

**Report of the
2004 PSAC
National
Health and Safety
Conference**

*Conférence
nationale*



**« HEALTH AND SAFETY:
OUR JOBS, OUR WORLD »**

**Toronto
March 25 – 28, 2004**

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GREETINGS

A message from the National President and the 2004 National Health and Safety Conference Co-Chairs

Sisters and Brothers:

All PSAC health and safety activists should be proud of their achievement over the last few years. Health and safety has been propelled to the forefront of our union's agenda. Your hard work started with our 2003 PSAC National Convention where a record number of health and safety resolutions were debated and endorsed by the delegates.

The budget was considerably increased and included full funding for 300 delegates attending this conference.

And like the Unity Conference, the Access Conference, the Pride Conference and the National Women's Conference, the National Health and Safety Conference now also has the right to send resolutions to the next PSAC Convention.

The theme of our 6th National Health and Safety Conference was:
<<Health and Safety: Our Jobs, Our World>>.

Our present campaign against globalization recognizes our union's responsibility to fight to improve the workplace rights and working conditions of our members, and acknowledges our role in fighting to improve the society in which we live.

Many of our speakers at the Conference made the connections between globalization and health and safety issues. We also had speakers sharing their experience with us in dealing with emerging workplace issues.

The title of the four workshops we proposed to our participants also reflected many of our present health and safety priorities: (1) Globalization and Its Effects on Workplace Health and Safety Issues; (2) Women's health and safety: Everyone's Struggle; (3) Committees – Dealing with Infectious Diseases: Lessons Learned; (4) Health and Safety Committees – Strategies for Change.

The resolutions debates were vibrant and engaging. For many, it was the first time ever they actually had an opportunity to share their view with all of us and shape the political agenda of their union.

Facilitated regional action plans sessions were also part of our Conference to link our work with the regions. Over the next two years each region will hold a regional health and safety conference. The work done during the regional action plans sessions is the first step in that process.

The 2004 National Health and Safety Conference was also the stage for the launching of our national campaign on reassignment of pregnant workers. It included a postcard campaign to be sent to our Prime Minister and a petition campaign which will be tabled in the House of Commons.

We must all understand that there is still lot of work to do and this Conference will be instrumental in shaping our health and safety program over the next few years. Protecting the health and safety of our members is an activity that all of us must continue throughout the year.

In Solidarity,

Nycole Turmel
National President

Patty Ducharme
REVP, B.C.

Gerry Halabecki
REVP, Ontario

Co-chairs of the National Health and Safety Conference

CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

Steering Committee

The PSAC established a Steering Committee for the National Health and Safety Conference whose mandate was to put forward recommendations to the Alliance Executive Committee on the theme and objectives of the Conference.

MEMBERS OF STEERING COMMITTEE

- **Sister Patty Ducharme**
Chairperson of the National Health and Safety Conference Steering Committee
- **Sister Karen Trainor**
- **Brother Paul Dagenais**
- **Brother Kevin Lundstrom**
- **Sister Dellie Lidyard**
- **Brother Yves Ducharme**

The Committee members discussed and debated a background paper with the overall objective of linking health and safety issues to the community and Labour and specifically to the overall vision of the PSAC. The members of the Steering Committee made a direct contribution in setting the political tone and

direction of the Conference. Their input was essential in the selection of our workshop topics as well as our panellists.

They also meet daily during the Conference to discuss any issue requiring their attention and make immediate recommendations to resolved outstanding issues.

Without their commitment, their leadership and their experience, an event such as this one would never happen. On behalf of all the delegates, observers and guests, thanks you for your contribution.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

Resolutions Committee

The primary purpose of the Resolutions Committee is to expedite Conference business by reworking each resolution into a form which it thinks will be acceptable to the Conference delegates.

MEMBERS OF RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

- **Sister Gwen Jackson**
Chairperson of the Resolutions Committee
- **Sister Marlene O'Neill**
- **Brother Al Dumont**
- **Sister Bernice Wilson**
- **Brother Gerry Halabecki**

In some cases, much deliberation and debate was required by Committee members. In general, little debate was required since most of the resolutions were clear and precisely worded. The Committee agreed on a specific recommendation for each

resolution and it became part of the Resolutions Committee's Report to Conference. The Committee recommendation is usually one of concurrence or non-concurrence. The delegates vote on the Committee's recommendation.

The Committee also established its priorities for the presentation of the resolutions including the late resolution and the emergency resolution. Accordingly, the Committee members meet many times over the course of the Conference.

On behalf of all the delegates, observers and guests, thanks you for your hard work and your valuable contribution.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

Back in October 2003, the National Board of Directors (NBoD) of the PSAC established the following five broad priorities for collective action throughout the Union to be promoted over the next three years.

- **Link globalization to members' lives;**
- **Build membership support through effective bargaining;**
- **Defend members' rights against employer and corporate strategies;**
- **Re-empower the membership and build the Union;**
- **Organize to protect members' gains.**

These five priorities build on the vision for the PSAC developed by the NBoD at its January 2002 Planning Session. The vision reads: *Through collective action, further the interests of all PSAC members and working people in general.* This vision recognizes the union's responsibility to fight to improve the workplace rights and working conditions of our members, and acknowledges our role in fighting to improve the society in which our members live.

Accordingly, those priorities were integrated during the development of the Health and Safety Conference Background Paper. The Conference Steering Committee worked on the implementation of these broad priorities within a health and safety perspective.

The objectives of the National Health and Safety Conference were to elevate the militancy of the Union by:

- establishing the link between globalization and its direct relationship to decreased health and safety protection in our workplaces;

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- ensuring that health and safety issues are mainstream issues for the Union and for the membership;
- building the activism of the members and activists in respect to the issue of health and safety in the workplace;
- developing and implementing Union based strategies to ensure that workplace health and safety issues are being addressed by employers and by government;
- establishing collective bargaining strategies.

The Conference theme was then developed by our Steering Committee to reflect our Conference objectives.

The theme selected of our 6th National Health and Safety Conference was <<***Health and Safety: Our Jobs, Our World***>>.

As stated in the PSAC Policy 16 on Health and Safety, our Union has a vital interest in protecting the occupational health and safety of its members. The National Conference along with the Regional Conferences are key activities used in promoting health and safety issues within our Union.

GETTING TO THE CONFERENCE

Our 6th National Health and Safety Conference was significantly shaped by the decisions taken during the 2003 PSAC National Convention

The Conference budget was considerably increased and included full funding for up to 300 delegates attending this conference.

Specifically, Resolution 353 which was endorsed by the delegates stated:

- *BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC fully fund an OHS Conference capped at 300 members in a location within Canada each triennial period; and*
- *BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the funding formula for this Conference be split in three (3) parts: part 1, that seven (7) members of each Component be eligible to attend for a sub-total of 119; and*
- *BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the part 2 premise be split that allows for the representation of seven (7) members amongst the seven (7) regions of the PSAC, equalling 49, for a sub-total of 168; and*
- *BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT part 3 be distributed amongst all of its Components' based on pro-rata membership participation for the remaining 132 seats.*

On November 20th 2003, registration forms were sent to all PSAC Locals, Components and all PSAC Regional Offices with a deadline for applications of January 7th 2004. An electronic registration form was developed for our PSAC Web Site. Members were able to apply online. Alternate formats were also available for our members with disabilities.

GETTING TO THE CONFERENCE

We requested that Locals inform members of both Policy Health and Safety Committees and Local Workplace Health and Safety Committees, appointed Health and Safety Representatives, or Health and Safety activists in their respective Local of the upcoming National Health and Safety Conference.

All PSAC members who were members in good standing could apply. The Steering Committee established that a priority had to be given to those union activists who are members of Policy Health and Safety Committees or Local Workplace Health and Safety Committees, or are appointed as Health and Safety Representatives for their workplaces. The selection of delegates also had to take into account union and health and safety activism, as well as representation (Region, Component, Gender, Language, and Equity group representation).

A short questionnaire was developed to establish a participant's profile and assist Component Presidents and Regional Executive Vice Presidents in the selection process.

The selection process included all Component Presidents and all Regional Executive Vice Presidents who made their selection based on the formula established by Resolution 353 and the participant's profile.

A total of **641 applications** were received for a chance to be selected as one of the 300 delegates attending the Conference.

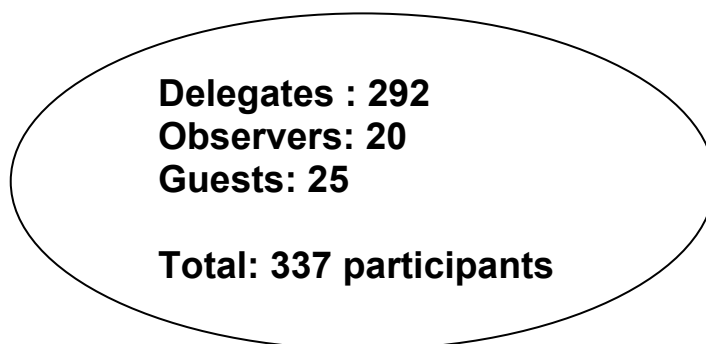
Members could also attend the Conference as observers; however they were responsible for all costs associated with their participation. The number of observers had to be limited based on the available space at the Conference. Observers were selected on a 'first come first serve' basis.

All members of the NBoD were invited as guests to our Conference. Other guests included representatives from other labour organizations.

GETTING TO THE CONFERENCE

Once the selection process was completed, a letter was sent to each applicant whether they were selected as delegates or not.

Despite our best efforts to replace the late cancellations from some delegates, the total number of delegates attending the Conference was shy of 300. The following are the total number of delegates, observers and guests (see Appendix A for complete breakdown of participants):



Delegates : 292
Observers: 20
Guests: 25

Total: 337 participants

The 6th National Health and Safety Conference was held at the Hilton Toronto (145 Richmond West in downtown Toronto) from March 25 to March 28, 2004.

The Conference had a full agenda which included speakers, panels, workshops, resolutions and regional action plans (see Appendix B).

GETTING TO THE CONFERENCE

SOLIDARITY RALLY



March 22 to 26, 2004 was the third National Solidarity Week where PSAC members across the country participated in a variety of events to show their commitment to achieving fair and equitable collective agreements.

Many participants to the PSAC National Health and Safety Conference attended a lunchtime rally on March 26, in support of their fellow union members. They joined other members and supporters for a series of country-wide solidarity actions. They rallied in front of the Federal Court building in downtown Toronto in support of labour bargaining for about 100,000 federal public sector workers.

Negotiations with Treasury Board, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Parks Canada Agency and Canada Revenue Agency had reached an impasse, and the union was completing the process of obtaining strike mandates for all these units.



They also took to the streets to show that the work they do has value for all Canadians.

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The PSAC has a vital interest in protecting the health and safety of its members. The gains and advances we made in health and safety have come, in very large part, from grass roots workplace activism.

Whether at the collective bargaining table or during legislative changes, our members want their Union to promote and protect their health and safety. Over the next few years, our activism should focus on the following priorities:

Globalization

Our members want more power to act but many factors can impact on our ability to mobilize our members. Amongst them, 'globalization' should be a concern for every health and safety activist.

The term 'globalization' captures a number of corporate and governmental activities that are designed to provide corporations with unfettered rights superseding any other national, human or environmental rights. The sole objective of globalization is to realize unlimited profits. By definition, these rules decrease the power of governments to enforce their own rules and laws.

Trade agreements jeopardize workers' rights and our ability to protect the environment. Issues such as gender and racial equality as well as ensuring developing countries are treated fairly are not considered a priority.

Current and planned trade agreements are designed to erode these rights. Many believe that the negative impacts of corporate globalization are by design not by omission.

Trade agreements in effect today undermine national sovereignty, promote the privatization of government services and their delivery, and allow corporations the right to undermine the legislative and regulatory power of

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government. The privileged few believe that government regulations and laws cannot interfere with their ability to make a profit. Globalization jeopardizes many government policy including issues as important as health, safety, the environment, and the protection of our natural resources.

Given that globalization has come about at least in part as a result of the expansion and consolidation of corporations, it will require collective action from a global perspective. As union activists we need to mobilize to advance the economic, political and social interests of citizens around the globe.

The PSAC has a direct responsibility to represent our members and negotiate good collective agreements. Our fight against globalization defends the employment and job security of a great many PSAC members. We also have a social responsibility to fight for a better society in which we can all live. Our fight against corporate globalization protects and defends public services for all Canadians, including PSAC members.

Our concerns as health and safety activists include:

- The protection of our health and safety rights won by the tears and blood of our sisters and brothers;
- Ongoing corporate and governments' assaults against health, safety and workers' compensation, designed to abolish or erode workers' rights and standards, and to nullify the laws, regulations, and workplace practices which are the core of workplace health and safety;
- The gradual decline of government's enforcement of health, safety and environmental legislation by the territorial, provincial and federal governments;
- The potential impact on the environment in light of the Kyoto Protocol recently endorsed by Canada;

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- International trade agreements that limits our ability to protect the environment;
- The real threat to our universal public health services;
- Ensuring the availability of affordable medicines to fight diseases.

The globalization priority recognizes our union's responsibility to fight to improve the workplace rights and working conditions of our members, and acknowledges our role in fighting to improve the society in which we live.

Furthermore, the PSAC has made the establishment of a Social Justice Fund a high priority to assist in creating an environment where trade unions can represent their members and work to ensure a better standard of living, health and safety laws and equity without reprisal.

Putting Health and Safety Issues at the Core of all Union Business

We need to ensure that health and safety issues are mainstream issues for the Union and for the membership.

Health and safety issues have to become integral to each union activity, and activists must act strategically. As you untangle any health and safety issue, you find that they relate fundamentally to other issues like human rights, fighting racism, democracy and social justice. The most militant organizations work to make these connections even though they are often difficult.

Closer links need to be established with activists defending human rights and women's rights. Other links need to be further enhanced which includes environmentalists, public health-care proponents and community activists.

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Important issues such as harassment and violence demonstrate how social issues find their way into our workplaces. Issues like “moral harassment” were part of recent amendments to the labour standards in Quebec. The federal government is drafting violence prevention regulations. Much work still remains.

Activists should make every effort to include health and safety topics and workshops at every Component conference and every PSAC conference including the Women’s Conference and Access Conference. We need to ensure that health and safety is a priority in all our regions. Locals should ensure health and safety is a standing agenda item at every meeting.

As employers “re-organize” our work and the environment in which we perform it (i.e. Public Service Modernization Act), the power structure in our workplace shifts and often creates an increasingly stressful environment.

Health and safety knows no barriers. It is probably the most important right for every human being on our globe. Without our health and safety, no other right or gain can be truly enjoyed.

Ensuring that health and safety issues are connected to the work and decision-making processes at every level of our Union

The 2002 National Health and Safety Conference served as a launch pad for PSAC Health and Safety activists across Canada. Since then, our members have mobilized to promote health and safety issues within their Components and the PSAC. The Regional Health and Safety Conferences held in 2003 are also instrumental in refocusing our activism.

During the 2003 PSAC Convention, the delegates discussed a record number of health and safety resolutions. They approved increased funding for our conferences as well as allowing delegates at the National Health and Safety Conference to send health and safety resolutions directly to the PSAC Convention.

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Our ability to send health and safety resolutions directly to the PSAC convention is an important link in shaping the future of our health and safety program.

Delegates also mandated the PSAC to launch a petition campaign to advance the issue of precautionary work cessation for all pregnant and nursing members.

We need to assess and better define the potential role that PSAC Regional Councils and their respective health and safety committees can play. They can play a key role in their regions in mobilizing the membership around health and safety issues.

We also have a rejuvenated National Board of Directors Standing Committee on Health, Safety and the Environment willing to promote health and safety and play a more active role in the various political forums within our Union.

Many believe that we need to establish a National Union Health and Safety Policy Committee to develop unified positions on health and safety issues. This idea needs to be openly discussed by our members.

Our National Conference should be used to articulate the PSAC Health and Safety Vision in key policy and program areas and must define a political agenda for subsequent debate at our PSAC Convention

Establishing and maintaining clear, two way communications with health and safety activists

The success of our program will greatly depend on our ability to communicate with our front-line members. At our last National Conference this recommendation was identified as a priority issue in both the workshops and the regional caucus.

There is a general consensus that we need to establish and maintain a health and safety network. Building a contact list for health and safety

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committee members would allow us to provide regular updates on current issues, bulletins and better respond to requests for information or assistance.

Communications between the various regions, the Components and the National Office is an important element in improving our ability to respond adequately to our members on the wide range of issues health activists are confronted in their workplaces.

Special consideration must be made to connect with our membership in the North region and in our rural communities. Our task would not be completed until the same sense of belonging to our Union is found everywhere across Canada.

Ensuring that effective, Union orientated health and safety training is delivered to all Union health and safety activists

Knowledge is power. This is especially true when dealing with health and safety issues in the workplace. Health and safety has always been and remains a power issue in the workplace.

Not a day goes by without our Union having to fight to protect the health and safety of our members, or assist members in knowing and fighting for their workplace rights. We must have functioning Locals along with effective health and safety committees at the workplace level.

Our members demand more union health and safety training. Union training was also a key recommendation in all workshops during our 2002 National Health and Safety Conference.

The PSAC is supportive of joint employer/union training initiatives, but only if they respect our union principles that include our full participation from the planning stage up to the delivery of the material. Although joint training provides an interesting training opportunity, it is no substitute to union health and safety training.

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We want to have the ability to train every PSAC members who sits on joint health and safety committee. Our members want to take control of the health and safety agenda in their workplace. Health and safety committees need to be driven by our union representatives.

It rests on the Union's ability to provide the membership with the tools, resources and education they need to defend their rights, and to make the Union strong.

Pushing for improved enforcement of health and safety legislation by the territorial, provincial and federal governments in our respective workplaces to provide and maintain a healthy and safe environment

The proper enforcement of health and safety laws is essential to safe and healthy workplaces. Our policies have to link and draw together the pursuit of workplace rights with the implementation of health and safety standards in the workplace.

Knowledgeable activists are better equipped to demand proper enforcement of health and safety laws. Our key role on the various legislative and regulatory committees provides us with the necessary expertise to lobby for better enforcement.

We must continue to demand that the territorial, provincial and federal government provide adequate resources to enforce the existing laws while maintaining the willingness to prosecute bad employers who repeatedly violate the law.

To this end, the PSAC supported the swift passage of Bill C-45, the so-called Westray Bill which made corporations and their managers more accountable for the safety of workers on the job. More than 800 Canadians die each year from work-related accidents.

We must make health and safety fines no longer tax-deductible for our corporate criminals. By using this tax loophole, major corporations can

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simply include health and safety fines as a normal cost of doing business and continue to ignore the carnage in our workplaces.

Our role also includes the promotion of national and international standards to improve and extend workers' health and safety protection.

We must continue to pressure territorial, provincial and federal governments which allow environmental degradation through deregulation, non-enforcement of regulations, or lack of regulations leading to such environmental crisis as tainted water in Walkerton and North Battleford.

Our legislative agenda also includes the promotion of a fully paid program for the protective reassignment of pregnant and breast-feeding workers and the inclusion of paid leave for union health and safety training for all workers.

Establishing collective bargaining strategies reflective of the experience of our health and safety activists to ensure that workplace health and safety issues are being addressed

Our Union's successes at the bargaining table, and our ability to negotiate improved wages and working conditions for all our members, regardless of where they live and work, is key to our ability to engage the membership, and ultimately, to build our Union.

Aided by a strong commitment on the part of the leadership at the National, Regional and Component level, our health and safety activists must work together to mobilize and fight for the inclusion of exemplary health and safety language in our collective bargaining.

Our goal should be to provide our members with collective bargaining language that enhances existing legislation and regulations in health, safety, workers' compensation and the environment.

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To meet that objective we will need to:

- Develop model language ready to be tabled by our health and safety activists across Canada;
- Act strategically to develop effective communication networks;
- Develop tools for effective mobilization of our health and safety activists before each bargaining round;
- Organize bargaining activities with an emphasis on health and safety at the Local, Regional, Component and National levels.

OPENING REMARKS

Sister Patty Ducharme (Co-chair of the Conference) welcomed all participants to the PSAC National Health and Safety Conference. She introduced the members of the National Health and Safety Conference Steering Committee.

She pointed out all the hard work our health and safety activists had done over the last two years which included putting forward a record number of health and safety resolutions at the 2003 PSAC Convention. The Conference objectives were also read out.

Brother Kevin Lundstrom reminded all participants that all PSAC events are to be held in a smoke-free and scent-free environment. He also introduced the Conference Accommodations Coordinator appointed for our event.

Sister Dellie Lidyard and Brother Paul Dagenais then read out the PSAC Harassment Statement in both official languages. The Harassment Coordinator was also pointed out to all participants.

Brother Gerry Halabecki (Co-chair of the Conference) also welcomed all participants to the Conference. He invited everyone to take a few moments and visit his beautiful city. He talked about the pride we should all take in the fact that our Union continues to play a leadership role in advocating for improvements in key health and safety initiatives including union health and safety training.

He highlighted the fact that all the work do as trade union health and safety activists should be in the context of what we are trying to achieve overall as a Union. As a Union we have a responsibility to fight to improve the workplace rights and working conditions of our members and all working people, and we also have a responsibility as a union to fight to improve the community and world in which we live.

The agenda was then approved by all delegates.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Sister Nycole Turmel



Sisters and Brothers, let me say off the top that there has never been a better time to be a health and safety activist within the PSAC.

Less than a year ago, delegates to the PSAC Convention in Montreal put more money into health and safety than at any time in our history.

The base budget presented by the PSAC leadership included a significant increase in PSAC Health and Safety Conference funding, a new health and safety officer staff position, and dedicated funds for regional health and safety activities. All in all it was a pretty good package. But Convention delegates went further and added 7 cents per member per month to the base budget to provide additional funding for the National Health and Safety Conference.

That's one of the reasons why so many of you are in Toronto this week, and why, for the first time in PSAC Health and Safety Conference history you have been fully funded to attend. But a more important reason why you are here is because Health and Safety is an issue of increasing importance and complexity.

We are in Toronto, a city that highlights the fact that Health and Safety is increasingly about what we can't see. We are in Toronto, a city that a year ago was at the centre of an international public health crisis. Beyond the personal tragedy of the SARS crisis, particularly in Toronto and Asia, SARS had devastating economic consequences for communities, and raised the bar on the importance of workplace health and safety.

I know that a number of Conference participants had an opportunity to participate in a workshop dealing with infectious diseases, and that you will use the knowledge gained to better protect your brothers and sisters at workplaces from coast to coast to coast.

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I know, as well, that it's not just disease that is unseen, but that materials like asbestos and toxic substances can kill and maim without being seen.

I know as well, that we have not witnessed the last of the infectious disease in our workplaces. By the vary nature of their jobs, some PSAC members are at greater risk than many in society. Take avian flu, a virus that can, in relatively rare cases, spread from live poultry to people. PSAC members employed by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency are currently on the front line of this disease. In British Columbia, they are on site in what the government calls a "control zone", helping to ensure that the disease does not spread.

I know as well, that health and safety is not the only union issue when it comes to the impact of deadly infectious diseases in the workplace. As HIV/AIDS and SARS have demonstrated, disease has an ugly face that can breed racism and homophobia as fast as it can spread from person to person around the globe. As health and safety activists within the PSAC, we have an obligation to ensure that our workplaces are protected, both from disease and from human rights' violations that sometimes follow the disease.

The PSAC is committed to connecting all parts of our Union on issues that affect our members and their workplaces.

That's one of the reasons why we are asking our Health and Safety activists to play an increasing role in the duty to accommodate workers with disabilities, an issue that will be at the forefront on the PSAC Access Conference later this year, and is being discussed here as well.

Connecting the dots is also why health and safety issues are increasingly finding their way to the negotiating table with our employers from coast to coast to coast. It's also why the employer's refusal to consider our health and safety demands is a solid reason for our activists who work for the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Parks Canada and Treasury Board to get out, and get your Brothers and Sisters out, to vote yes at strike vote meetings that are currently underway.

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Sisters and Brothers, you know better than I the daily grind that is involved in getting our employers to take health and safety seriously. Getting them to go beyond the law and create a workplace culture that puts workers' health above the cost control philosophy that has permeated a great many of our workplaces over the last two decades.

But I know the statistics, to the extent that the government bothers to compile them.

First the good news. The statistical record is improving in Canada and around the world, primarily because workers are standing their ground, defending their rights and demanding effective legislation and the implementation of sound health and safety practices. In fact, the statistics indicate that workplace committees and health and safety activists are having a positive impact.

But the statistical news isn't all good. In fact, they're down right devastating.

In 2001, there were more than a thousand workplace fatalities in Canada. That averages out to three deaths a day, and that's three too many.

Between 1994 and 1998, there was an average of 801,000 workplace injuries in Canada. That's more than 3,500 a day worked.

In fact, Canadians are three and a half times more likely to get injured on the job than in a traffic accident, and it does not stop there.

Canada consistently loses more time to workplace injuries than it does during strikes or lockouts.

While the cost to the families of individuals killed on the job, and workers injured on the job, are hard to quantify, the cost to the economy is not.

Our government's tolerance of poor workplace health and safety practices costs the Canadian economy more than \$9.3 billion in workers'

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compensation payments and indirect costs alone. That's more than \$175,000 per minute.

I also know that Canada doesn't fare very well when its workplace death and injury rate is compared to countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

We share with Italy the distinction of having the worst record when it comes to workplace deaths. In fact, Canada's death on the job rate is more than seven times higher than in the United Kingdom, and 1.75 times higher than in the United States.

Worse still, while death and injury rates are falling in OECD countries, they are falling far less in Canada than in other countries.

In other words, as a country, we have to do more to stop the carnage that is occurring at workplaces across the country at an alarming and unacceptable rate.

That's one of the reasons why the PSAC supported Bill C-45, the legislation adopted late last year which amended the Criminal Code to hold corporations, their directors and executives accountable for criminally negligent acts in the workplace.

I am going to say a few words about this Bill because it clearly indicates how hard it is for Unions to get things done, and why it's so important to continue the struggle in the face of the opposition that we face from governments.

In a battle that was reminiscent of the PSAC's Pay Equity fight, the Steelworkers Union took on the struggle to hold corporations to account for criminally negligent acts in the workplace under the Criminal Code. They started the campaign the morning after a 1992 explosion ripped through the Westray Coal mine in Stellerton Nova Scotia killing 26 miners and devastating the community.

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It took a half a decade of pressure from the Steelworkers before the government agreed to hold a Public Inquiry into the tragedy, and even then, the legislation was introduced by Alexa McDonough, then the leader of the New Democratic Party, as a Private Member's Bill. In total, it took more than 11 years of petitions, lobbying and mobilization before the government finally acted.

I make this point for two reasons. First, the Steelworkers, the NDP and many others, including the delegates, observers and guests at the 2003 PSAC Convention should be thanked for staying the course, for forcing the government to act, and for ultimately making employers think twice about the dangers that they are exposing their workers to. And second, because today, as we embark on our postcard and petition campaign to advance reassignment for pregnant and nursing workers, we need to remember that change doesn't just happen. It comes about through struggle, commitment and dedication. It comes through political action. And while it can take a lot of time, it's essential that we never give up.

So, sign the postcard, take the petition back to your workplace, and gather support for a change, which like the Westray Bill is long overdue.

But we can't just stop with postcards and petitions, and we won't. Reassignment of pregnant and nursing workers is at the bargaining table for a number of PSAC bargaining groups. It's a health and safety issue, and it's going nowhere fast in the face of employer resistance. So I am going to ask you to do this. If you are part of the PSAC Treasury Board, Parks or CFIA bargaining groups, get out to the strike vote meetings that are currently underway and build support for the issue by speaking out, and by voting yes for strike action if necessary. And those of you who are members of other bargaining groups, you need to make sure that the issue is addressed at the bargaining table, and that our negotiating team members understand the issue, and why it is so very important to women workers from coast to coast to coast.

Sisters and Brothers, we are working during a time when the economy is undergoing rapid change. Trade deals are undermining labour and environmental standards and rights. Corporations and governments are

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cutting expenditures, work rules are being relaxed, hours are being extended, and there is no end to the consequences.

Let me give you just one example. I met with the Deputy Minister of a large federal department a few weeks ago, and he told me that he is looking to transform critical parts of the organization into a 24/7 operation. He is moving in that direction because he believes that it will enhance service. But he's given absolutely no thought to the impact on the workers involved. No thought about the health and safety consequences. No thought about the disruption of peoples lives. No thought whatsoever.

But in a technologically-driven, globalized economy, we are going to face more challenges like this, and we need to be proactive at the workplace, in bargaining, in the political arena and in the community at large. That's one of the reasons that the NBoD took a Globalization Action Plan to the last PSAC Convention, and why we continue to connect the dots between globalization and bargaining, between globalization and health and safety, between globalization and women's health, between globalization and human rights, and between globalization and social justice.

Before closing, I want to do four things. First, I want to very briefly say that this is a watershed year in Canadian politics. While health and safety is not likely to be a wedge issue during the federal election, you should get active and involved in the upcoming election campaign because governments, and particularly majority governments, that are beholden to corporations, and who advocate Free Trade are trying to reshape the economy and drive labour rights and standards, including health and safety, to the lowest common denominator.

Second, getting the government to take health and safety seriously is a huge struggle in federal public sector workplaces as well as the economy as a whole. We did a great job at the National Joint Council level, and finally got the employer to agree to draft terms of reference for a Joint Health and Safety Policy Committee. This is important because a lot of potential hazards, such as contaminated federal sites, transcend individual workplaces, and need a focus and resources at the national level.

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Third, the March 23rd federal budget has a direct impact on health and safety, and the program review update released the following day may well have an indirect impact. The good news is that the government has earmarked a substantial sum of money for the cleanup of contaminated federal worksites, in large part because of pressure from the PSAC and our assertion that it was not doing enough and not getting the clean-up done quickly enough. The bad news is that the government is going to reallocate more money from existing programs and services to new initiatives, and every program, including health and safety initiatives, are going to be competing for available resources. So those of you who work for the federal government and the many agencies subject to program review are going to have to be diligent and tenacious in order to protect health and safety programs and initiatives.

The final point that I want to make is a commitment that the PSAC will continue to provide the tools that you need to get the job done. And in this regard, I am happy to announce that a PSAC Health and Safety Tool Kit is being officially launched at this Conference. It's a comprehensive kit, and it is going to be updated on a regular basis. It will also be expanded to cover provincial and territorial jurisdictions.

We also have other tools in the works, including an updated health and safety training program.

I also want to thank each and every one of you for attending the Conference, and for your daily commitment to making our members' workplaces safer and healthier. Its important work and the PSAC can be proud of the fact that we have so many committed activists who participate on workplace health and safety committees and on Component, Local and Regional Executives.

As health and safety leaders within our Union, every one of you in this room has a role to play. So you have a job to do when you leave this Conference. You must take back the information, analysis and tools from the Conference to the members of your Locals and Branches and your Health and Safety Committees. You must make the link between your role

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as health and safety representatives and your role within the Local with grassroots members.

So please continue to play an active role with others in your region to ensure that health and safety is successfully implemented. I encourage all of you here today, to work within your regions in making all of our Regional Health and Safety Conferences and regional health and safety activities as successful as I understand this Conference has been.

Thank you.

PANEL ON GLOBALIZATION

The panel on Globalization was moderated by **Brother Todd Parsons**, National President of the Union of Northern Workers and a member of the NBoD Standing Committees on Occupational Health and Safety and on Environment. The following is Brother Parsons' address to the participants:



«The National Board of Directors met last fall to discuss and identify broad priorities for the Union for the next three years. Collective bargaining and mobilization, the development of strong Locals, and defending the workplace rights of all of our members, including our health and safety rights – were at the heart of our discussions.

And from those discussions, we identified five broad priorities, one of which was “Linking globalization to our members’ lives” and I hope that this panel today will contribute to that.

Our Union’s involvement in the anti-globalization struggle has been growing over the years. From our collective efforts with the Canadian Labour Congress and the Action Canada Network to stop the North American Free Trade Agreement – to the world wide campaign against the MAI (a fight we actually won!) – from Seattle, Quebec City, Miami and many, many places in between, our Union along with other unions and the broader social movement have been increasingly challenging corporate power and governments who are abandoning their economic and social responsibilities to working people.

For the last three years, our Union has made defending public services a political priority and education, communications and mobilization on globalization a priority as well. At our last convention we debated an action plan to fight globalization – an

action that begins here at home – where we can make a difference in our workplaces, our collective agreements and in our union. We agreed on an action plan that allows us to make the links between our struggles here in Canada, including our struggles as health and safety activists, and those of our brothers and sisters around the world.

Whether you live and work in downtown Toronto, on the East Coast, the West Coast or up North, Globalization has an impact on your life. We need to better understand this and to develop effective strategies to take on corporate globalization as we know it because when we do, we are protecting and defending public services, and we are protecting our rights as workers and those of our sisters and brothers around the world.

We have two distinguished guests on our panel this morning with a wealth of knowledge on this issue. »



Brother Rory O'Neill

Summary of the Presentation

Two million workers are killed at work each year. A total of 270 million injured at work each year. And just when you thought it was dangerous enough, the employers introduced a whole new set of hazards:

- Downsizing and job insecurity
- Intensification of work
- Casualisation
- Automation
- Punitive sickness absence policies
- Overwork
- Drug and alcohol tests
- “Blame the worker” safety schemes
- Snooping at work

Now they are working us to death. In my opinion, the major occupational diseases of the 21st century workplace will be:

- Much of what we had before, plus
- Heart attacks
- Suicides and
- Strokes

And then they went and globalised. Consider the following:

- Over half of the world's largest economies are now companies, not countries;
- The 500 largest multinationals account for 70 per cent of world trade;
- Microsoft is a bigger economy than the Philippines; Phillip Morris bigger than either Ireland or Denmark.

By doing an extensive review of many industries, you can easily find their link with Globalization: Construction; Textile; Agriculture; Microelectronics; Transportation; Chemical and Mining.

Keep in mind that Canada has one of the highest work fatality rates in the developed world. All Governments have caved in to industry pressure and opted for voluntary rather than regulatory approaches.

They've globalised, casualised, rationalised, intensified, deregulated, harassed, blamed us, tested our urine, tested our patience, video snooped, eavesdropped, blamed our genes and when they've done with all that, they've worked us to death.

They don't care about unions or loyalty to the workforce; they just threaten to "offshore" or export our jobs – it's "take it or leave it" or "take it or we leave you".

Is there anything unions can do up against all this?

In Canada, there is a quite a lot you can do. Consider the following:

- A 1993 study for the Canadian Ministries of Labour shows union supported health and safety committees have a significant "impact on reducing injury rates.

- Ontario Workplace Health and Safety Agency “found that 78-79 per cent of unionized workplaces reported high compliance with health and safety legislation while only 54-61 per cent of non-unionized workplaces reported such compliance.”

The same “union safety effect” is seen worldwide, because Unions have the knowledge, muscle and skills to deliver (Union campaigns at work; Union education; Working with the membership; Participatory research techniques; Learning from each other, etc).

A network of global union federations is working to make unions a force on the global stage. We can do it together.

Internationally the global unions’ network includes 200 national union centres in 143 countries representing 125 million members. That’s a force to be reckoned with, if we work together and...

- Work with our members
- Don’t get suckered, get trained
- Learn from each other
- Be real – the new workplace hazards including overwork and insecurity
- Recognise safety is an industrial issue, not a technical issue – and union organisation is the only guarantee of safety.

And finally, for the love of all things union and for the sake of global safety, buy Hazards Magazine (www.hazards.org).

Sister Cathy Walker



Summary of the Presentation

The world changed after 1989 when the Soviet Union imploded and, in Canada, Mulroney was elected.

A Free Trade agreement (FTA) was signed between US and Canada on January 1st 1989. The purpose was to benefit US corporations by implementing the corporate agenda and globalization. With Free Trade came deregulation.

Its effect on health and safety was quickly felt. Workers had to “speed up” and lay off’s were soon implemented. We saw a dramatic increase in repetitive strain injuries on workers.

In 1993 the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was signed and implemented on January 1st 1994. Some of the effects on Canadians included:

- Increased of reported stress and workload;
- Increased fatigue which lead to a CAW “fatigue kills” campaign to deal with the significant increase of tired drivers in big trucks on the road.

NAFTA also included side deals allowing domestic authorities to enforce their own health and safety or environmental laws (often weaker than in Canada). They often endorse “Best Practices” which really means no enforcement.

Health and safety problems did build solidarity amongst workers in NAFTA countries. But the environment is also at stake under NAFTA. The Agreement allows corporations to challenge sovereign environmental laws. They successfully argued that governments can't enact law to restrict their ability to sell product.

What can we do about globalization?

- Fight back;
- Vote out politicians (people support governments who support people);
- Mobilize to support health and safety legislation;
- “Build our Union, Save our world”;
- Mobilize against globalization (demonstrations, campaigns, etc);
- Health & safety and globalization are the same struggle.

Our slogan should be “Fighting back makes the difference”. Together we CAN change the world.

PANEL ON EMERGING WORKPLACE ISSUES



The panel on Emerging Workplace Issues was moderated by **Brother Yves Ducharme**, National President of the Agriculture Union and a member of the NBoD Standing Committees on Occupational Health and Safety and on Environment. The following is Brother Ducharme's address to the participants:

«The work of health and safety activists is never done. Employers do not lack creativity when it comes to implementing acts and regulations. Governments sometimes even conspire with employers and often limit themselves to vague promises of voluntary compliance rather than officially report violations of the acts and regulations.

The increased workload resulting from work reorganization, downsizing, contracting out, deregulation and technological change constitutes a serious risk to the health and safety of our members. Stress, burn-out and physical and psychological injury are real consequences of work overload.

PSAC members also work in a variety of environments where they are subject to psychological or physical violence from their clientele, their co-workers and their supervisors or managers. Physical violence results in injury, post-traumatic stress disorder and even death. It often results in fear, anger, stress, a sense of helplessness, a lessening of effectiveness, and physical or mental illness.

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PANEL ON EMERGING WORKPLACE ISSUES

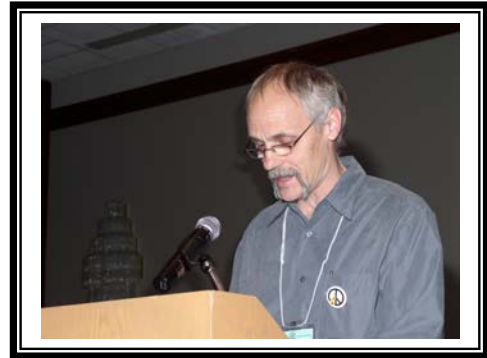
Emerging health and safety issues are numerous and never-ending. Infectious diseases are a good example. Over the last few months, we had to deal with SARS, Avian Flu and Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy. That is why we need to meet and discuss them regularly to establish union strategies to fight back.

Today's Panel of Emerging Workplace Issues is exactly that: an opportunity for all of us to listen to experts in their fields and plant a few seeds which will hopefully produce new and innovative ideas to best protect ourselves.

It is an honour for me to act as the moderator of the **Panel on Emerging Workplace Issues.**

Our speakers today have impressive records. Their reputations precede them.

Brother Charley Richardson



Summary of the Presentation

Work organization and work reorganization is at the core of the problems that workers are facing – it is the source. We have to understand it and place it at the center of health and safety struggles; otherwise we are only fighting fires.

Our work is being changed on an ongoing basis and we can be certain that those changes will continue and will in fact accelerate. Restructuring is systematic and scientific. They work hard at it. they have lots of resources and expertise behind it. It will not go away or be easily diverted. They don't care about the consequences of their plans.

Technology is a critical factor, giving them increasingly sophisticated tools to monitor, de-skill, control, isolate and eliminate workers.

Computers are everywhere. Terminals are being put in trucks to track and direct the workforce. Outsourcing, which is computer-enabled, is reaching epidemic proportions and is moving up the skill ladder to affect lawyers, doctors and architects. Computerized automation is being used to eliminate jobs.

Work restructuring is fundamentally about power. You can't understand restructuring or its impacts without looking at the control factor. And technology is being aimed directly at our sources of power.

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Work restructuring and technological changes are having huge impacts on everything we care about as workers and union members – including of course health and safety. Stress, RSI's, workplace violence, injuries and illnesses – the foundations for each of these is laid in the struggle over work organization and technology. For example, understaffing and long hours of work, both endemic in the new restructured world of work, are directly related to an increase in injuries, illnesses and even death.

The most important impact of restructuring and technological changes is their impact on the strength of the union (isolation of members; division among members, despair; loss of critical skills and knowledge; loss of members and resources).

So it is clear that something needs to be done – but it is also clear that restructuring is accelerating, rather than slowing, that it is getting more intense and more “effective”.

There is a disconnect between the pace and reality of change in the workplace and the traditional mechanisms of labor-management interaction.

The existing model says that we sit down with management every three years or so to discuss key issues, to negotiate the rules of the workplace. The rest of the time, we are supposed to focus on enforcing the contract.

But this leaves management with the advantage. Because they sit down every day and make new plans for the workplace – new ways to bypass the rules that have been put in place, new ways to change work to their advantage.

They are planning today for the ways they are going to use technology against us next year, the year after that and the year after that.

The struggle over work organization and technology is fundamentally a struggle over the right to a say something about our futures; and health

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and safety is a key and necessary way into that struggle. We can never make

our workplaces safe and healthy if we don't take on the struggle over work organization. It is not about exposure limits, it is about the future, it is about power and control.

So what do we need?

We need a continuous bargaining framework which requires that every change management is seeking needs to be bargained.

We need education around work organization and technology.

We need Union mechanisms for monitoring changes in technology and work organization, for researching and looking ahead, for bringing together what we know so we can see the big picture.

We need integration of health and safety efforts with the rest of the union.

We need contract language to counter-act the power shift, to ensure a voice in changes that are occurring.

Health and safety is a way into a struggle over those fundamental problems, into the core struggle for our futures. It is a way into the fight to transform not only our workplaces, but the lives of working people. There are no more important people to this struggle than health and safety activists.

Management will try to divide us, divert us, put blinders on us and de-fang us. But as long as we keep our eyes on the prize, our focus on a healthy and safe workplace, we will be able to move our unions to where they need to be. As long as we ignore the siren call of blame the worker programs and personal protective equipment, as long as we keep pointing to the source, the health and safety struggle can be a defining struggle for our unions and our futures.

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PANEL ON EMERGING WORKPLACE ISSUES



Brother Hassan Yussuff

Summary of the Presentation

Health and safety is a political issue. Every day work in the work place is where we can fight for our rights.

Although we try to eat healthy food, many get cancer. A very large majority of delegates know very close people who are victims of cancer. Cancer is now an epidemic. We do not have the legislation nor do we have the regulation in place to ensure reduction of carcinogens.

There is a web site maintained by the federal government, on it there is a clock that shows how many people have contracted and died from cancer. This epidemic is throughout Canadian society. Although we have to support research for cure, it is prevention that we have to focus upon.

The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) has produced a booklet for workers to explain the concept behind cancer. This is a prevention campaign. Statistics show that if you work on exposure to carcinogens, we can reduce the number of workers who would suffer from cancer. Carcinogens are now found in food, water and food. No matter what you do or where you live you are regularly in contact with carcinogens.

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What workers can do is to be activists at the workplace to work on ensuring carcinogens are taken away from work. We should try to support efforts for banning carcinogens in society.

The current CLC campaign will be effective if it is taken back to the workplace. (CLC web site is at www.clc-ctc.ca). The CLC is trying to give tools for workplace and community campaign. If we want a change in the number of people affected by cancer, the fight against cancer has to be political as well.

I also want to raise with you the issue of legislation and enforcement of health and safety laws. The issue is not as much the lack of legislation, but more the compliance to legislation.

Recently, The Minister of Labour introduced changes to the Canada Labour Code, Part II. It took 7 long years to negotiate. Employers have to see that members are supported by workplace health and safety committees and vice-versa. We have to demonstrate our strengths and resources.

The protection of workers in the workplace is often violated without any penalty on employers because there is very few enforcement. The Westray story is a reflection of neglect. Bill C-45 was introduced last year in response to this event. Considering the number of workers who died in this event, no one has been charged. This Bill is now one additional important tool in our arsenal to try to continue to work for changes and improved prevention in the workplace.

This year is the 20th anniversary of the (April 28) Day of Mourning in Canada. In 2002 we saw an increase in workplace deaths: 934. In addition, 700 000 workers were injured. On April 28, 2004, we will be mourning 16 000 workers who died on the job during this 20 year period. During that same period, 17 million Canadian workers were injured on the job.

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Health and safety is not only a technical aspect. It means to try to make the workplace a better and safer place. Activists are significant elements to achieve this goal.

Now, after the past 20 years, there is far better protection than there was 20 years ago. Jeff Bennie and Denis St-Jean have significantly contributed to the changes of the Canada Labour Code, part II. Jeff was there for the 7 years during which the changes to the legislation were negotiated and Denis was there for the latter part. The upcoming Violence in the workplace Regulation will have been developed because of the effort of both Denis and Jeff.

As activists, the job can be somehow frustrating in terms of health and safety, but the work that delegates at this convention do is the key action that will lead to a better and safer workplace.

PANEL ON EMERGING WORKPLACE ISSUES



Sister Katherine Lippel

Summary of the Presentation

Physical health may be compromised by acute stress (a single, highly stressful event) or by chronic stress, that is a series of events, even trivial ones, the cumulative effect of which undermines health.

There are a number of sources of chronic stress: organizational violence, abuse of authority, moral harassment, psychological harassment, discriminatory harassment, work overload, etc. It is important to emphasize that not every stressor constitutes psychological harassment.

The grounds most often cited in claims involving the Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CSST - Québec Workers' Compensation Board), are related to a desire to exclude in cases such as a return to work after an occupational injury or after sick or maternity leave. There are also cases related to work reorganization, which alters work teams. In return-to-work cases, the employer cannot dismiss the employee and, in some instances, may harass the employee in the hope that he or she will decide to leave.

Work organization may encourage harassment and violence. One example is the case of an employer wishing to get rid of an employee. As the employer has no grounds for dismissal, it will create a situation in which co-workers are encouraged to exclude the employee in question. Harassers may be executives and supervisors, co-workers or clients.

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PANEL ON EMERGING WORKPLACE ISSUES

The vast majority of provincial statutes have ruled out the possibility of compensation for employment injury attributable to chronic stress. Quebec is the only province that has agreed to compensate these cases. Access to compensation does not depend on proof of harassment as such, but rather on evidence of an employment injury.

However, employment injuries as a result of psychological harassment stand little chance of being recognized at the trial level (only one successful case in 100 cases reviewed). Chances are better at the appeal stage (30 favourable CLP decisions).

The present statutes do not recognize non-discriminatory harassment and do not prohibit psychological harassment. Furthermore, there is no effective legal remedy to prevent such harassment. Existing legislation on health in the workplace is difficult to enforce. It applies only for the purpose of compensating employment injury. The right of refusal does not apply either.

The Quebec Department of Labour examined the issue of psychological harassment in 2001, and passed Bill 143 on December 19, 2002. That legislation will go into effect in June 2004.

The new act is applicable to all workers, whether unionized or not. It defines psychological harassment, establishes a right to a harassment-free environment, defines the employer's obligations and provides various remedies and time for filing a grievance.

The intention of the act is preventive. Its definition is tortuous to say the least. However, it does not require evidence of malicious intent. Nor must it be proven that the victim's health was affected. It must only be proven that there has been an attack on the employee's dignity, psychological or physical integrity and that the situation has resulted in a harmful work environment for the employee.

PANEL ON EMERGING WORKPLACE ISSUES

It is important to note that the act does not require that fault be assigned. This means that psychological harassment is still harassment, even if a "less difficult" person would not have been targeted.

The act also defines employers' new obligations: "Employers must take reasonable action to prevent psychological harassment and, whenever they become aware of such behaviour, to put a stop to it."

The act also increases union liability. Employees may now file a complaint against their union if they believe they have been poorly represented in this respect.

The act sets out the time limits for filing their complaint. Deadlines may vary with the circumstances. However, it is important to note that definitions, rights, deadlines and remedies will have to be integrated into all collective agreements under the act. It will therefore be impossible for unionized employees to negotiate better conditions.

The act is not perfect, but it requires employers to take psychological harassment seriously.

CONFERENCE WORKSHOP TOPICS

Health and safety activists are often trying to deal with many different issues often reflected in our daily newspapers. The last couple of years were no exception. The Steering Committee members also wanted to deal with many of the ongoing struggles all our health and safety committee members must tackle.

In attempting to meet all those priorities, four workshops topics were offered at the National Conference. All applicants were asked to indicate their order of preference for the different workshops. Every attempt was made to respect their first preference. All participants attended one workshop during the conference.

Globalization and Its Effects on Workplace Health and Safety Issues

This workshop looked at the issue of globalization of industry and government services, including the move to privatization and deregulation, and what impact these concepts and practices have had on health and safety and working conditions for all workers including, more specifically, Canadian workers.

In all, 53 members participated in the two English workshops and 17 members participated in the French workshop.

Women's Health and Safety: Everyone's Struggle

This workshop examined health and safety issues that are of a particular concern to women. Participants had the opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues including reassignment of pregnant or nursing workers, barriers that limit the ability for women to participate on health and safety committees, ergonomics, violence in the workplace, etc.

In all, 46 members participated in the two English workshops and 11 members participated in the French workshop.

CONFERENCE WORKSHOP TOPICS

Committees – Dealing with Infectious Diseases: Lessons Learned

This workshop looked at the wide range of issues and problems that Committee members must deal with when faced with an infectious disease outbreak. Participants had the opportunity to exchange information drawing from our experience with recent outbreaks of SARS, West Nile Virus, etc.

In all, 54 members participated in the two English workshops and 14 members participated in the French workshop.

Health and Safety Committees – Strategies for Change

This workshop looked at how an effective union health and safety program can be established, reviewed strategies that will enable activists to improve workplace health and safety conditions through the establishment of Union enforcement plans, reviewed our Union policies and services available when faced with an issue.

In all, 75 members participated in the three English workshops and 22 members participated in the French workshop.

CONFERENCE WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

The number of participants to our Conference required more than one group working on the same workshop topic. The Conference Agenda also included workshop reports to be presented to the plenary session.

In order to prepare a report from all groups working on the same topic, all workshops were asked to select a reporter. All workshop reporters from the same topics met and prepared recommendations to be presented to the plenary session.



The following reports are the recommendations made from all workshop reporters working on the same topic. These recommendations were presented during the plenary session.

CONFERENCE WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Globalization and Its Effects on Workplace Health and Safety Issues

Who Is Affected?

- Us personally
- Families
- Children
- Governments
- Countries

Effects

- Increased workload
- Changing tasks
- Greater risks to health –increased health costs.
- Fewer workers to do the work
- Technological change – replacement of human workers

Corporations (National Globalization League)

- Wal Mart
- Ford, GM
- Imperial Tobacco
- Consolidated Bathurst

Taxes on multinationals represent 14% of government revenue – can transfer resources out of country and have tremendous lobbying power to effect changes to taxation system in their favour.

86% of government revenue comes from taxes of small businesses and individuals.

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CONFERENCE WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Response

- Education
- Documentation / Information
- Continue to participate in “common fronts” to fight back
- Reinforce collective agreements
- Putting pressure on MP’s
- Voting for political parties favourable to workers
- Developing campaigns on demands of unions on health and safety
- Internationalize the message
- Getting message to workers and future generations
- Making members aware of pros and cons of globalization
- Better publicizing our victories with the membership

CONFERENCE WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

GLOBALIZATION – FIGHTBACK STRATEGIES

In our Locals:

- Get involved in Day of Mourning: local activities
- Lobby for worker memorials in every community
- Bring Day of Mourning activities to local town councils for endorsement
- Organize town hall meetings: in cities/towns
- Utilize media
- Network with other Unions/Labour organizations
- Educate membership on ethical shopping – boycotting of goods made by companies exploiting workers
- Drive home the message through broad based coalitions and campaigns
- Get message out to youth: through school system, unionized teachers, establish programs in elementary schools on health and safety
- Provide federal programs on health and safety in secondary schools and colleges

Nationally:

- Negotiate new health and safety provisions in collective agreements (i.e. PSAC Social Justice Fund, Training Plan)
- Develop stronger health and safety awareness campaigns
- Negotiate stronger legislative provisions
- Participate in boycotts
- Provide globalization information on rallies, boycotts, events, information on the website
- Reach out to public – involve other constituencies beyond Union movement in campaigns
- Include Globalization awareness as a standing agenda item at conventions and conferences
- Educate/target youth in schools (i.e. national poster contests, Scholarships)
- Organize annual demonstrations

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CONFERENCE WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Internationally:

Develop Action Plan

1. Develop lists of contacts - form coalitions - work with the CLC, ILO, ICFTU, International Federation of Journalists, National Commonwealth of Journalists
 - Work with United Nations and International human rights organizations (Amnesty International)
 - Develop an international coalition – developed through worker advocate exchanges
 - Lobby governments – ministers of external and foreign affairs
 - Develop international labour orientated model health and safety legislation
2. Develop Mission Statement
 - Get the message out and establish mechanisms to get feedback
 - Know the audience (who is listening - who is hearing - develop plain language)
 - Recognize political, cultural, religious, technological barriers
3. Fund Raising
 - Form partnership
 - Establish budget
4. Establish a Timeframe (Continuously Evolving)
 - Consider language barriers, financial barriers, etc.
5. Ongoing Evaluation

CONFERENCE WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Additional Points to Consider:

- Define international terms of reference
- Look outside the box
- Hold international conferences
- Use plain language
- Take a leadership role, not passive
- Utilize international guest speakers

CONFERENCE WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Women's Health and Safety: Everyone's Struggle

Violence in the Workplace

- Violence in the workplace continues to exist but women of the PSAC have begun to recognize the signs better. Women no longer will be ignored.
- Violence appears in many different forms and it happens when dealing with the public, clients, co-workers and when working in isolation.
- Violence can be physical, psychological, verbal or come in written form.
- Harassment is a form of violence and is being experienced from managers and between co-workers as well.

Strategies include:

- Training on situation specific violence.
- Ensuring that women know their rights as well as use the Union Management Committees and the health and safety committees.

Musculoskeletal and Repetitive Strain Injuries

All jobs now potentially have a repetitive component or put a strain on muscles, tendons and other body parts. Repetitive and musculoskeletal related injuries seem to be occurring in almost all types of work.

Strategies include:

- Ensuring that ergonomic assessments are done by experts from outside the workplace as well as "ergo experts" attached to the health and safety committees who can be trained to assess when workers may be at risk on the job.
- Ensuring that policies state that when workstations change, an ergonomic assessment will automatically happen within a short period of time.

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CONFERENCE WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensuring that workstations fit new employees at the time they are hired.
- Using the employer's Duty to Accommodate to push ergonomic issues, recognizing that DTA issues require a broader communications network.

Effective Functioning Committees

Women aren't often on joint health and safety committees, and when they are, they often are not given the support needed to push forward women's issues.

Strategies include:

- As a first step, review Terms of Reference for committees for their adverse impact on women;
- Committees need to interact with the membership on women's issues to eliminate ignorance of women's health issues; and
- Unresolved issues need to be sent to regional committees and if necessary, to national committees for political action.

Protective Reassignment

To obtain paid leave if a pregnant or nursing worker can't be reassigned.

Strategies include:

- Developing an education campaign;
- Producing a toolkit for shop stewards;
- Bringing the issue to the negotiation table;
- Action to change the law!

CONFERENCE WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Eliminate Ignorance about Women's Health Issues

Health and Safety issues that are of special interest to women are too often minimized. These issues include women's physiological changes as well as health and safety issues related to the traditional and nontraditional work women do. PSAC women are determined to change this situation.

Strategies include:

- Using all levels of the union to eliminate ignorance about women's health and safety issues.
- Holding joint training on specific issues.
- Submitting resolutions to health and safety and women's conferences to research women's issues in order to develop and present support for bargaining demands.

CONFERENCE WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Committees – Dealing with Infectious Diseases: Lessons Learned

The participants reviewed the various government reports drafted following the SARS outbreak in Canada. They shared information drawing from their personal experience. An assessment of the capacity of their respective workplace to react to another such crisis was also performed. They reflected on the many tools required to prepare for the next infectious disease outbreak in Canada.

The following are recommendations which were drawn from the discussions:

On the Issue of Communications, Occupational Health and Safety Resources & Funding

- Improve the PSAC WEB Site:
- Allow for better access
- Expand on its content (all Policies)
- Arrange for networking amongst members and staff
- Ensure presence of Regions to facilitate networking in response to a regional situation
- Ensure presence of Components to facilitate networking amongst its members
- All workshop participants agreed that each PSAC Regions must have at least one PSAC Health and Safety Representative.

On the Issues of Emergency Situations and Enforcement of Health and Safety Legislation

Participants established as a fact that infectious diseases are too often not perceived as a professional risk.

- PSAC must continue to lobby all Government for better legislation, regulations and overall enforcement of health and safety provisions.
- Every Health and Safety Policy Committee must include on their Committee Agenda the issue of Job Hazard Analysis with a strong emphasis on its capacity to react to an infectious disease outbreak.

CONFERENCE WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Health and Safety Committees – Strategies for Change

Workshop participants reviewed the various tools already available to assist Committee members. They also looked at the many training opportunities available to them. The PSAC Union structure was discussed highlighting their particular roles and responsibilities in health and safety.

The following are the key recommendations for each structure of the PSAC:

Local Level

- PSAC must provide training to all local union health and safety committee representative.
- All locals should have an executive position dedicated to health and safety.
- Locals must offer on-site health and safety union training to all members.

Regional Structure

- Regional Councils to prepare a hand out describing the political and administrative responsibilities of the Regional level.
- Regional Council to lobby for financial support for regional health and safety program from the National Board of Directors.
- PSAC to ensure dedicated health and safety position in every region.

Components

- Each Component must have a dedicated health and safety position (health and safety service officer).
- Components should provide a financial contribution (on a per capita basis) to cover some of the cost involved around health and safety activities organized within the Regional Council structure.
- Components should develop health and safety policies and ensure a wide distribution of them.

CONFERENCE WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

National Level

- National Office should lobby governments to provide increased funding to all agencies in order to fulfill occupational health and safety obligations.
- National Office to restore HRDC-Labour Programs to full departmental status with sufficient resources to promote all aspects of health and safety training, enforcement and inspections

REGIONAL ACTION PLANS

Regional caucuses were convened on the last day of the conference. The participants were asked to formulate regional strategies around the action plans that emanated from the workshops.

What follows are the proposed regional strategies as developed during the Facilitated Regional Action Plans Sessions. These recommendations were presented during the plenary session.





NORTH REGION

1. To create health and safety committees and strengthen existing committees
 - Training to support health and safety committee members:
 - Through the development of courses and resource material specific to the North, including different Territorial Legislation as well as the Canada Labour Code
 - To place any newly created information pertinent to the North on the PSAC website for easy access of the membership
 - Through the creation of a PSAC Health and Safety Regional Representative position
 - Through the canvassing of Locals to ensure Local by-laws reflect an executive position of each Local for a health and safety executive officer who will provide communication to and from joint health and safety committees, and to ensure that each local has succession planning in place when members leave the executive and the workplace committees
 - To create a contact list of Northern PSAC health and safety activists: to be done by Holly (create National Conference list); Gerard – Nunavut List; Cheryl – NWT list; Laurie – Yukon list and Sheila – tool kit distribution.

2. Regional Health and Safety Conference in the North

- Holding the regional conference in conjunction with another labour event to deter the high cost of travel – decision to do so in conjunction with the PSAC North Regional Convention in May 2005 (the regional health and safety conference will be held one day prior to the Convention in Whitehorse)
- To create a planning committee for this conference made up of at least one member from each territory and one member from the newly formed BHP Local (so that issues relating to the Mine Safety Act be a focus at the conference as well as other health and safety issues pertinent to the North) as well as representation from any Directly Chartered Locals.
- This planning committee will use conference calls, e-mail and the internet as the main ways of planning with the assistance of PSAC Regional Staff.
- To use the material and expertise from the Yukon to strengthen the rest of the North in the area of health and safety
- To create an evaluation sheet to be used at the end of the conference for future planning ideas and feedback



BRITISH COLUMBIA REGION

The British Columbia regional caucus reviewed the priorities from the last National Health and Safety Conference in Quebec City in 2002. The top 4 priorities from that conference were:

1. To deliver joint health and safety training developed by the union, delivered by the union and paid for by the employer.
2. To explore opportunities that would allow union health and safety training to be delivered in a variety of ways including distance learning or delivery by area councils.
3. To develop a policy paper that would identify how to make health and safety more of a union priority and how to address hazard identification both while performing work for the employer and for the union.
4. To address violence in the workplace by surveying our regional health and safety activists to determine the extent of the problem and identify any current preventative measures.

Members of the caucus outlined the work that has been done on these priorities over the last 2 years. There was much progress to celebrate but much work still to do.

REGIONAL ACTION PLANS

We then created a list of the current issues which the caucus would like to see addressed in the next cycle. We agreed that the regional conference would also be part of moving our new priorities foreword.

After extensive discussion we identified 12 issues which require attention. After a dotmocracy priority exercise the following four priorities emerged:

1. Joint health and safety training again topped the list. We agreed the initiatives underway would continue to be our top priority.
2. Create a regional inventory of health and safety activists and activities thru a regional survey. This would help us move the training initiative foreword and also help provide content and direction to the BC Regional Union Safety and Health Committee (BRUSH) and the next regional health and safety conference. This conference would likely take place in 2005.
3. Our third priority is to create a network of regional health and safety activists. This would use the survey as the building block and the BRUSH would develop methods of building and maintaining this network. We could use the process of organizing the regional health and safety conference to lay the ground work for this priority.
4. Our fourth priority is once again violence in the workplace. We agreed that the development of a workplace strategy to address this issue is needed. We understand that the new regulations are close to finalized. Again this would likely be a topic for our regional conference and we could do more work on the issue at that conference.

A comparison of our priorities over the last two conferences shows that the members' will is clear. Our task as health and safety activists is to continue to move these union priorities foreword in our region.

PRAIRIES REGION

There are several challenges to be addressed in our action plan, including:

- Fully informing members on rights and processes through education and training.
- Overcoming apathy.
- Creating secure workplaces.
- Forcing the employer to provide needed tools and training and funding for health and safety.
- Being proactive rather than reactive.
- In co-located workplaces, we need to make sure that unions are giving the same information and are working together on health and safety.
- Ensuring that health and safety is respected at small sites and remote locations.



The Prairies regional plan has three main goals:

I. TRAINING (provided by the Union)

To see that our members:

- Receive the necessary training and education to be aware of and understand their rights under applicable laws, regulations, standards and codes.

- Are provided with new member orientation packages on health and safety rights
- Have access to all applicable health and safety training and education for their workplaces
- Are provided with sessions to handle the formal processes:
 - Internal responsibility systems (IRS)
 - Protocols
 - Union representative rights and responsibilities on joint committees, or where no joint committee can be established, the union health and safety representative
- Are provided with training handouts on:
 - Current health crises (i.e. SARS, Avian flu, BSI)
 - Women specific issues (i.e. Violence and harassment, protective reassignment)
 - One-page hand-outs on specific provisions of health and safety legislation

II. COMMUNICATIONS

Raise awareness to health and safety through:

- Training (outlined above)
- Creating a health and safety page on the Prairies Regional Council website that provides links to the occupational health and safety pages of the PSAC, Components, Federations of Labour and the Canada Labour Congress websites.
- Ensure availability of information on issues and boycotts.
- Distribute handouts on rights under legislation, health and safety newsletters, information on current crisis.
- Create an e-mail tree for health and safety activists and representatives to share and distribute information.
- Prairies Regional Council, Locals and Area Councils should conduct a political lobby with health and safety as its main theme.

III. STRUCTURE (i.e. Local and Regional Health and Safety Committees and Area Councils)

Strengthen the Prairies Regional Council's Regional Health and Safety Committee by:

- Including the Health and Safety Standing Committee in the Prairies Regional Council by-laws.
- Preparing a mission statement and terms of reference for the Health and Safety Standing Committee.
- Informing Locals and Area Councils of the work of the Prairies Regional Council Health and Safety Committee.
- Networking with Federations of Labour and other unions and PSAC Health and Safety Committees.
- Set up Health and Safety Standing Committees on Area Councils.
- Recommend that Locals include an executive position dedicated to health and safety.
- Include Health and Safety as a standing item at all PSAC Union meetings, including Area Council meetings and Regional Council meetings.
- Work to make changes within the PSAC to ensure that adequate funding is provided for health and safety training.
- Conduct a campaign at all levels of the union within the region to ensure that the employer provides necessary training.
- Establish a Regional Health & Safety staff position.



ONTARIO REGION

The Ontario Regional Caucus Main Objectives are:

- I. To obtain a better understanding of both duty to accommodate and return to work issues;
- II. To develop a Scent-Free Policy and Implementation Plan for both members and employers;
- III. Force employers to abide by the respective Health & Safety Legislation (federal and provincial legislation as applicable);
- IV. To increase knowledge of the Provincial workers' compensation system (WSIB)
 - Gain expertise in representation on WSIB Cases
 - Member education (basic rights & obligations)
 - Member advocacy and regulations
 - Early and safe return to work
 - Contain the number of cases through education

Detailed Objectives

I. To obtain a better understanding of both duty to accommodate and return to work issues

- i. Identify appropriate activities to achieve the objective
 - Education of member representatives and management
 - National policy recommended for Canada-wide with participation from all levels (i.e. who does what, where and how?).

- ii. Identify human resources both available and needed.

Inside the PSAC

- Money for education
- Resource Officer, regional and national
- Knowledge from members
- Outside and inside help for union

Outside the PSAC

- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety (CCOHS)
- Human Rights Section 15B
- Ontario Federation of Labour
- Health Canada

- iii. Identify material resources both available and needed

Inside PSAC

- Duty to accommodate
- WSIB Course Levels 1 & 2
- Money for training.

Outside the PSAC

- Ontario Federation of Labour
- Canadian Labour Congress
- Advocacy groups
- Injured workers groups

- WSIB Information
- iv. Divide tasks and responsibilities
 - PSAC provide courses and financial support
 - Provide a contact list on the website
 - Each local should request Policy from the National level of their respective employers
- v. Set up a communication/decision making system
 - Requires more time
 - Monitor and set up list of trained people and make available to the various components.
- vi. Set time line/deadlines
 - ASAP
- vii. Identify an evaluation process.
 - Continuous upgrade – work upgrade

II. To develop a Scent-Free policy and implementation plan for both members and employers.

- i. Identify appropriate activities to achieve the objective
 - Clearly identify what scent free means using PSAC policy as a model.
 - Worksite needs to identify what kinds of products being used and should be on the inventory sheet with the WHMIS.
 - The option of adding to the Health and Safety inspection checklist or each time take out products so we can look at them.
 - Have a joint training developed to educate staff and employer.

ii. Identify human resources both available and needed

Inside the PSAC

- Lorraine Diaper, CEIU member, London Region
- Denis St-Jean - Health and Safety Officer
- National Health and Safety Representatives
- Regional Health & Safety Representatives

Outside the PSAC

- Nurses and Doctors to speak on issues to assist with education
- Clinics – Health Units
- Website/ Internet – Ontario Federation of Labour and Labour Council
- Non-medical person (Workers Health & Safety Centre (WHSC))

iii. Identify material resources both available and needed

Inside the PSAC

- Policy Information
- Training and awareness information

Outside the PSAC

- Workers Health & Safety Centre

iv. Divide tasks and responsibilities

- PSAC help with training the trainer and bring back to train the Locals.
- Workers Health and Safety Centre and WSIB – Same as above - to train the locals
- Set up a committee to delegate with timelines (who does what and when) or assist with the Regional Health & Safety Committee.

REGIONAL ACTION PLANS

- v. Set up a communication / decision-making system
 - Network with other PSAC members working on the same issues in the community
 - Prepare recommendations to bring forward to employers for approval for training and commitments to training dates.
 - Desk drops, bulletin boards, standing agenda item and Health and Safety meeting.
 - Have as part of orientation session for new employees

- vi. Set time line/deadlines
 - Fall – training courses/spring training session
 - Possibly a theme for Health and Safety conference

- vii. Identify an evaluation process.
 - Do periodic checks to ensure on track
 - Do follow up surveys to get feedback.
 - Continue to schedule ongoing.

III. Force employers to abide by the respective Health & Safety Legislation (federal and provincial legislation as applicable)

- i. Identify appropriate activities to achieve the objective
 - Take copy of the appropriate code to Joint Health & Safety Meetings
 - Education of employees, committee members, managers and supervisors
 - Utilize the Internal complaint process available in the code(s)
 - Contact HRDC Labour Programs Health and Safety Inspectors (Federal Code) or Ministry of Labour inspector (Provincial Code)
 - Health and safety committees need to know about Health and Safety Officer in Component and PSAC Office.
 - Member advocacy
 - Member education on basic rights/objectives

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ii. Identify human resources both available and needed

Inside the PSAC

- Regional Representative to attend health and safety meetings
- Ontario Council Health and Safety Representative
- Local Committees
- Component Health and Safety Representative
- Alliance Facilitator

Outside the PSAC

- HRDC Labour Safety Inspector (Federal Code members)
- Ministry of Labour (Provincial Code members)
- Workers Health and Safety Centre (WHSC)
- Ontario Health Clinic for Ontario Workers (OHCOW)
- WSIB
- MP

iii. Identify material resources both available and needed

Inside the PSAC

- Health and Safety Tool Kit (will be available on internet soon)
- Everyone on health and safety committee should have one
- Collective Agreement \ NJC agreements
- Resource List

Outside the PSAC

- Courses through the Canadian Labour Council and the Ontario Federation of Labour
- Workers
- CCOHS – Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

- iv. Divide tasks and responsibilities
 - Make sure Local Health and Safety Committee members have federal Code or provincial Code training (as appropriate)
 - Regional Education
 - National Internal Complaint process
 - National HRDC Policy Committee

- v. Set up a communication/decision making system
 - Area Council meetings – health and safety as a standing agenda item
 - Component communications
 - Regional contact list
 - Regional Council Health and Safety Committee
 - Link on the PSAC for health and safety – add bulletin

- vi. Set time line/deadlines
 - Next health and safety meeting – Local
 - Contact Ontario Region Education Representative to add more health and safety courses

- vii. Identify an evaluation process.
 - Revisit periodically
 - Annual Report

IV. To increase knowledge of the Provincial workers' compensation system (WSIB)

- Gain expertise in representation on WSIB Cases
- Member education (basic rights and obligations)
- Member advocacy and regulations
- Early and safe return to work
- Contain the number of cases through education

REGIONAL ACTION PLANS

- I. Identify appropriate activities to achieve the objective
 - 'Coles' notes of WSIB for Health and Safety Representatives and Committees
 - What is mandatory and what is a wish list
 - Need current and appropriate information to fight and educate employer
 - Basic WSIB level 1 for all members
 - Elected Health and Safety position on local executive (accountability)
 - Return-to-work course (OFL) - need to make it accessible to everyone

- II. Identify human resources both available and needed

Inside the PSAC

- Develop our own return-to-work course
- Find or develop the "Coles Notes" (Regional Health and Safety Committee-AFN-Regional Health and Safety Officer joint undertaking)
- Updated, current information to fight employer – local component needs training
- WSIB and regional committee to negotiate
- Local by-law language - Components

Outside the PSAC

- OFL Return-to-work course
- Workers Health and Safety Centre (return-to-work/Role of Representative and 'Coles' Notes)

- III. Identify material resources both available and needed
 - Same as previously mentioned
 - Duty to accommodate
 - WSIB Course Levels 1 & 2
 - Money for training.

REGIONAL ACTION PLANS

- IV. Divide tasks and responsibilities
- V. Set up a communication/decision making system
 - Regional Health and Safety network
 - Local to send minutes to PSAC Regional Office– best practices
- VI. Set time line/deadlines
 - ‘Coles’ Notes – 6 months
 - WSIB 1 year ongoing (mini course per quarterly)
 - Return-to-Work course - Ontario Fall School (2005) (easier if national and local funding available)
- VII. Identify an evaluation process.
 - Survey in 2 years
 - Local to keep track of WSIB cases and report progress to Regional Health and Safety Committee and the PSAC Health and Safety Officer
 - Reinstate Regional Health and Safety Newsletter – within the next quarter (report won cases and lessons learned)

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION



There were 40 participants who have contributed to the discussions leading to this action plan. The discussions were held on the last morning of the Conference, following days of very pertinent information which was shared through plenary sessions, specific issues workshops and resolution debates.

Prior to the Conference, the National Capital Region (NCR) delegation had met to discuss issues and to review the objectives of the regional workshop which had been developed to assist in attaining an Action Plan for the NCR.

There were discussions on health and safety issues such as: workplace culture, internal responsibilities system, legislator's safety officer cut-backs, management's lack of due diligence (information, training, hazard identification, prevention), ergonomics, violence in the workplace, infectious diseases, multiple chemical sensitivity, changes to the criminal codes, changes to the Canada Labour Code, upcoming federal health and safety regulations, internet research opportunity, health and safety and women issues, workplace committees.

Participants recommended the following actions for the upcoming 3 year cycle:

- Initiate discussions to evaluate how all National Capital Region workplace committee annual reports be analyzed and or monitored to gather data which could be useful to strategize action priorities and to initiate recommendations to Health and Safety Policy Committees;
- Ensure NCR Health and Safety activist data bank be maintained and enlarged;

REGIONAL ACTION PLANS

- Ensure upgrading of Health and Safety Information and links available on the PSAC NCR Web site;
- Ensure that all PSAC Health and Safety related booklet be available on an electronic platform (ideally the PSAC Web site);
- Ensure that Health and Safety related topics be included in NCR Union School opportunity;
- Ensure that investigation be initiated to have an updated listing of alternate scent-free products in support of the resolution which was agreed upon on scent-free work environment during this conference;
- Ensure that the Day of Mourning be used as a mobilization activity for NCR Health and Safety activists through disseminating information and organizing activities around this event;
- Ensure that Health and Safety activists realize that health and safety (from various perspectives, including a specific perspective on health and safety and women's struggles) can be considered as part of the school system curriculum - the volunteer day could be used for this purpose - the Regional Health and Safety Committee should investigate appropriate mean to realize this objective;
- The NCR Health and Safety Committee should consider drafting a resolution fro the next PSAC convention to address the need of Union sponsored research on health and safety issues which affect particularly women such as (but not limited to) violence, stress and musculo-skeletal problems;
- Ensure that Workplace and Policy Health and Safety Committees recommend the development of workplace health and safety policies on women health and safety issues;

REGIONAL ACTION PLANS

- Initiate discussions to evaluate if the PSAC could establish a program to attribute, on a yearly basis, Orange and Lemon prizes to various health and safety initiatives;
- Initiate discussions to evaluate the appropriateness of holding seasonal “informal discussions sessions” on specific health and safety topics;
- Ensure that the PSAC updates its Policy on infectious diseases;
- Ensure that the PSAC Web site be used when an infectious disease situation threatens many PSAC members - the PSAC web site must have a specific visual Health and Safety Section link on its greeting page;
- Ensure that, in support of the resolution which was agreed upon on scent free work environment during this conference, air quality issues (better standards, specific guidelines, methodology, information sessions) be further investigated by the PSAC and that appropriate pressure be applied by PSAC representatives on various Policy Committees;
- Ensure that the NCR Health and Safety Committee initiate discussions to evaluate how more youth may be recruited to represent the PSAC on workplace committees;
- Ensure that information session be offered on the upcoming federal Prevention Regulation.

The participants to this workshop have also manifested that Local sections, Components and the Region must investigate ways to ensure that communication between all these structures of the PSAC be regularly exchanging information and collaborate to ensure that the interest of all PSAC members be at the forefront of health and safety related actions.



QUEBEC REGION

- I. The local health and safety committees will have to ensure that the employer gives them the required training under section 125 of the Canada Labour Code, Part II.
- II. Provide a list of members of the local health and safety committees to the regional offices and national officers.
- III. The national officers will have to bring the necessary pressure to bear so that employers grant leave with pay for all health and safety training and health and safety conferences.
- IV. Provide a list of all available health and safety courses.
- V. Establish the official sequence of health and safety courses.
- VI. Prepare a tool kit for pregnant workers on protective assignment.
- VII. Use the policy committees to advance health and safety issues.
- VIII. Provide a list of members of the local health and safety committees and policy committees.

REGIONAL ACTION PLANS

- IX. Conduct an ergonomic assessment of workstations that are likely, in the medium and long terms, to lead to musculoskeletal conditions (changes to workstations).
- X. Provide basic training on globalization and the health and safety threats it presents.
- XI. Establish a network of contacts among the local health and safety committees.
- XII. Provide follow-up on the PSAC site on the consequences of infectious diseases.
- XIII. Automatically send out e-mail for health and safety groups and interests.
- XIV. Send the minutes of local health and safety committees to the regional office.
- XV. Conduct a survey on violence in the workplace.
- XVI. Increase awareness of violence in the workplace.

ATLANTIC REGION

Members of the Atlantic Region met on March 28th, 2004 and produced the following 3 broad objectives for the region as recommendations:



- I. Enhance and strengthen the health and safety structure in the region (request the Regional Health and Safety Officer be 100% dedicated to the position).
- II. To increase health and safety education in the Atlantic
 - By offering health and safety training immediately following this National Health and Safety Conference
 - By identifying health and safety training needs of the membership through a survey
 - By increasing and standardizing health and safety training for committee members
- III. To enhance communication around health and safety in the Atlantic
 - By use of the above mentioned survey
 - By use of electronic resources such as electronic bulletin boards and a database of health and safety activists
 - By continuing to develop a network of health and safety activists as identified and actioned at the 2002 National Health and Safety Conference

Other more specific objectives include:

- An audit of employers re: health and safety
- Assurance from the PSAC to follow through with this action plan
- To increase funding for health and safety in the Atlantic (translation costs)

HEALTH AND SAFETY RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE DELEGATES

On November 20th 2003, registration forms for the National Conference were sent to all PSAC Locals, Components and all PSAC Regional Offices with a general call for resolutions deadline of January 7th 2004.

All constitutionally recognized bodies and Union structures were entitled to forward resolutions to the National Health and Safety Conference.



As per the resolution adopted at the 2003 PSAC Triennial Convention, resolutions submitted to the upcoming National Health and Safety Conference had to deal with health and safety issues.

The resolutions were then presented to our Conference Resolutions Committee for their review and recommendation to our Conference delegates.

A report from the Conference Resolutions Committee was then prepared in advance of the Conference and delegates debate and voted based on the Committee's recommendation. The Resolutions Committee Report to the delegates can be found in Appendix C.

This was the first National Health and Safety Conference held by our Union at which health and safety activists in the Union had the opportunity to submit resolutions to the Conference aimed at strengthening and improving the Union's work on health and safety issues.

The AEC also made the decision that all resolutions should be forwarded to our National President before being sent to the PSAC Convention. That will allow the PSAC to act upon some of the resolutions before the next Convention.

HEALTH AND SAFETY RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE DELEGATES

Any outstanding resolutions adopted by the delegates at the Conference will be submitted to the next PSAC Triennial Convention in 2006.

The following are the resolutions which were passed by the delegates at the 2004 National Health and Safety Conference:

RESOLUTION 1

SCENT FREE POLICY

ORIGINATOR: UVAE – LOCAL OO43

WHEREAS employees should have the right to work in a scent free/chemical free environment and should not have to become sick at work because some of the products used by other employees are too strong and are making them ill; and

WHEREAS many employees experience severe reactions to various scented products including perfume and aftershave; and

WHEREAS not having clean air to breathe in their working environment is a Health and Safety issue; and

WHEREAS with a scent free working environment, all employees could breathe easier;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Federal Government of Canada establish a scent free policy for all Government Offices.

RESOLUTION 3

ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITIES

ORIGINATOR: USGE - LOCAL 70165

WHEREAS there is growing concern about *Environmental Illness (EI) in the workplace; and

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HEALTH AND SAFETY RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE DELEGATES

WHEREAS scented products adversely affect the health of many Federal Government employees in the workplace; and

WHEREAS lack of public awareness of the negative impact on EI sufferers leads to problematic and intolerant behaviour in the workplace; and

WHEREAS the burden of proof of the frequently disastrous, long-term health effects of the individual is placed on the EI sufferer; and

WHEREAS attempts by individual workplaces to implement a policy, for example, a scent free environment, is fraught with difficulties due to incomplete understanding of the complexity of the health issues involved, and the fact that there is no Federal Government policy concerning this matter; and

WHEREAS lack of knowledge of the health issues impacts on how the present Accommodation Policy can be effectively implemented; and

WHEREAS the implementation of a Federal government environmentally healthy workplace would not cause undue hardship to any individual, nor incur any costs, but rather would result in improved work performance and decreased employee sickness and/or absenteeism;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the public service be recognized as an environmentally healthy workplace through effective Environmental Illness (EI) policy implementation;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT meaningful action to promote a healthy work environment take place by providing educational sessions for all Federal Government employees' well being including the directly affected individual.

*Environmental Illness or EI is known by many names: Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS), Sick Building Syndrome; Chemical or Environmental Hypersensitivity, Chemical Injury, Gulf War Syndrome, and Environmental Sensitivity Disorder.

HEALTH AND SAFETY RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE DELEGATES

RESOLUTION 5

REGIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEES

ORIGINATOR: UNDE - LOCAL 629

WHEREAS the Regional Health and Safety Committees have a mandate to promote health and safety issues within their respective region; and

WHEREAS these committees work to ensure that the membership are mobilized and aware of their rights under the different legislation; and

WHEREAS health and safety has been identified as a major NBoD strategic priority;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC Regional Health and Safety Committees be recognized constitutionally.

RESOLUTION 6

REGIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEES

ORIGINATOR: UNDE - LOCAL 629

WHEREAS the Regional Health and Safety Committee has a mandate to promote health and safety issues within their respective region; and

WHEREAS these committees have a direct link to the member's concerns at the workplaces within the region; and

WHEREAS these issues and concerns are raised at the regional health and safety conferences;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC Regional Health and Safety Committees have the authority to put forward resolutions directly to the National Health and Safety Conference.

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HEALTH AND SAFETY RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE DELEGATES

RESOLUTION 8

JOINT OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING FUND
ORIGINATOR: NCR HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

WHEREAS there are legal requirements for both members of Policy and Workplace Health and Safety Committees and Health and Safety Representatives to be trained; and

WHEREAS there is also requirements for the training of all workers by their employer on health and safety awareness; and

WHEREAS members of Joint Policy and Workplace Health and Safety Committees and Health and Safety Representatives need to be trained on issues such as workplace inspections and accident investigations;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC initiate discussions with the employer (Treasury Board and separate employers employing members of the PSAC) to fully fund joint occupational health and safety training; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT employers offer joint generic courses on topics such as orientation of Health and Safety Committee members and Health and Safety Representatives, health and safety awareness education for all workers, workplace inspections, and other relevant topics.

HEALTH AND SAFETY RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE DELEGATES

LATE RESOLUTION 1

PARLIAMENT HILL WORKERS
LOCALS 70390-70407-70408

WHEREAS since obtaining union certification in the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) in 1987, locals 70390, 70407 and 70408 continues employer operations in a workplace with “NO” recognized Health and Safety legislation and protection for its members and,

WHEREAS there members have had to contend with serious Health and Safety issues and infractions such as asbestos, ergonomics, air quality and Human Rights violations including stress.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) expend whatever funds and resources deemed necessary to organize a campaign which would include public awareness and lobbying of all Members of Parliament and Senators to introduce and proclaim Health and Safety legislation for all Parliament Hill workers and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the PSAC National President oversee and evaluate the implementation of this initiative.

EMERGENCY RESOLUTION 1

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS
ORIGINATOR: NCR-MDAC

WHEREAS the PSAC at the highest level stresses the importance of combating globalization at all levels; and

WHEREAS the City of Ottawa, the Province of Ontario, and members of the Senate of Canada are currently involved in initiatives that promote globalization and privatization in various forms, specifically with regards to Health Care and P3 partnerships.

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HEALTH AND SAFETY RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE DELEGATES

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Executive of this Union, on behalf of its membership, review these issues in a timely fashion and publicly decry and denounce these initiatives as being detrimental to the health and safety of our members and contrary to the public interest.

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN ON REASSIGNMENT OF PREGNANT WORKERS

During the 2003 PSAC National Convention, the delegates voted unanimously for a resolution that asked the PSAC to launch a petition campaign to advance the issue of precautionary work cessation for all pregnant or nursing workers.

The PSAC has been actively promoting the issue of protective reassignment for pregnant or nursing workers for many years, with limited results. So far, we have published an information booklet which details the model for protective reassignment that was established years ago, in Quebec; and, in this booklet, we also outlined the existing benefits established for PSAC members working in the federal jurisdiction.

The PSAC attempted to introduce the concept of protective reassignment for pregnant or nursing workers during the review of Part III of the Canada Labour Code, and the review of the Government Employee's Compensation Act. We faced stubborn opposition at every door we knocked at during the consultative process involved during legislative reviews. We did succeed in September 2000, when Part II of the Canada Labour Code was amended. A new provision was added (Section 132) that provides for limited protection of pregnant or nursing workers.

We also had some success in collective bargaining, but delegates recognized that we need to do even more.

Our National Campaign on protective reassignment of pregnant or nursing workers was officially launched during the National Health and Safety Conference. The campaign was two fold:

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN ON REASSIGNMENT OF PREGNANT WORKERS

Postcard Campaign



A Postcard Campaign was kicked off. On each Conference bag, a Conference card was inserted on the outside sleeve which showed the logo and theme of the Conference. The Conference card is actually a postcard already addressed to the Prime Minister of Canada. The back of the Conference card reads:

“It is unacceptable that Canadian women still have to choose between having a healthy child and keeping their income. We urge the government to put forward legislation to ensure protective reassignment of pregnant or nursing workers and when protective reassignment is not possible, that these workers be granted leave with pay from their employment.”

We requested that all participants at our National Conference sign the postcard and mail it in after the Conference. We wanted to make sure the Prime Minister was aware of this issue. We also requested that every participant take some of the postcards with them when they left the Conference for distribution in their Locals.

Copies of the postcard were also sent to all PSAC Regional Offices.

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NATIONAL CAMPAIGN ON REASSIGNMENT OF PREGNANT WORKERS

Petition Campaign

Integral to this campaign was a petition to Parliament, which was circulated to all PSAC members and supporters. Copies of the petition were distributed to all participants at the Conference. The petition reads as follow:

PETITION
TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

We, the undersigned members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada, draw the attention of the House to the following:

THAT under the provisions of current Federal Labour legislation, a worker who is pregnant or nursing a child, can exercise the right to refuse work if she believes that her current job functions pose a risk to her health or to that of the foetus or nursing child.

In such a situation, where a qualified medical practitioner finds that the job functions being performed do in fact pose a risk to the worker or to that of the foetus or nursing child, the employer may accommodate the worker or place her on leave without pay.

THEREFORE we call upon Parliament to ensure that legislation is put forward to ensure protective reassignment of pregnant or nursing workers and when protective reassignment is not possible, that these workers be granted leave with pay from their employment.

A copy of this petition is available from the PSAC Web Site (until the end of September 2004 at the following address: www.pzac.com/issues/issues-e.shtml). Members are encouraged to print off a copy of the petition and distribute it in their workplace. Completed petitions need to be sent, **before September 30, 2004**, to the Programs Section, PSAC National Headquarters, 233 Gilmour, Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 0P1.

CLOSING REMARKS



Brother Yves Ducharme

(National President of the Agriculture Union and member of the NBoD Standing Committees on Occupational Health and Safety and on Environment)

The Conference was a huge success!

Let me remind everyone what were the Conference Objectives:

- establishing the link between globalization and its direct relationship to decreased health and safety protection in our workplaces;
- ensuring that health and safety issues are mainstream issues for the Union and for the membership;
- building the activism of the members and activists in respect to the issue of health and safety in the workplace;
- developing and implementing Union based strategies to ensure that workplace health and safety issues are being addressed by employers and by government;
- establishing collective bargaining strategies

In my opinion we met all of these objectives. We had a very successful conference and I hope you will all go back with renewed enthusiasm and commitment to our health and safety initiatives.

CLOSING REMARKS

Please share your experience, your new knowledge with all your co-workers. Make your health and safety commitment more infectious throughout your workplaces than anything else they – your employers - have ever seen before.

Remember Rory's slide: BEWARE – UNION EDUCATED MEMBER.

Our conference emphasized the importance of having our union activists on all our health and safety committees.

With members who are more informed about their rights and the remedies available to them, we will be in a better position to demand that our health and safety statutes and regulations are implemented.

Soon we should be seeing:

- The new regulations on prevention programs, including an on-the-job training program;
- The new regulations on prevention of violence in the workplace, which should include the very first psychological harassment provisions under federal jurisdiction;
- Revision of the Health and Safety Committees regulations should soon be completed, with considerable amendments;
- We will continue pressing the government for regulations on ergonomics in the workplace.

Our representatives on those committees are selected by our union, and we must ensure that the union health and safety agenda is always advanced at every meeting.

In addition, we have recently reached an agreement on the new rules of procedure of the Canadian Health and Safety Committee of the National Joint Council. The Health and Safety Directives review process is now more operational than ever.

In the coming months, we will present our new demands to Treasury Board in order to improve our collective agreements through the Joint National Council. Thank you.

CLOSING REMARKS



Brother Gerry Halabecki

(Regional Executive Vice-President - Ontario and Co-chair of the 2004 National Health and Safety conference)

Our Conference was a huge success! It's been an honour and privilege to be here, and to co-chair this conference.

This was the first fully funded conference which brought more than 300 health and safety union activists together from coast to coast to coast. All the feedback that I have heard has been extremely positive.

We had great speakers.

We had the opportunity to listen to our brother from the U.K. Rory O'Neill. I hope that all of you will take out a subscription of Brother O'Neill's Hazards magazine. It is a very useful resource that will assist us in our fight against globalization and the fight for workers rights here in Canada and around the world. We will send more information on the magazine in the National Conference report and we hope to provide a link from our website.

Sister Cathy Walker clearly outlined how globalization particularly impacts the health and safety of workers and that we need to have a broader strategy that includes political action and working in coalition to stop the international trade deals and organizations like the World Bank and WTO that directly impact labour and environmental standards.

Brother Charlie Richardson connected the dots for us. He explained how employers use and abuse the system by design. How they make sure that the deck is always stacked in their favour and how we can and must fight back. He reminded us that we need to have broader strategies because workers around the world are facing many of the same issues.

CLOSING REMARKS

Brother Hassan Yussuff was as passionate as ever. He provided us an overview of the CLC Prevent Cancer Campaign and outlined the challenges we face in ensuring government enforcement. He also reminded us of the importance of working together.

Katherine Lippel presented the new Quebec legislative initiative on psychological harassment. She gave us the technical details of yet another progressive piece of legislation coming out of Quebec.

Our National President, Nycole Turmel, outlined specific health and safety issues and urged us as health and safety activists to mobilize members around these issues to ensure that we get strong strike vote results. She challenged us to go back to our workplaces and locals and make the link between health and safety issues and negotiations and she challenged us to do the follow-up work with our Protective Reassignment campaign. I hope you will all meet that challenge and more.

I think you all agree that each presentation was extremely informative and the one common message throughout was that we cannot limit our activism to health and safety issues in the workplace.

We need to raise these issues at the bargaining table, in the political arena and when necessary, in the streets. We need to work with our brothers and sisters in other unions and around the world if we are to successfully protect the rights we have won and all those we have yet to achieve.

For the first time ever, the National Health and Safety Conference delegates debated nine resolutions on a wide range of issues including:

- Recognition of Regional Health and Safety Committees within the PSAC Constitution.
- Pushing for better Joint Health and Safety Training in your workplaces.
- Fighting for our sisters and brother afflicted by Environmental Illness.

CLOSING REMARKS

- The delegates unanimously mandated the PSAC to send this message to Prime Minister Paul Martin: Paul, it's us again, we just want to remind you that its time to enact health and safety legislation for parliament workers.

Yesterday's session provided all of you with the opportunity to debate the issues. It was a very good session and now these resolutions will go to the National President to asses what we can implement right now rather than waiting two years to take them to convention.

Again, I want to thank all of you for your participation and commitment.

Sister Patty Ducharme

(Regional Executive Vice-President - British Columbia and Co-chair of the 2004 National Health and Safety conference)

A big part of the Conference was devoted to the Regional Action Plans. You had the opportunity to discuss and develop those plans. Now you need to make a commitment to go back to your region and to do the follow up required to successfully implement your plan.



We launched an important Petition and Postcard campaign on Protective Reassignment. Please take the PSAC Petition back to your workplaces, get your members to sign it and return them to us by September 30, 2004.

A Conference Report will be drafted over the next few months and we will mail a copy to you.

At the National level, the Health and Safety Program has been revitalized, with new emphasis placed on providing tools for health and safety activists and providing Union-based health and safety education for health and safety committee members and representatives.

At the last triennial convention, delegates, recognizing that health and safety issues are a priority for the membership, added another position to the Health and Safety program and sent a clear message regarding the importance of occupational health and safety issues in the workplace.

Delegates to this conference have sent a clear message regarding the importance of both ensuring that the employers meet their legal obligations to train health and safety committee members and health and safety representatives, and that the Union provide education for health and safety

CLOSING REMARKS

activists that emphasizes strategic concepts for building effective, Union driven health and safety programs in the workplace.

The workshops offered to all of you were extremely pertinent to your every day battles. The workshop on “**Globalization and Its Effects on Workplace Health and Safety Issues**” focused on the impact globalization has on the working conditions of Canadian workers and workers around the world.

A number of detailed actions that we can undertake as individual trade unionists and as members of our communities were identified as well as actions at the local level and national level as part of our efforts to defend the rights we have won and to continue to achieve a better and safer world for all working people.

The workshop on “**Women’s health and safety: Everyone’s Struggle**” was very important to me. A woman’s place is in her union!

This workshop reinforced that the sisters of this union are ready to mobilize and take action to ensure that the health and safety issues that particularly affect women become the issues of the union. Women need to participate on Health and Safety Committees and our brothers on the committees need to support women’s’ issues.

The next one was “**Committees – Dealing with Infectious Diseases: Lessons Learned**”. This workshop gave us an opportunity to share information about our experiences with recent outbreaks of SARS, West Nile Virus and Avian Flu.

We need to continue to improve our means of communications through our website, increase our formal and informal networking and lobby to establish the appropriate mechanisms to monitor and control potential outbreaks of infectious diseases that put workers and the broader public at risk.

CLOSING REMARKS

We can all agree that we need strong and effective health and safety committees which explain why we offered one **on “Health and Safety Committees – Strategies for Change”**. This workshop provided a forum for us to learn from each other, to review our Union policies and develop strategies that build effective union driven health and safety programs in the workplace.

We need to extend our greatest gratitude to the members of the 2004 National Health and Safety Conference Steering Committee and Conference Resolutions Committee.

Thank you to our PSAC staff that makes this Conference run so smoothly. I must recognize the Programs Section staff. They have been working behind the scene for months prior to this Conference. Thanks also go to the administrative staff, regional representatives, translators, interpreters, technical staff and, of course, the hotel staff.

Thank you to all the participants to our Conference. We value your Input, leadership, and commitment to health and safety within our Union.

APPENDIX A

Regional, Component and Equity Breakdown of Participants

List of Delegates by Component

Agriculture Union	20
Canada Employment and Immigration Union	26
Customs Excise Union Douanes Accise	18
Directly Chartered Locals	2
Environment Component	12
Government Services Union	17
National Component	34
Nunavut Employees Union	7
National Health and Welfare Union	16
Natural Resources Union	7
Union of Canadian Transportation Employees	15
Union of National Defence Employees	26
Union of Northern Workers	12
Union of Postal Communications Employees	10
Union of Solicitor General Employees	22
Union of Taxation Employees	33
Union of Veterans' Affairs Employees	9
Yukon Employees Union	6
TOTAL	292

List of Delegates by Region

National Capital Region	42
Ontario	41
Prairies	49
Quebec	42
Atlantic	49
British Columbia	37
North	32
TOTAL	292

Equity Groups Participation - Delegates

Women	137
Persons with a Disability	32
Aboriginal	20
Racially Visible	18
GLBT	4
Youth	14

APPENDIX B

Conference Agenda

Thursday, March 25, 2004

- 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.:** Registration
8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Meet and Greet (cash bar)

Friday, March 26, 2004

- 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.** Registration
9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. **Opening remarks**
Conference Co-Chairs
Patty Ducharme: Regional Executive Vice-President, British Columbia / Responsible for National Health and Safety Portfolio
Gerry Halabecki: Regional Executive Vice-President, Ontario / Responsible for National Health and Safety Portfolio
Introductions:
Conference Steering Committee
Conference Resolutions Committee
9:45 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. **Panel on Globalization**
Moderator: **Todd Parsons** - National President, Union of Northern Workers
Guest Speaker: **Rory O'Neill** - Editor: Hazards Magazine (U.K.) and Worker's Health International News

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- 10:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.** Break
- 10:45 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** **Panel on Globalization** (Continued)
- Guest Speaker: **Cathy Walker** - Director,
National Health and Safety Department
Canadian Auto Workers
- Question Period**
- 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.** Lunch
- 1:30 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.** **Workshops**
- 3:15 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.** Break
- 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.** **Continuation of Workshops**

Saturday, March 27, 2004

- 8:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.** **Panel on Emerging Workplace Issues**
- Moderator:** **Yves Ducharme** - National
President, Agriculture Union
- Guest speakers
- Charley Richardson:** Director of the Labour
Extension Program / University of
Massachusetts
- Hassan Yussuff:** Secretary–Treasurer,
Canadian Labour Congress / National Officer
responsible for Health and Safety
- Katherine Lippel:** Professor, Legal Studies
Department / Université du Québec à
Montréal

APPENDIX B

10:15 a.m. to 10:30a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m. to 11:15 p.m.	PSAC National President Address, Nycole Turmel
11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.	Workshops Reports in Plenary
12:15 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.	Lunch
1:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.	Resolutions Debate
3:15 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.	Break
3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.	Resolutions Debate (continued)
Sunday, March 28, 2004	
8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.	Facilitated Regional Action Plans Sessions
10:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.	Break
10:15 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.	Facilitated Regional Action Plans Sessions (Continued)
11:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.	Regional Action Plans - Reports in Plenary
12:15 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.	Closing Remarks Patty Ducharme: Regional Executive Vice-President, British Columbia / Responsible for National Health and Safety Portfolio Gerry Halabecki: Regional Executive Vice-President, Ontario / Responsible for National Health and Safety Portfolio Yves Ducharme: National President, Agriculture Union / Member of PSAC National Board of Directors / Standing Committee on Health, Safety and the Environment
1:00 p.m.	End of the Conference

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APPENDIX C



NATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY CONFERENCE 2004

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

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REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

TO THE

PSAC NATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY CONFERENCE

March 25 – 28, 2004

PSAC National President Nycole Turmel appointed Regional Executive Vice-President for British Columbia, Patty Ducharme, and Regional Executive Vice-President for Ontario, Gerry Halabecki as the co-chairs of the PSAC National Health and Safety Conference. The members of the Resolutions Committee are listed below.

Any decision or recommendation made by the Committee is subject to ratification by the delegates to the PSAC National Health and Safety Conference.

Chairperson:

Gwen Jackson Union of Taxation Employees / Prairies

Members:

Gerry Halabecki	REVP Ontario
Bernice Wilson	NBoD Health and Safety Committee
Marlene O'Neill	Agriculture Union / NCR
Al Dumont	Union of Northern Workers / North

The Committee met by teleconference February 10 and March 8, 2004 and debated 9 resolutions. The Committee established its priorities as follows:

1. Resolution 8
2. Resolution 1
3. Resolution 3
4. Resolution 5 (part 1)
5. Resolution 6

6. Resolution 9,
7. Resolution 5 (part 2).

The Committee took note that Resolution 8 and Resolution 9 were submitted by a Regional Health and Safety Committee, which is not a constitutionally recognized body or Union structure. The Committee also took note that the call-out letter for the submission of resolutions specified a resolution submission process which did not necessarily include Regional Health and Safety Committees. The committee made a decision to consider Resolution 8 and Resolution 9 allowing the delegates to the PSAC National Health and Safety Conference the opportunity to debate these resolutions.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Committee,

(original signed: Gwen Jackson)

Gwen Jackson
Chairperson

RESOLUTION 1

Covers Resolution 2

The committee recommends concurrence on Resolution 1 to cover the intent of Resolution 2.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Federal Government of Canada establish a scent free policy for all government offices.

Rationale: The PSAC has done extensive work and education on multiple chemical sensitivities however the government has been reluctant to implement a policy which would include scent free government offices and workplaces. The union should continue its efforts to educate and mobilize members to achieve workplaces that are healthy and safe for all workers, which for many workers includes a scent free workplace.

RESOLUTION 3

The Committee recommends concurrence on Resolution 3.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the public service be recognized as an environmentally healthy workplace through effective Environmental Illness (EI) policy implementation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT meaningful action to promote a healthy work environment take place by providing educational sessions for all Federal Government employees' well being, including the directly affected individual.

Rationale: Workers with Environmental Illness often experience difficulty in obtaining recognition and support of their illness from family, friends, co-workers and employers. Implementing a comprehensive policy addressing Environmental Illness would help ensure that workers with this illness have a healthy and safe workplace and that their illness is recognized as legitimate and serious. While the PSAC has produced extensive materials

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and done a great deal of work to help achieve this, on-going efforts must be made to ensure that employers, in this case the federal government, develop a policy and provide appropriate work place training.

RESOLUTION 5

The committee divided the Resolution in two parts:

1st Part:

The Committee recommends concurrence.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Regional Health and Safety Committees be recognized constitutionally.

Rationale: The Committee agrees that there is a need for Regional Health and Safety Committees to be recognized constitutionally. The PSAC Constitution recognizes many other regional bodies of the Union and the Committee believes that Regional Health and Safety Committees should be granted constitutional status.

2nd Part:

The Committee recommends non-concurrence.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Section 15 of the PSAC Constitution be amended to include the words “and the Regional Health and Safety Committees” in Sub-Section (1), (2), (3), (4) & (5).

Rationale: Section 15 of the PSAC Constitution deals specifically with Regional Women’s and Equity Committees and the Committee did not feel that this was the appropriate section of the Constitution to incorporate the concept of Regional Health and Safety Committees.

RESOLUTION 6

The committee recommends concurrence.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Regional Health and Safety Committees have the authority to put forward resolutions directly to the National Health and Safety Conference.

Rationale: The Committee agreed that Regional Health and Safety Committees should have the right to submit resolutions directly to the National Health and Safety Conference, as these Committees are well placed to understand the issues and represent the health and safety activists in their respective Regions.

RESOLUTION 8

The Committee recommends concurrence on Resolution 8.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC initiate discussions with the employer (Treasury Board and separate employers employing members of the PSAC) in order to have established by each employer a joint occupational health and safety training fund; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT such a fund would be used to finance joint training projects and to develop and offer joint generic courses on topics such as orientation of Health and Safety Committee members and Health and Safety Representatives, health and safety awareness education for all workers, workplace inspections, and other relevant topics.

Rationale: The Committee agreed that joint training on health and safety is an employer responsibility, but recognized that most employers do not meet their legal requirements in regards to fulfilling this responsibility. The Committee believes that the establishment of a joint occupational health and safety training fund would greatly benefit PSAC members in a similar way as the Joint PSAC-TBS Joint Learning Program has.

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RESOLUTION 9

The committee recommends non-concurrence on Resolution 9.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC develop and put into place a certification system to ensure that worker representatives who are appointed as members of Joint Policy or Workplace Health and Safety Committees, or as Health and Safety Representatives have the necessary minimal knowledge to adequately carry out the duties and responsibilities of these positions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT an adequate budget be established in order to implement and sustain such a certification system.

Rationale: The Committee recognizes the challenges Locals face when trying to recruit and select health and safety committee members. Imposing a strict requirement such as a certification system to participate on Joint Health and Safety Committees would likely deter Union participation.

RESOLUTION 4

Resolution 4 was referred back to the submitting body as it is a collective bargaining demand. The resolution was also forwarded to the PSAC Collective Bargaining Branch for future consideration.

RESOLUTION 7

Resolution 7 was referred back to the submitting body as it did not deal with a health and safety issue, as per the 2003 PSAC Triennial Convention decision permitting the National Health and Safety Conference to submit resolutions to the PSAC Convention, the substance of which was detailed in the Call-out letter for Resolutions.