

BULLETIN

Arbitration makes progress on 37.5 hour week challenges

March 28, 2014

HSA, on behalf of the Health Science Professionals Bargaining Association (HSPBA), recently met with employers March 10 to 12 to negotiate a resolution to the approximately 1500 grievances related to the 2013 transition to a 37.5 hour work week. Aided by veteran arbitrators Vince Ready and Corrine Bell, some progress was achieved. A ruling is expected shortly to address management's handling of the reduction of hours for part-timer employees, and the arbitrators are drafting instruction on how to deal with grievances related to the process used by employers to implement new schedules.

The first day of meetings featured legal counsel from both parties presenting arguments centering on issues related to reduction in hours, including reductions to part-time employees out of the order of seniority. Mr. Ready is now working on a ruling on these submissions, and there is not a precise timeline for issuing the ruling. Mr. Ready is a very busy arbitrator, having recently stepped in to sort out this week's dispute between Port Metro Vancouver and their truckers, for example.

The second and third day of the meetings were devoted to a combination of legal argument and mediation regarding grievance files relating to the process the employers used to implement new 37.5 hour work week schedules, including where the unions assert the employer has superimposed a separate process on the implementation of new work schedules. HSA and other unions provided several examples of scenarios which represented violations of the process.

By the end of the third day, it became clear the unions and the employers would be unlikely to reach a mediated settlement. Mr. Ready informed the parties that he would issue an award which detailed his assessment of the parties' arguments, and which would provide the parties with principles and steps to follow in order to resolve the issues raised in the grievances surrounding the application of the process used to arrive at new schedules.

The parties were able to come to a tentative agreement to address the specific set of facts regarding the Quick Responses Team in Victoria. Both sides are currently finalizing the details of this agreement, and we will announce them as soon as they are finalized.

Type:

[Bulletins](#)

Topic:

[Contract negotiations](#)

- [Print](#)
- [PDF](#)