



Canadian Merchant Service Guild

Eastern Branch NEWSLETTER

Guild Applies to Represent the Engineers at Algoma and CSL

The Eastern Branch of the Guild is extremely pleased to announce that we have applied to the Canada Industrial Relations Board to become the certified bargaining agents for the Engineers at Algoma and at CSL. This is a natural progression for the Guild since over the past few years many Officers have decided they want Guild representation. We expect that there will be a Board ordered vote between the Guild and the incumbent union. One of the unlicensed unions has tried to get involved as well but the Guild believes that a majority of Officers will realize that strength exists in all Officers sticking together in one union.

The Guild is certain that the pension and medical plans that we have in place will be of interest to Officers for their safety and security, ease of access, member trustees, and focus on Officers terms and conditions.

Breakthrough on Leave System for Upper Lakes

Engineers and Electricians at Upper Lakes have recently achieved a breakthrough at Arbitration. An Arbitrator has approved the establishment of a trial leave system of 6 weeks on and 6 weeks off on 2 year round vessels at Upper Lakes. The purpose of the trial is to address concerns of some of the Engineers and Electricians at Upper Lakes. There have been proposals for a number of contracts that there be an equal time-on time-off leave system established. While these systems are fairly commonplace in various other areas of the Branch, and on some tanker operations in the Lakes, this will be a first for a major Lakes fleet. The Guild is very pleased to see this development occur and we look forward to seeing the trial system put into place so that we can monitor the results and adapt as required.



District Meetings

District meetings were held throughout the Branch this winter and were well attended. For the first time in many years the Guild held a district meeting in Cape Breton to meet and discuss issues with Guild members for the area, especially those from Marine Atlantic, the Coast Guard College, and others who reside in the area. The Branch Board met this year in Halifax and it was a very busy 2-day event. The GSO Advisory Committee occupied the first day and the Board also spent much time discussing the various issues occupying the Eastern Branch.

Guild Eastern Branch Thanks and Welcomes New Engineers at Algoma and CSL

The Guild never presumes to anticipate the outcome of a ratification ballot or in this case a CIRB membership vote. In this case however we are very much buoyed by the support we have received in phone calls, emails, and the positive responses of Engineers when we've met them on board their vessels. We want to thank those Officers who have supported the Guild and helped us in our efforts to speak to as many Engineers as possible in the last number of months. We expect to be successful in the CIRB ballots and we will be with your support. This process has many steps and if we do as well as we can in the votes we will then be well on our way to uniting Officers into a unified and markedly stronger group. We will be keeping Officers up to date on developments in this very important Endeavour.

Staying Connected!



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

Health & Safety at Marine

Atlantic

The Guild continues to follow and monitor the situation with the asbestos problem on the Atlantic Freighter. The situation now is that containment and abatement procedures have been addressed, and the Guild will continue to talk to the Company to address further issues on behalf of our members on board that vessel as and when they arise. It appears that the vessel is not going back into service but we still want to know what the Company is doing in terms of Officers that had previously worked on that vessel

Canadian Marine Pilots' Association (CMPA)

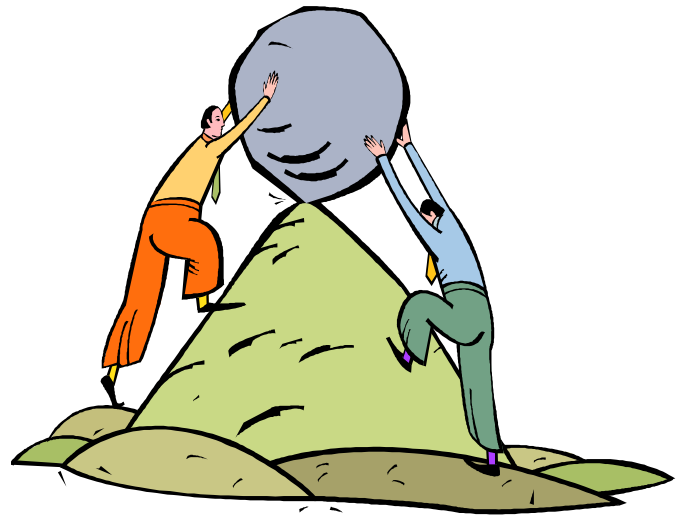


The National Board Meetings of the Canadian Marine Pilots' Association were held in Ottawa, March 25 & 26th. Front Row (from left): Joy Thomson (National Secretary-Treasurer, CMSG), Capt. Simon Pelletier (National Vice President, CMPA), Capt. Bernard Boissoneault (Vice President, Laurentian Region, CMPA), Capt. Michel Pouliot (President, CMPA), and Capt. Mike Roman (Vice President, Pacific Region, CMPA). Back row (from left): Capt. Andrew Rae (Vice President, Atlantic Region, CMPA), Capt. Alex MacIntyre (President Eastern Branch, CMSG), Capt. Mike Burgess (Vice President, Great Lakes Region, CMPA), Capt. Neil MacDougall (President Western Branch, CMSG) and Capt. Mark Boucher (National President, CMSG). Missing from photo: Mr. Bruce Carter (Eastern Branch Secretary-Treasurer, CMSG).

Negotiations and Grievances

The following is the status of negotiations being addressed by the Eastern Branch staff and negotiating committees:

- **Bay Ferries** – Negotiations completed.
- **Marine Atlantic** – Mates Engineers and Electricians have been in numerous sessions of direct bargaining. The next session may determine the way ahead since we are scheduled to meet with the help of a Conciliator.
- **Marine Atlantic Captains, Chief Engineers and Chief Electrical Officers** – Scheduled to begin negotiations this spring.
- **Nfld. Provincial Ferry Captains** – This agreement has been signed and the Captains there will avail of the 20% wage template established by the Provincial Government.
- **MV Arctic** – Negotiations completed and new contract signed.
- **GLPA** – Two groups at the GLPA have new contracts, 1 group remains outstanding, and 1 group reached a tentative deal the first week of April – that deal is scheduled to go out for a ballot soon.
- **Oceanex** – Negotiations completed and contract signed.
- **Upper Lakes Mates and Engineers** – Negotiations completed and contracts signed.
- **Maersk/Seabase** – A 3-day Arbitration was held to settle outstanding issues with the Captains and Chief Engineers in January and we recently received that award. It contains increases in the \$40,000 range for the five year renewal and gives us at least partial access to a proper severance Article.
- **Maersk/Seabase Mates and Engineers** – Arbitration was held on March 23, 2009 and we are awaiting the decision of the Arbitration Board.
- **Cancrew** – A tentative Agreement for the Mates Engineers and Electricians was reached in conciliation in January and the voting packages have now gone out to members for their vote. There was much work involved in this first set of negotiations and we look with interest to the members' ballot response in the first week of April.



- **Cancrew** – Captains and Chief Engineers – we expect to begin negotiations for a first Collective Agreement for this group once the final outcome is known for the Mates and Engineers and Electricians Agreement.
- **Cancrew – Umiak 1** – Proposals are just about complete at the time of writing this newsletter and we expect to have them exchanged with the Company soon.
- **MacKeils** – We have a signed Collective Agreement but are currently investigating the actions that brought about a decertification application to the CIRB. As expected that application was dismissed.
- **OSG (Overseas Shirley)** – A tentative first agreement has been slowly going through the editing process and we expect to have it out for a membership vote shortly.
- **APA Launchmasters** – Negotiations completed and contract signed.
- **APA Pilots** – A tentative agreement is out for vote.
- **Rigel Shipping** – Negotiations completed and members turned down the settlement and endorsed strike action. The Guild and the Company met in mediation and the Company revised its offer and the membership accepted the revised offer.
- **Ocean Group Tugmasters** – No agreement reached so a strike vote was taken. Revised offer at mediation was accepted by the members.
- **Desgagnés Marine and Petro** – Both contracts are in the early stages of negotiations.

Grievances:

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Each Guild office has various grievances being worked on by staff. The grievance workload at Marine Atlantic alone is tremendous. We are working very hard to try to get the labour relations climate with that Company back to a reasonable level. Until then we deal with grievances over contracting out, shortage of work (Officers not being called back), too much work (Officers being held back), termination, and many others that seem to arise almost on a daily basis. Marine Atlantic has engendered some managerial revitalization that may result in better cooperation in the future. We are certainly open to a change as the current situation is not working for anyone, in our opinion.

There are termination and promotion grievances outstanding at Oceanex. There are pay amount issues still outstanding at Algoma Tankers and interpretation issues outstanding at Upper Lakes.

It has been our history at the Guild not to have too many grievances on behalf of our members and our history not to spend inordinate amounts of time beyond investigation on grievances that cannot be substantiated. We try to have discussions with the Employers to mitigate situations that might result in grievances, or if we are aware of the circumstances early enough try to have the circumstances corrected or at least understood better. However, we also know that the grievance procedures in our Collective Agreements are there to be used when a solution cannot be found. We use those procedures as required to protect Guild members.



Reminder for Guild Members

Guild members are reminded once again of the cards given to members containing emergency numbers to be used in the case of a marine incident. Please keep those cards available and use them if an incident occurs. All emergency calls are monitored, and should be made as soon as possible after the incident.

The report on the tragedy involving a Coast Guard vessel and a sealing vessel off Sydney NS was recently released. Guild members were properly represented during this whole investigation process. Another recent accident on an Algoma vessel in Quebec again illustrates the dangers of life at sea and the need for Guild representation.

The toll taken on the families of the accident victims is always tremendous and the Guild sympathizes with them. There is also a tremendous toll on our members who deal with the trauma of the accident itself and the aftermath of investigations or inquiries. The Guild uses the legal defense insurance as required to protect our members in these marine incidents.

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