



BULLETIN

HSA staff is there for you

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HSA members can count on extraordinary support from hundreds of stewards around the province, and many of you know them well.

But the stewards themselves depend on a team of labour relations staff who many members will never meet. I'd like to shine a light on their work today.

Labour relations officers (LROs) are based at HSA's Vancouver office but spend much of their time at meetings in workplaces around the province. In the year leading up to convention, LROs attended over 250 labour/management meetings to address issues that might otherwise become grievances. The meetings usually last a half or full day and often require considerable travel, so the time commitment is enormous. But it doesn't end there.

Over the same period, LROs also attended more than 400 chapter or steward meetings around BC. They also attended more than 30 meetings to talk about things that can dramatically affect our members: downsizing, restructuring and changes in service delivery. Careful preparation, added to considerable meeting time, is required, but in many cases LROs are able to mitigate the effect on members.

Besides attendance at these many meetings, LROs must always be on call for unpredictable events that require comprehensive action without neglecting their other duties. Over the year leading up to our recent convention, such events included ratification of new five-year agreements, negotiation of essential service levels for members in health care, and dealing with issues related to the implementation of a 37.5 hour work week. As many of you know, this last initiative required hundreds of hours of meetings with employers, consultation with members and processing over 1200 grievances.

Grievances are, of course, a big part of the LROs day. In the year leading up to convention, HSA's LRO team dealt with over 1000 other grievances falling into about 120 different categories. Bear in mind that even a relatively "easy" grievance will take several hours of preparation, research and discussion. Most take significantly longer - a harassment grievance, for example, will take as many as 30 hours of LRO time to bring to an agreeable conclusion.

So let's hear it for their continued dedication and excellent representation on behalf of members like you. You may not see them every day, but - much like you - the system wouldn't work without them.

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