

September 9, 2014

Via courier

The Honourable Leo A. Glavine
Minister of Health and Wellness
Department of Health and Wellness
17th Floor, Barrington Tower
1894 Barrington Street
PO Box 488
Halifax, NS B3J 2R8

Dear Minister:

Merged District Health Authorities

I am in receipt of your letter dated August 28, 2014. Your direction for further discussions was well received by the Unions. We have had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Roland King and the employer representatives on September 4, 2014 and September 9, 2014. As you requested, our discussions have focused on the five concerns raised by the employers. The Unions have addressed those issues.

As stated in my August 22, 2014 letter, regardless of the manner in which the bargaining agents are organized, the employers and bargaining agents will have to resolve issues about the structure of bargaining units will have to integrate different terms and conditions of employment into province-wide collective agreements. The bargaining association model allows this process to take place in a cooperative manner and reduce conflict to the advantage of all parties.

Our further discussions have concluded with the outstanding issues addressed as follows:

- The first two issues relate to the composition of bargaining units. The Unions and employers have a difference of opinion in how the units should be defined and composed. The Labour Board is the adjudicator of these sorts of questions and is well equipped with the expertise required to resolve any issues in a timely manner. The Unions maintain that their proposal is the least disruptive.
- Item 3 is a matter for collective bargaining. The Unions will seek the best terms for their members. However, the outcome of this effort is a matter for collective bargaining.

- There is agreement between the Unions and employers that the system has to work and that collective agreements must be concluded in a timely manner. The Unions are committed to establish such a system and acknowledge that the constitutions for the bargaining associations must address both issues. Any conflicts must be resolved quickly and with finality.
- The Unions are committed to full, province-wide mobility within the merged units. How mobility will work is a matter for collective bargaining. The Unions and employers had positive discussions about mobility and confirmed how it would apply to the IWK and for temporary transfers. The Union understands that this issue is resolved.

In addition to the five issues previously identified, Mr. King raised two further questions: The first was about the timing of the bargaining association constitutions. Once any legislation is passed and bargaining units are determined, the Unions expect to conclude and ratify constitutions without delay. Second, Mr. King asked about the timing for collective bargaining if the bargaining association model is accepted. It is anticipated that bargaining would not commence until the creation of the new province-wide employer next spring.

The proposal of the Unions is responsive to the objectives of government. There will be four province-wide bargaining units in the acute care sector and four province-wide collective agreements. There is a sincere commitment to work cooperatively to develop a labour relations system for the new health authority.

As noted in my August 22, 2014 letter it is anticipated that legislation will be required. The Unions request to be consulted on its content.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours truly,



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Cc: Rick Clarke – Nova Scotia Federation of Labour
Janet Hazelton – Nova Scotia Nurses' Union
Joan Jessome – Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union
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Roland King, Executive Director, Public Sector Labour Relations