



Canadian Merchant Service Guild

Eastern Branch NEWSLETTER



Guild Now Represents Engineers at Algoma, CSL/V. Ships and Desgagnés Marine Cargo

The Guild is continuing its efforts to represent Ships' Officers across the country and particularly in our jurisdiction in the Eastern Branch. The Canada Industrial Relations Board has over the summer granted certifications to the Guild to represent the Engineers at Algoma (the bulker fleet), the Engineers at CSL V. Ships on the self unloaders and bulkers, and at Desgagnés Marine Cargo, and also the Engineers on the MV Arctic.

These certifications have come about for two main reasons – the Officers there wanted a change in their representation and they knew the Guild was the right union for Ships' Officers and there was tremendous work put in by Guild staff members and very supportive bargaining unit members who assisted Guild staff. Thanks to Mario and Kieran and Bernard and Tom for their efforts in making these new certifications a reality. Many thanks to the members who provided support and assistance in making this happen.

Guild Engineers Under Attack in Raid by Teamsters Local at Upper Lakes Shipping

The Guild bargaining unit of Engineers and Electricians is under attack in the form of an attempted raid by a Toronto Teamsters local – aided and abetted by two disaffected members of the bargaining unit who are, in our opinion, using their fellow Officers to further their own agendas. How else can you explain the fact that this comes about while we're in negotiations with both the Engineers/Electricians and the Mates at the same time (unprecedented) for both groups, as well as the fact that now all the other major players on the Great Lakes are Guild members.

The Guild has been listening to the members of this group and has been working hard to try to give them the representation they need. We are doing everything in our power to repel this raid and we believe that in the end the Engineers and Electricians will agree that leaving the Guild and their benefit and pension plan and legal defense and the other positives that the Guild provides for them to go to a group that has no marine background, no other marine members, no legal defense, is a retrogressive step and not the right thing to do.

The Economic Outlook

We heard a lot of doom and gloom from some parts of the Branch early in 2010 about how bad the economy would be and how work would be affected. On the East Coast one of the Cancrew tankers has gone to "world wide trade" and there is talk that another may as well. So far Canadian Officers (Guild members) have remained with the vessels and we have been discussing options with the Company. Recent offshore 'step out' operations have concluded to the point where one rig has left the area but the 3 production programs continue and Guild members continue working on supply vessels work as before.

We heard the most ill sounding predictions from some of the Lakes Companies in terms of what this year would bring. While there were staggered dates in terms of vessels returning to service and therefore some impacts on Guild members from that things have now gotten into the accustomed 'stretch run' where most if not all vessels are working to conclude cargoes before the end of the year. A member recently indicated that the vessel he was on had cargo until the end of the year even though earlier on they were told it would not be working and the plan by the Company was to "turn it into razor blades". Strange how plans get altered.

Government Ships' Officers

Preparatory proposal meetings are upcoming for the Officers at Coast Guard/DFO and DND. Considering the Employers approach to negotiations last time we are not sure what direction the talks will take or what mandate, if any, the Treasury Board negotiators will receive. Between the "political will" and the approach of some of the Employing departments we expect this round to be as difficult as most so we need to have as much preparation done as possible. Of course the spectre of legislation is always looming and we will only know for sure as the process unfolds further.

Guild Staff

The Guild is in the process of hiring a second Labour Relations Officer for the Quebec Office. We have conducted interviews and expect to have the new person in place in early October.

After two years of working with the Guild Kaelan Keys has tendered his resignation. We will now undertake a recruitment process to fill the second LRO position in the Dartmouth office. That person will eventually



Kieran Clarke (LRO) and Lee Miller (1st Mate), *Algomarine*

be assigned the responsibility of the Marine Atlantic Mates and Engineers contract amongst other duties so the successful applicant will need to be able to conduct themselves throughout the full range of Labour Relations duties, and with more than just that one group, the same as other LROs are responsible for several bargaining units and collective agreements each.

The Guild began a process of trying to improve our level of member representation a number of years ago. We knew then it was going to be an ongoing process and while the amount of ships visits by Guild staff has increased tremendously (just as one area of improvement) we intend to make more adjustments to continue to improve.

We were asked last year at a district meeting if adding new bargaining units would lead to less service for existing bargaining units. The answer to that was then and is now an unequivocal "NO". The Guild has added staff over the past few years and will continue to evaluate our staffing levels to make sure that once finances are confirmed the staffing levels can provide the representation we believe the members require. Unfortunately, the nature of our operation precludes "anticipatory staffing" - we have to be sure we have the members before we can add staff so sometimes there is a time lag of getting a new person on board and confirming that person is right for the job.

The comment in our offices is that many things are "a work in progress". Staffing levels is certainly one of those things but the Branch is committed to making sure we provide proper representation to all Guild members.

Ship visits throughout the Branch



Algouva from left: Brian Hoffe (3rd Engineer), Derrick Spurrel (1st Mate) and Kieran Clarke (LRO).



Northumberland Ferries Confederation, from left: Jimmie Gosbee, David Blue, David Johnston, Hunter Moffatt, Blair MacKinnon and Glen Hawkins.



From left: Mario Elrick (LRO), Tim Howell (Chief Engineer), Dave McGuinness (Commanding Officer) and Kieran Clarke (LRO).



Greetings from the Algoma Guardian. Backrow from left: Kieran Clarke (LRO), Laurent Dumont (3rd Eng), Lauren Lawson (3rd Mate), Mario Elrick (LRO), Perry Baker (4th Eng) and Monford Organ (1st Mate). Front row from left: Jean Bouffard (2nd Mate) and Gavin Pink (2nd Eng).



Collective Agreements In Negotiations

Cancrew (MV Umiak 1)

We are finally going to get these negotiations started even though the mine strike at Voiseys Bay is still ongoing. The Committee is set to meet first and will then meet with the Company.

Comtug

Conciliation is scheduled for late September.

ECTUG

Currently in negotiations.

Marine Atlantic (Capts. and Chiefs)

We are scheduling arbitration.

Marine Atlantic (Mates, Engineers, Electricians)

Notice to Bargain has been given.

Groupe Ocean

In negotiations.

LPA launchmasters

In negotiations.

Algoma Tankers (Mates and Engineers)

In negotiations.

Upper Lakes Shipping (Mates and Engineers)

In conciliation.

Grievances

Grievances of every description are filed with each office in the Branch. We currently have grievances on dismissal, travel, recalls and overtime. The amount and number of grievances will fluctuate but we are seeing a large variety. Some are making their way to Arbitration – particularly two we have on the Lakes concerning payment for security drills and other drills not related to lifeboat or fire drills.

Stay Connected!



Members can connect with Branch publications on the "Eastern Branch Updates" section of the National Office website at www.CMSG-CMMC.ca



CSL Métis discharging into hopper at Sydney, N.S.

Contracts Completed

The Marine Atlantic Mates Engineers and Electricians contract was arbitrated in June and the award was received in August. There were wage increases – retroactive for the 3 years of the term of the Agreement, a new vacation pay increment, and a new clause to address the 'extra days' accumulated by Guild members. This clause is an adjustment to one from a previous arbitration before the Officers were Guild members and members so far are apparently skeptical of the new clause's viability.

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