey your displeasure if needed. In closing many of you have asked if the Union has raised the issue of what some call danger pay, while others call it hazard or risk pay. Just so you are aware, the Committee has raised this with the Company, and they have no plans to adopt this practice. Additionally, Unifor has raised this exact issue at all three National levels, in both our Telecommunications and Media Sectors with BCE and has had the concept repeatedly rejected, in all various proposal formats.

Stay Safe, Stay Healthy And Stay Connected!

In solidarity,

Your BTS Ontario Bargaining Committee