

**COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UPDATE
CUPE 1975 - October 26, 2007**

On October 25, 2007, after three days of conciliation, the Universities of Saskatchewan and Regina presented CUPE with a settlement offer in an effort to bring bargaining to conclusion. Conciliation ended Thursday evening, despite significant movement by the Universities on the issues CUPE indicated were of the greatest importance. As of now, no further bargaining dates have been set.

Q. Why was an agreement not reached during conciliation?

- Over the course of three very difficult days, we sought to find compromise on the Union's key issues without violating the University's principles and interests. From the outset, the Union leadership appeared not to be interested in reaching an agreement and consistently changed its mind on what the key issues were. The Employer made numerous compromises in an effort to address the union's ever changing demands. We remain committed to reaching an agreement. Conciliation ended when the parties could not reach an agreement on benefits and increments for non-performers.

Q. What is the Universities' current offer?

<p>Wage Increases (17% over 3 years)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average CUPE employee will receive approximately 17% over 3 years - 4.5% in 2007, 4.75% in 2008 and 5.0% in 2009. • Pension contributions increase from 4.82% to 6.0% in 2008 and to 6.5% in 2009 (1.68% increase) • Unsocial hours premium (shift premium) increase from \$0.80/hour to \$0.90/hour and expanded to cover casual and recurring relief employees.
<p>Employees Above the Range "Red Circling" (5% One-time Payments per year)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-time lump sum payments in 2007, 2008, 2009 of 5.0%.
<p>Benefits (Status Quo supported by a Funding Surplus and an additional 0.5% funding)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase funding to 6.0% in 2009 after a joint review process • CUPE Benefits Plan currently has a \$106,965 surplus at the U of S and therefore no further injection of funds is required.
<p>Performance (Consistency with Universities' Goals)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Universities do not want to change this language. • It is not in anyone's best interest to provide increments to the few CUPE staff that are performing at a level that is less than satisfactory. • This is inconsistent with the Universities' goals of service and excellence, which we all share. • The employer has proposed the ability to grieve a decision where an increment is withheld in an effort to resolve this matter.

Q. What progress has been made as of October 25, 2007?

Summary of Agreed and Outstanding Issues as of October 25, 2007		
	Agreed in principle	Outstanding
Earned Days Off	✓	
Increase to Unsocial Hours Premium (\$0.90 /hr)	✓	
Increase to Hazardous Work Premium (\$100)	✓	
Increase to Rescue Team Premium (\$120)	✓	
EAP Stakeholders Agreement	✓	
FAPA Wage Increase (12%)	✓	
Pension Increase (6.5%)	✓	
Increase to Salary Ranges (6% 2007, 4% 2008, 4% 2009)	✓	
Increase to Joint Union Management funding (\$20,000)	✓	
Protocol to Review Recurring Relief Status	✓	
Lump Sum Payments for Red-circled employees	✓	
Increments of 2% per year	✓	
General Wage Increases	✓	
Essential Services Protocol	✓	
Benefits Funding		✓
Phase I and Apprentice open competitions	✓	
Increments to less than satisfactory performers		✓
Break in Service Changed from 30 to 60 Days	✓	

Q. What is the Employer's most recent financial offer?

- The financial offer is competitive and fiscally responsible. The average CUPE employee will receive about 17% over 3 years including increases to their pension and benefit plans.
- Including increments in expanded ranges, the average employee will see an increase of 4.5% in 2007, 4.75% in 2008 and 5.0% in 2009. In addition, the Employer has proposed increases to the matching pension contributions. The pension contributions will increase from 4.82% to 6.0% in 2008 and again will further increase to 6.5% in 2009, for a total increase of 1.68% to pension contributions.
- The Employer is proposing an increase in the unsocial hours premium (shift premium) from \$0.80/hour to \$0.90/hour and is proposing to expand this to cover casual and recurring relief employees.
- This offer is comparable to the settlements reached with other bargaining units on the U of S campus in recent years.
- In an attempt to address a key union concerns, the Employers have proposed a process to add up to a further 0.5% of funding for benefits in 2009 after a review process.
- Our current proposal offers one-time lump sum payments to all red-circled employees in each of the three years of the contract of 5% (market supplements are not included in the calculation of eligibility for wage adjustments).
- The Union accepted 5% one-time payments as a resolution to the issue.
- If an employee achieves the top of the range with less than 5% salary adjustment, the balance of the said 5% adjustment will be paid as a one-time payment.

Q. How does the Employers' most recent financial offer compare to other bargaining units?

- This offer is comparable to the settlements reached with other bargaining units on the U of S campus in recent years.

Q. Are regular increments tied to performance?

- The language of the current agreement reads that increments are provided "to recognize growth in proficiency from experience and a satisfactory level of performance to employees".
- The Union agreed to this language in the last round of bargaining, and now wants to revert to the former language. This is in response to the University of Regina withholding increments in six cases after communicating concerns to the affected members did not result in improved performance. (This issue is more appropriately addressed by a grievance / arbitration process at the University of Regina.)
- The Universities do not want to change this language, but have now proposed that where an increment is withheld, the affected employee may grieve that decision.
- The Union has been informed that a successful grievance will address not only a withheld increment but also inaccurate information which led to or formed the basis of the decision.
- It is not in anyone's best interest to provide increments to the few CUPE staff who are performing at a level that is less than satisfactory. This is inconsistent with the Universities goals of service and excellence, which we all share.
- In 2006, the Universities changed the salary model to provide these increments. This was a move away from a single pay rate for most jobs.
- The Universities' offer is a significant investment in our CUPE staff and recognizes their contribution to the universities.
- The Union offered to drop this issue contingent on receiving additional benefits funding.

Q. What is the Universities' proposal on benefits?

- To date the Union has offered no evidence whatsoever that there is a fiscal problem with benefits.
- Both Universities are currently in a position to fully fund benefit program without additional resources. In fact, the U of S has a benefit plan surplus of \$106,965.
- Nonetheless, the Employer proposed an additional 0.5% funding effective January 1, 2009 provided that the joint Non-Academic Fringe Benefits Committee recommend a rebalanced benefits program.
- The Universities are committed to investments in benefit plans in exchange for improvements to plan design. This is necessary to ensure our ability to provide competitive benefits which meet the needs of our employees into the future.

Q. What is next?

- We remain committed to reaching an agreement that is in the best interests of the University and CUPE represented staff.
- University has developed contingency plans and is prepared in the event of any labour disruption.

Please refer to the HR website for our complete proposals at <http://www.usask.ca/hrd/>