

A Letter from a Number

I'm sure you have heard so many complaints and comments from disgruntled employees, that you're about to just toss this letter and not read it.. I'm asking you to fight the urge and continue reading.

I have been an employee here for a while now. When I was hired I was given a speech about the attitudes of Teck and the new mind set they are trying to establish throughout the sites. I was encouraged by the thought that this company is really trying to change its environment for the better. I was warned about discontented older employees and was asked to try to form my own opinions and not to fall into the negative attitude that some of these older employees have.

What I took from my interview and new hire was that the company wanted me to form my own opinions and work towards a better Teck!

Courageous leadership is the concept that Teck is trying to implement throughout its mine sites. A great Idea, a super plan and I can see the picture you are trying to create. I bought into it and tried to bring a positive attitude to work with me every day. I am sorry to say however that I can see that it's NOT working. Too bad because your right, it is a great concept. In my previous field of work, jobs were not that abundant and everyone wanted a job in (the industry). They were willing to do just about anything to get a good paying job and tolerated abuse and unsafe conditions to keep a steady paycheck coming in. I watched as relatives and friends were hurt and killed due to unsafe conditions.

The attitude then was getting it while the price is high!! Work safe until you need to get it done then... Just get it done no matter what! From what I understood the mining industry was the same. Then the recession hit. And everyone started to look for a steady paying job, me included. Mining and Teck seemed to be the answer.



So we packed up and moved our families to a different province to a new job that promised a great lifestyle and a steady pay cheque. They were not wrong. That's exactly what we got.

As mining remains steady, skilled labor in these fields is becoming hard to come by as there are so many positions out there that people can jump ship from one company to another very easily. SO what makes a company one that people want to work for? This is the question I feel needs to be looked at very seriously. Slowly we can see that those companies who retain their workers have a few things they are doing that make them stand apart. I'm not talking about wages although it is a factor. I'm talking about the treatment of employees and the amount of enjoyment they get from going to work every day. The friendships they make and the pride they have in the work they do. This in my humble opinion is where Teck as a whole is failing.

Courageous leadership only works if people can say what is on their minds without the fear of being reprimanded, to be able to ask questions and get honest answers. This to say the least is not what is happening on the Teck sites. It also only works if the people believe what they are doing is for the greater good... so that they CAN go home safe and healthy every day. The Teck I see from where I am is this.. People are asked to perform safety inspections and fill out reports etc but when they do, nothing is done about the problems. When they finally stop saying something and an incident happens .. they get blamed if not reprimanded and yes punished for what is in fact not their fault. It could be anything from scratched up mirrors on haul trucks, to ruff road conditions, to failing equipment in the shops. The accidents and incidents are in the end blamed on the worker. The treatment of employees is truly the reason why this company is failing. Everyone who works here including some bosses and office people share the same opinion. Which is to put it bluntly, if they don't care, why should we? Attitudes need to change. Teck needs to see its workers as a valuable commodity not a replaceable entity. They need to listen when they speak and they need to realize that the employees are adult human beings.

Punishing people for making a mistake is not the way to go about things. All it does is makes them scared of you, it doesn't make them learn. If a person is afraid of getting in trouble they will not be likely to speak up when something does happen. And in the end it could have serious side effects as a result. A positive work environment should consist of a steady give and take between workers and management. Yes there is a reason for management. They have a position of control which can be used in 2 ways. One is to positively guide their workers and encourage them to put their best foot forward in completing their tasks in a timely manner. The other is to enforce the rules of the company by threatening the workers with punishment in order to scare them into completing their tasks. I do not need to tell you which environment Teck has decided to promote.

We see it every day. If indeed there are some foremen who try to use the positive reinforcement methods they are quickly dealt with by those even higher than themselves. This is too bad as they are the ones a person wants to work for. They are the ones who will stand behind you when a problem arises. If you feel what you do is appreciated you are more likely to put more effort in. You will come forward with near misses and incidents that could have caused serious damage or first aids because you don't want it to happen again. You will finish your job and at the end of the day go home with pride in what you have accomplished.

As it stands now, people are being stepped and reprimanded for reporting little things that have happened, while major things that could have been catastrophic go unnoticed or swept under the rug. As it stands employees are forced to prove that they are fit for work and their human rights are being violated by random testing.

I do not think a single employee has complained about pre-employment testing nor do they complain about being tested after an incident. But random?? What did we do to deserve this lack of trust? Why is it assumed we are under the influence? At what point did the company feel we became so untrustworthy? It just seems that everything the company has been doing has been to belittle the employees. There is no trust and no respect. We do not feel appreciated. We do not feel like the company cares. In the end.. We are just ...a number

Employees Feel They Are Not Treated With Respect and Dignity - Does this Matter?

Of course! Without Management Respect Employees will eventually:

- *Lose their Respect for management*
- *Stop trusting management*
- *Become resentful and less motivated – and*
- *Lose commitment to the organization and it's goals*



Steelworkers Support Alberta Flood Relief

The Steelworkers Humanity Fund is contributed over \$50,000 to flood relief efforts in Alberta and other areas of Western Canada, with additional donations that came from Steelworkers Union members across the country.

"The Steelworkers Humanity Fund and our Union's members are committed to help families and communities that have been devastated by the recent flooding, particularly the hard-hit areas of Alberta, and British Columbia.

Many Steelworkers' members and their families are among the thousands of flood victims who are facing the daunting task of rebuilding their lives. Our members truly appreciate the help that their families and their communities are receiving from fellow Steelworkers and from all Canadians who are supporting the relief efforts.

The Steelworkers Humanity Fund is a registered charitable organization that supports Canadian communities in crisis as well as development projects and emergency aid in developing countries. United Steelworkers members contribute to the fund through clauses negotiated into their collective agreements, and we thank you for your continued support.



Steelworkers Humanity Fund Contributes \$130,800 to Canadian Food Banks

The United Steelworkers Humanity Fund contributed \$130,800 to 63 different food banks in Canadian communities where USW members live and work.

"In communities as diverse as Lady Smith, B.C., Goose Bay, Val d'Or and Thunder Bay, the Steelworkers Humanity Fund is contributing to food banks because poor and vulnerable Canadians continue to rely on food banks to make ends meet.

"The fact is that right across this country we are collectively failing in our attempts to eliminate poverty. And we will continue to fail until we start to see the elimination of poverty as a human rights obligation that requires positive, committed government action at all levels.

The recently released Hunger Count 2012, produced by Food Banks Canada, provides one snapshot of the alarming dimensions of poverty in Canada:

- 880,000 individuals received food from a food bank in March 2012;*
- Food bank use in 2012 was 2.4% higher than in 2011, and 31% higher than in 2008 prior to the recession*
- People on social assistance, single parent families, and those who identify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit are all at higher risk of needing help.*

The United Steelworkers continue to support Dignity for all: the Campaign for a Poverty-Free Canada, which aims to make Canada poverty-free, socially secure and cohesive by 2020. The campaign has three core objectives:

- A federal plan for poverty elimination that complements provincial and territorial plans.*
- A federal anti-poverty Act that ensures an enduring federal commitment and accountability for results.*
- Sufficient federal investment in social security for all Canadians.*

Steelworkers Humanity Fund

Founded in 1985, the Steelworkers Humanity Fund is a registered charitable organization that focuses primarily on development projects and emergency aid in developing countries, but it also supports Canadian communities in crisis. Steelworker members contribute to the Fund through clauses negotiated into collective agreements. In some cases matching contributions come from employers.

Harassment Free Workplace

The Union has filed a grievance against the Company for not providing a harassment free workplace. Why did we file this grievance? We filed this grievance because of the continued, ongoing disrespectful, ignorant, arrogant, and hostile behavior of a foreman in the maintenance department, who I will define as a serial bully boss.

A serial bully boss is someone who displays an obsessive, compulsive and self-gratifying urge to displace his uncontrolled aggression onto others whilst exhibiting an apparent lack of insight into his behavior and its effect on people around him. Jealousy and envy motivate the bully to identify a competent and popular individual who is then controlled and subjugated through projection of the bully's own inadequacy and incompetence.

When the target asserts their right not to be bullied, a paranoid fear of exposure compels the bully to perceive that person as a threat and hence neutralizes and disposes of them as quickly as possible. Once a person has been eliminated there's an interval of between 2 days and 2 weeks before the bully chooses another target and the cycle starts again.

This serial bully boss appears to lack insight into his behaviour and seems to be oblivious to the crassness and inappropriateness of his behavior; however, it is more likely that he knows what he is doing but elects to switch off the moral and ethical considerations by which normal people are bound. If the bully knows what he is doing, he is responsible for his behaviour and should be terminated immediately. If this bully boss doesn't know what he is doing, then he should be suspended from duty on the grounds of diminished responsibility and the provisions of the Mental Health Act should apply.



ZERO Tolerance



Internal Announcement:

November 28, 2013

Please be advised that Bob Schentag; Foreman, Mine Maintenance, Will be Leaving the Company Effective Immediately.

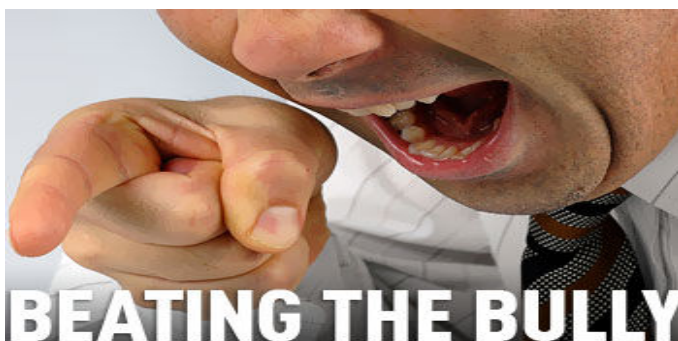
Report to the Union Hall

The Union continually receives other complaints, especially from workers on G shift, regarding another ignorant, hostile, bully boss; this type of disrespectful, aggressive approach to employees has to stop immediately. Who do you people think you are? You get a title and you think that you are someone special, and beyond reproach?

Well you had better think twice the next time that you think about disrespecting your workers because we will no longer tolerate your aggressive behavior. Everyone has a job to do at the mine and we want to go to work, do our jobs, and go home harassment free. We are grown adults, we have families, wives, children, and grandchildren, and we are human beings, were not some piece of scrap that you think you can kick around at your leisure. If you have a problem with a worker, then you had better treat that worker with dignity and respect, and communicate in a calm rational manner when resolving it, or we will discuss your attitude in the Managers office, and take whatever other legal action that we deem necessary to resolve your attitude problem.

The only way to stop a Serial Bully is by exposure. We are asking all employees on the mine-site to get involved, don't remain silent anymore. Contact the Union Hall, if you are being disrespected and bullied, or you witness someone else being disrespected by a bully boss. We must do everything in our power to eradicate this cancer from our mine-site.

Everyone has a responsibility to put an end to this archaic management approach that a select few, "bully bosses" have created when dealing with some of their employees. The Union is keeping a file at the Union Hall called the Bully Boss file, and we need your help by providing us with statements. Your names will always remain confidential, unless you authorize us to release that information. Without your proactive approach, of documenting and providing us with statements, these people will continue their abusive behavior, so please stop by the Union Hall, send us a fax, or e-mail, and let's eradicate these bully bosses from Fording River.



THE BREAKDOWN OF COURAGEOUS SAFETY LEADERSHIP

“Your own safety is at stake when your neighbor’s wall is ablaze” - Horace



Not the correct way to run a management safety training course...

Inattention puts Electrical Workers Safety in the backseat.

It was through an information request in 2013 due to a grievance, that an experts report on electric fields conducted 2 years prior was acquired by Local 7884 at Fording River Operations. On August 19th 2011, a company called Braga Electric was onsite to conduct electromagnetic field (EMF) and radio frequency (RF) testing of the cable repair area at Fording River Operations. These experts were brought in to assess the health hazards of the area for a particular worker who may have been subject to being extra sensitive to EMF and RF exposure due to a medical condition.

The report from the experts at Braga Electric brought to light that hazardous levels of EMF and RF were indeed present. The high levels measured were identified as presenting a hazard to ALL workers (not just the particular worker in question) and several areas were deemed as “severe concern” based on the Building Biology Evaluation Guidelines.

“Severe Concern” is defined in the guidelines as:

‘Values in this category are not acceptable from a building biology point of view, they call for action. Remediation should be carried out soon. In addition to numerous case histories, scientific studies indicate biological effects and health problems within this reference range’.

The report mentioned specific health hazards such as poor sleep, tinnitus (ringing in the ears), and memory loss and recommended discussions with the affected workers and that actions be taken. It was three days later, on August 22 2011 that the Braga report was sent directly to the Electrical General Foreman and that’s where it ended. No workers were notified of the hazardous work environment or the potential health effects and no action was taken.

In the summer of 2013, the Braga Report was obtained by your union and was immediately brought to the attention of the OHSC. A grievance was filed for ‘Not Cooperating to Promote Safe Work Practices- Health Conditions’, and a meeting was set up on August 8th between the electrical general foreman and the union electrical safety rep. At the meeting the general foreman was questioned as to why it had been almost two years and still nobody had been made aware of the Braga report findings. The foreman replied that the report said that the company may want to “CONSIDER” action.

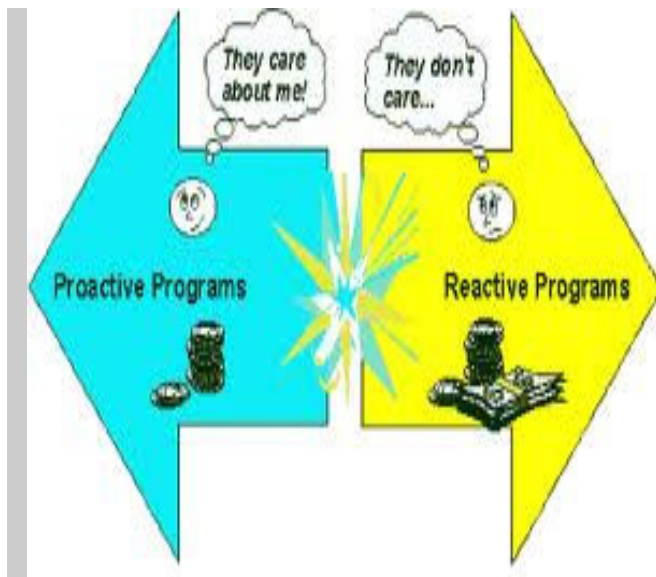
When asked why the foreman would not take a proactive approach to the findings and be a courageous safety leader the foreman had nothing to say except for accusing the safety rep of being confrontational. It was then pointed out by the safety rep that the general foreman has a responsibility to advise workers of any potential hazards that he has been made aware of. The foreman acknowledged that he knew of that responsibility but yet his actions conflicted with that acknowledgement.

At the end of the meeting, the union safety rep presented a list of 5 Recommendations to the company, including a discussion with workers in the area of concern to make them aware of the hazards. The electrical general foreman would not contribute to any recommendations nor would he commit to implementing any of the recommendations. The foreman said he could not go through with any of the safety reps suggestions and could not even discuss the safety hazards with the work group until he talked to the maintenance superintendent. It is very troubling how the results of testing that clearly warn the company of safety concerns, are kept secret from the workers.

The fact that Teck's Fording River Operations actively promotes their Courageous Safety Leadership program to both the workforce and management but yet the whole idea of Courageous Leadership seems to stop once it reaches upper management really highlights why the program is simply not working.

This was the same foreman who was reluctant to provide the proper arc flash PPE to electricians even though most of Teck's other operations were issuing the PPE as necessary protection, even going as far as falsely declaring that the PPE coveralls had been 'recalled' and stripping workers of the coveralls that had been proactively ordered in by another foreman. It takes proactive leadership to improve safety and workers should be able to have a reasonable expectation that they will not knowingly be exposed to known hazards.

Workers should be able to expect that a supervisor would do the right thing when it comes to protecting their health, not only as a supervisor but as a human being. When seeing examples like what happened here with the Braga report findings, it is clear to see where the breakdown of Courageous Safety Leadership lies.



FIX THE HAZARDS! DON'T BLAME THE WORKERS!

Quote: Don Lindsay President, & CEO Teck Resources Limited

***“Responsibility for Safety has to start from the Individual right at the Front Line!
Because in the end everyone is Accountable, and not just for themselves”***

O.H.S.C REPORT

Mine Ops.

Several tours have been done and things seem to be moving in the right direction. We all are aware that there is a new superintendent and it takes time to implement new ideas and practices. At this point the reports are all positive. Yes there are some outstanding issues but there seems to be an understanding that they can be resolved. The smaller issues are being dealt with immediately and not ignored. As for the hot coal issue everyone has been well informed and has had input. We all hope that this cooperation with everyone will continue.

Processing

We all know that processing, due to the small number of employees is an entity all of its own. Issues seem to get resolved without being forwarded to the OHSC. There is a new OHSC rep in the plant. Due to scheduling problems no tours or discussions have taken place. We have been assured that this will be addressed immediately. So if there are any concerns they will be addressed at that time.

Warehouse

Although some issues have been resolved there seems to be a reluctance to invest any time in OHSC tours and discussions by the management in this area. The small issues that have been resolved have required a large amount of time and effort for no reason. It seems that a major confrontation is required to get the smallest issues resolved. Hopefully this will change in the future.

Maintenance

Again several tours and meetings have taken place. Unfortunately none of the major issues have been resolved. The answer "we are looking into this" is very familiar. We expect a resolve to these issues in the very near future. If these issues are not resolved other avenues will be discussed.

OHSC

During the last OHSC meeting the tour that the ministry did on potable water plant was discussed. There seems to be 2 entirely different accounts of what happened. This is not the place for a "he said she said". One thing does stand out. The company stated that they had no prior knowledge of the ministry coming yet a supervisor informed a union rep, the day **before** that they were to go on a tour with the ministry. That worker was then told his services were not required and was removed on the day of the tour. Maybe someone was mistaken?

Remember, if you have a Safety issue report it to your Foreman, If there is no resolve, then contact your Union Safety Rep or the Union Hall.

Courageous Leadership

Health care or the lack there of, is nothing new to us here in the valley. The Government has made cuts to the point, I believe, of being dangerous. If you are not in perfect health or have any health issues at all it can be quite concerning. The nearest 24 hour health care is 40 miles away.

The doctors we do get here stay for 3-4 months and then their gone. You hear new people say they can't even get an appointment because the doctors in the valley are full right up. I've talked to new employee's who have to live in bigger center's and commute because they have children with health issues that although may not be life threatening still need access to regular doctors care. So having said this, now I get to the employee's themselves who work 24/7 in the mines in all kinds of inclement weather around all sorts of hazards.

The Companies reason for implementing the drug and alcohol policy is that the mines are very safety sensitive. If you have the slightest accident you are drug tested, even if you don't you are subject to random testing. The purpose they say is in their slogan "Everyone going home Safe and Healthy every day". Well if this is true then why did a local contractor have to spearhead a raffle to raise the 300,000 for the out dated helipad at our health care centre? That's a lot of money. We have around 2500 employee's at the mines in the valley so really that's only equal to the wages of about four employee's in one year, or maybe the wages of 2 doctors in a year.

Ok, so what you say. Where am I going with this? Well Teck had no problem donating a \$1,000,000.00 to the new community center to have the banquet room called the Teck room. Yep they got their name on the banquet room so we can all see it when we go to the Christmas parties. Oh by the way, this is the same community center that the majority of residents in Elkford voted against. If Teck wanted us all Safe and Healthy don't you think they would use that money to allow us access to other viable options for Health Care?

So if their concern for our welfare is so great to them (random testing) then why would they give a million dollars to the community center when less than one third of that would have updated our helipad?

This helipad has been the difference to many people being saved over the years. Yes employee's as well. If mining is so safety sensitive that we are pee tested every time we turn around then put the money towards HEALTH AND SAFETY.

Oh and one more thought that has been bothering me. This “Know your Numbers” Campaign that the Company set up. They can bring in nurses to check my cholesterol and blood pressure when I can’t even get into a doctor to have this done privately. I go to work to earn a living. I go to the doctor to have my Health checked. Why would I want my employer looking after my health?

I hear people complain about the privacy issue around random testing, and rightfully so. So again why would I go to work for a check up? This is a very private issue between me and my doctor, not the company. One last note, let’s all go to work and do stretches in the morning, all the while being videotaped. LMAO, I think I’m being paranoid.

B.C. Prepared to Risk Water Quality on Elk Valley Coal Mine

Government knows Teck project is going to pollute, but doesn’t know if water treatment plan will work.

When the Provincial Government issued an environmental certificate to Teck Coal Ltd. this fall it appeared pollution problems associated with a massive new coal mine in the Elk Valley had been resolved.

But background documents show that is far from the case. The British Columbia Government has rolled the dice on the project and is hoping that Teck’s money – and experimental water-treatment plants – can save the Elk River.

A document that gives the Minister’s reasons for issuing a certificate for the Line Creek mine, states the environmental assessment “was not able to conclude on the magnitude, reversibility and therefore significance” of an array of pollutants. Nor could it determine “the effectiveness” of two planned water-treatment facilities that will use new methods in an attempt to filter out selenium.

In other words, the government knows the new mine is going to pollute but it doesn’t know whether the water-treatment plan will work.

Everyone is hoping the bet pays off: the miners who work in the Elk Valley, the mining company that is planning to spend \$200-million on water treatment, and the government, which could run afoul of an international treaty if pollution controls fail.

With so much uncertainty, it might seem like a high-risk bet, but the B.C. Government really had little choice. Without approval, the mine would have shut down, 500 jobs would have been lost and the pollutants already seeping from existing mountains of waste rock would have continued to leach into the river.

Approval of the \$3.4-billion mine means Teck stays in business for another 18 years and corporate money continues to pour into research and pollution-abatement efforts.

Coal mining releases many pollutants into surrounding watersheds. But the biggest concern is selenium, a naturally occurring chemical element which, even in small doses, can cause deformities in aquatic birds, fish and insects.

Studies in recent years have shown the Elk watershed is carrying a high load of selenium, a pollutant that has become of increasing concern around North American coal mines. Both the U.S. State Department and the Government of Montana have taken note of the selenium flowing south in the Elk River.

Under the Boundary Waters Treaty, signed in 1909, Canada and the U.S. agreed that shared waters can't be polluted on either side of the border, to cause injury on the other side. The U.S. has been keeping a close watch on the selenium levels in Lake Koochanusa, which spans the border in southeast B.C., and into which the Elk River flows.

In B.C., trout appear to be thriving in the Elk River, but research shows selenium is building up in the fish and is near levels at which eggs become so fragile they break when exposed to water.

The big fear with Teck's new Line Creek mine, which will produce 637 million cubic metres of waste rock, is that it could release enough selenium to push aquatic life over the edge. That would not only be an environmental disaster for B.C., where the Elk is treasured as one of the world's best trout-fishing rivers, but it could trigger an international showdown, perhaps with the U.S. invoking the Boundary Waters Treaty to force the closing of a Canadian mine.

When B.C. Environment Minister Mary Polak and Energy Minister Bill Bennett issued approval for the new mine in October, they stated in a news release "the company will stabilize and reverse trends in water contaminant concentrations."

That's a bold statement, but it's based on hope, not certainty.

Teck has committed \$100-million to one water-treatment plant and is planning a second. But plant No. 2 won't open until nine years after the new mine has started.

So there is big gap when untreated water will flow from the slag heaps. During that time, scientists on both sides of the border will nervously watch selenium levels. If they soar, all bets will be off as to what happens next in the Elk Valley coal fields.

Article by Mark Hume - Globe & Mail - November 24, 2013

Drug Alcohol & Medication Policy

(The D.A.M. Policy)

United Steelworkers lawyers sought a pre hearing order prohibiting Teck Coal Ltd. from implementing the D.A.M. policy as we believe that it is not in keeping with Canadian Laws and seriously erodes the privacy rights of our members. The Arbitrator refused to grant a pre hearing order. Our Lawyers were of the view that the Arbitrator made fundamental error's in his interim award and proceeded to take action with the British Columbia Court of Appeal as well as the British Columbia Labour Board.

In November 2013 the British Columbia Court of Appeal unfortunately declined jurisdiction to hear the dispute because in this province these matters must proceed to the BC Labour Board. We expect to have a hearing in early 2014 and feel confident that the BC Labour Board will agree with our position in that we obtain the same injunctive relief that the Alberta Court of Appeal granted Suncor's Alberta workers. We wish to make it clear that the BC Court of Appeal's ruling on jurisdiction does not in anyway reflect the merits of the Union's appeal.

Local 7884 continue, to strongly believe that, in light of the clear direction provided by the Supreme Court of Canada's decision (Irving Pulp and Paper) decided in June 2013, Teck Coal Ltd's D.A.M. policies will be struck down as unreasonable and unjustified gross violations of the privacy rights of our members.

In another development the Arbitrator assigned to this dispute advised both parties (Teck and the Union) that due to scheduling difficulties he could not continue to hear the merits of the case and withdrew his appointment. The Union wrote the Arbitrator and accepted his withdrawal.

Surprisingly, a short while after this the very same Arbitrator issued an order of procedure and now claimed he had not withdrawn from the case. Our Lawyers wrote the Arbitrator and advised him that he did not have the jurisdiction to issue any order as he had withdrawn from the case. Thankfully the Arbitrator once again withdrew from the case. The Union and Teck Coal Ltd. are in discussions to appoint a new Arbitrator.

Also the Union and Teck have agreed that all individual members test no longer have to be individually challenged as all test's will be covered by a Policy grievance. We still want to hear from workers if they are required to give a urine test and they feel they have been mistreated (ie: inappropriate statements from management, or any other questionable incidents). The Union with the support of our International Union will leave no rock unturned until Teck's D.A.M. policy is struck down and our members whose privacy rights have been violated are appropriately addressed.

Grievance Report

1) *Austin discharge arbitration: We have already had several days of hearing and expect to conclude on Dec. 17, 18, and 19, 2013.*

2) *Holt termination: We have already had one hearing and will resume in the New Year.*

3) *Staniforth arbitration: (Back pay) scheduled for Feb. 2014.*

4) *We have several other disputes that are awaiting scheduling. Please drop by the Union or give us a call for more details.*

5) *We still receive a number of complaints of our members being advised by management that they have to provide a doctors note when they are ill. If this happens to you please contact the Union Hall for advice.*

6) *Once again the Company is calling in our members concerning their attendance and their placement on the attendance review program.*

Many workers leave these meetings feeling threatened and that they have done something wrong.

This is unfortunate as the purpose of the program according to Teck is to attempt to improve attendance.

Teck knows full well that their chances of discharging a worker for an attendance problem (if one even exists) is slim to next to none.

Not only would the Company have to prove that a significant attendance problem exists, they would also have to satisfy the British Columbia Human Rights Statute and demonstrate that Teck would suffer undue hardship by keeping employees who suffer from illness in their employment.

Overtime the Company continues to lower the level of attendance that places workers on the attendance program. The vast majority of these workers do not have a significant attendance problem and the program in our opinion is just a form of harassment. Since the introduction of the attendance program no worker has been disciplined or terminated.

If you have any questions about the topic please contact the Union Hall.

Compensation Report

When a worker is injured at work, the Employer almost immediately offers light duty work. The worker is obliged under WorkSafe policy to discuss with the attending Physician the Employers offer and if the doctor agrees that light duty work is appropriate, the doctor will provide to the Employer a listing of all work restrictions.

The Employer is than obliged to develop a light duty assignment for the injured worker in keeping with any work restrictions. If that is not possible then the worker will be paid by WCB, for any work time loss due to the injury.

If a worker does not agree with the initial attending doctor that light duty work is appropriate, the worker may seek a second opinion. However, if the WCB finds that light duties were appropriate, the worker will not be paid.

If a injured worker does agree with participating in light duty work, and the worker fins that the work offered is not in keeping with the doctor's work restrictions than the worker should not do the work and immediately discuss it with the Foreman. If no agreement can be reached than ask for a Safety Rep. or contact the Hall.

Also the work offered has to be productive. It is not appropriate light duty work to have injured workers read SP and P's for 3 or 4 days, or to sleep.

Finally, it is never appropriate to badger an injured worker with comments like "Are you still not better" or "You need to get back to your regular job and just work thru your injuries". Remember, once your doctor and certainly you are qualified to when your injury has healed sufficiently to allow a return to your regular duties.

For the most part, the Employer has followed a suitable light duty work schedule for injured workers. However, from time to time, we do get complains from workers about the work duties and inappropriate comments made by Supervision or co-workers.

ALWAYS CONTACT THE UNION HALL if you are injured at work and then we can assist you from the beginning to the end with any employment issues or WCB issues. If you have any other questions concerning WCB please drop in or give us a call.



Vacation Scheduling for 2014

In the later part of 2012, a number of employees had regular vacation entitlement that needed to be scheduled. Those employees requested time off and the employer denied their request because of manpower needs. The employer advised these workers that they would be paid out their remaining regular vacation entitlement.

The union filed a grievance as it was our position that the employer does not have the option to payout regular vacation entitlement, and that it must be scheduled in the vacation year. The only exceptions to this position is per article 17.08 of the Collective Agreement (vacation cannot be used in the vacation year as the employee is off on sickness and accident benefits) or if agreement is reached between the union and the employer, or when there are special circumstances.

The Arbitrator agreed with the Union's position and stated: "the obligation of the Company is to schedule all regular vacation entitlements for employees under the Collective Agreement before year-end. I find and declare that the Company violated the terms of the Collective Agreement in the payout of unscheduled vacation entitlements for a number of employees in the year 2012."

As a result of the Arbitrator's findings, Teck has advised the Union that "all" vacation for our members will be scheduled by April 15th of the vacation year as per Article 17.05 of the Collective Agreement. No longer will employees be allowed to have unscheduled vacation sitting in the bank beyond April 15th of the vacation year.

Teck's new position is in keeping with the Collective Agreement and as the new vacation year is very close, we would like to offer the following to assist you as it concerns vacation scheduling.

- *Between January 1st and February 15th of the vacation year, vacation requests are based on a first request basis.*
- *The employer will post vacation entitlements as soon as possible but no later than January 15th of the year.*
- *Employees may then indicate their preference in vacation dates up to and including February 15th, (vacation request forms). If you are away during this time, contact the Union Hall, as we have the forms. Again these forms "must" be in by February 15th.*
- *The employer will then proceed with the vacation scheduling process and vacation schedules must be posted no later than April 15th of each year.*

- *Vacations will be scheduled by bargaining unit seniority “for those employees who have indicated their preference”.*
- *If you do not put in a vacation request form, the employer will schedule your vacation dates for you without any consideration of your seniority or your desire to have time off work that is suitable to you.*
- *The Union strongly recommends that all employees put in vacation request forms up to and including February 15th.*
- *The Union also strongly recommends that you keep a copy of your vacation request form, in case of a future dispute.*
- *Regular vacation entitlements have precedent over special vacation entitlement, during the scheduling process.*
- *Regular vacation is scheduled in 48 hour blocks or 40 hour blocks for the 5x2 workers.*

Exceptions to the rule are:

- *At the beginning and end of shutdowns.*
- *The final portion of vacation entitlements, for example, if you have a couple days left when filling out your vacation request form, the employer must honour your seniority and allow you the 24 hours, even though you are not booking 48 hours or 40 hours for 5x2. The employer cannot ignore your request and give preference to someone who has less seniority and wants to schedule a 48 hour block, or 40 hour block for 5x2. Remember this is at the end, “the final portion of your vacation entitlement”.*
- *Other durations as requested by the employee and approved by the Company.*
- *Once vacation lists are approved and posted, vacations can only be changed with “the mutual agreement of the employee and the Company”, except where a major business circumstance that could not have been reasonably anticipated by the Company requires the rescheduling of some or all of the vacations.*

We recommend that now is the time to start thinking of when you would like to take your vacation for next year. Please call us, or send us an e-mail if you have any questions regarding vacations scheduling, or any other issue, and we will respond back to you without any undue delay.

Retirement Planning Option

An employee who is eligible for Unreduced Early Retirement may, entirely at his own option, elect to apply for Early Retirement Leave. Early Retirement Leave is designed to provide employees with an opportunity to assess retirement conditions before actual retirement. However, no restrictions are placed on the manner in which this option is utilized.

Early Retirement Leave will be available to eligible employees during the period October 1 to the following April 30, provided that application is made prior to the preceding July 1. The length of leave available will depend on the employee's age as follows:

- | • AGE | DURATION |
|-------|------------------------------|
| • 60 | 4 weeks |
| • 61 | 4 or 8 weeks |
| • 62 | 4, 8 or 12 weeks |
| • 63 | 4, 8, 12, 16 or 20 weeks |
| • 64 | 4, 8, 12, 16, 20 or 24 weeks |

Time on Early Retirement Leave will be included in Credited Service under the Plan.

If you are interested in the Retirement Planning Option, or if you are interested in finding out what your Pension entitlement will be when you retire, then contact the Union Hall and we give you the appropriate information, and do up a Pension Estimate for you.



Taking Early CPP

For those 60 years and older who have chosen to continue working, Canada Pension Plan (CPP) has changed its rules in qualifying for CPP benefits. Previously to qualify for CPP Benefits between the ages of 60-65, you had to either stop working before your CPP retirement pension began or have earning less than the monthly max of the CPP benefit.

Under the new rules that took effect in 2012, you can start receiving your CPP benefits at age 60 without any requirement to stop working or reduce your monthly earnings. In addition, if you are under age 65, both you and your employer will continue to contribute to the CPP which in return will result in you receiving more pension credits and a larger pension amount.

Between the ages of 65 and 70 if still working, contributions to the Plan are optional. The downside of all this is that pensions will now be reduced by 7.2% for each year you begin collecting CPP before the age 65 (up from the previous 6 %.)

These changes will gradually be introduced from 2012 to 2016. If you need more information, or if you need assistance in applying for CPP contact the Union Hall. If you don't have a computer you can use one of our computers, and we can assist you in applying on line, it take about 15 minutes.

Sickness & Accident & L.T.D.

If you are off work on Sickness & Accident or Long Term Disability, there is no obligation for you to send any medical records to the employer. You do however have an obligation to inform your Foreman and Benefits Administrator that you are off of work. Your private medical information is between you, you're Doctor and the Insurance provider, (Sunlife).

*We have had a couple of reports from workers who are off on S&A that the Company has requested medical information pertaining to their disability, we then contacted the Company and they denied the fact that they had requested any medical information. Remember, this is your **"private medical information"** privileged between you, your Doctor and the Insurance carrier; it is against the Law for your Doctor, or the Insurance carrier to release your medical information to the employer without your consent. If you are requested by the employer to provide any medical information, please contact the Union Hall immediately, and we will question the Company on their request.*

Tim Hortons OT Allegations Highlight Flaws In Temporary Foreign Workers Program

By Steve Mertl/Daily Brew

Fast-food outlets seem to be among the most enthusiastic users of Ottawa's problem-plagued Temporary Foreign Worker Program. According to [federal statistics](#), sales and service jobs far outpace other occupations in the program. The government approved more than 70,000 such positions last year, compared with just under 50,000 the year before, representing the largest year-over-year expansion among the program's nine categories.

It shouldn't be surprising that some employers will take advantage of the vulnerable newcomers who've left their homes overseas in search of work to support their families. That's what allegedly happened to employees of a Tim Hortons outlet in the mountain town of Fernie BC. Two workers have come forward to claim their employer, Pierre Pelletier, cheated them out of overtime pay.

Heidi Kibanoff and her boyfriend, Richard Pepito, say Pierre Pelletier hired them and other Filipinos under the program. Their long work hours earned them overtime pay but they didn't get to keep it, the claim reads." He will issue a cheque to us and then what he wants is you cash the cheque, and after you cash the cheque you give the money back to him," Pepito said.

Kibanoff said Pelletier would drive employees to the bank and wait while they cashed their cheques, then it's alleged he asked for a portion of the money. Kibanoff complied because she said she had an application under the Provincial Nominee Program, which fast tracks workers to permanent residency. "All was I thinking was that I don't wanna go home, and he said it's to protect us and he's doing us a favour," she said.

Kibanoff said she left her job at Tim Hortons in June but is still stressed by her experience. "It feels like even if I'm not working there anymore he can still try to threaten us through other people that he knows," she told CBC News. Pepito also quit, and filed a complaint with the B.C. Employment Standards Branch.

CBC News contacted Pelletier and his wife, who professed ignorance of the allegations. However, the broadcaster said Tim Hortons' head office has launched an internal investigation into Pelletier. "This matter has been brought to our attention," the company said in a statement. "We are treating it seriously and are currently conducting a review in full co-operation with B.C. Employment Standards." Pelletier is also accused of charging employees processing fees for renewing their temporary work permits, which regulations require the employer to pay.

Critics, especially labour unions, have cast a jaundiced eye at the Temporary Foreign Worker program for some time. While proponents tout it as a way of dealing with labour shortages and filling skills gaps, others see it as a way for businesses to keep down wages and benefits.

The service industry has come under particular scrutiny because of scepticism over claims that jobs as burger flippers and coffee dispensers are hard to fill. Fast-food operators say a lot of Canadians won't take these relatively low-wage jobs, especially in smaller communities. But Karl Flecker, Canadian Labour Congress National Director of anti-racism and human rights, told [CBC News](#) last year these temporary migrant workers are vulnerable to exploitation, abuse and dangerous working conditions. "I think that most Canadians would be really disturbed to find out the kinds of working conditions people from so many countries are finding themselves in despite promises that they had heard from labour brokers and recruiters," said Flecker. B.C. MLA Mabel Elmore, who has met with Kibanoff and Pepito, told CBC News their case is common among foreign workers.

"They are dependent on their employers," she said. "They often don't know their rights." A B.C. Tim Hortons outlet figured in another complaint last year when four Mexican workers who worked at two Dawson Creek restaurants alleged their boss exploited them.

A Tim Hortons spokeswoman told CBC News many of the company's outlets couldn't operate without the program because franchisees in many locations can't find local residents to fill jobs. Earlier this year, the Alberta Federation of Labour said fast-food chains and convenience stores were using a loophole in the program to keep labour costs down, [CBC News](#) reported.

The federation said documents it obtained under access-to-information legislation show half the temporary workers hired through a new fast-track process to bring in highly-skilled people ended up at fast-food outlets or convenience stores.

"It stretches the bounds of credibility that companies like A&W, McDonalds would be hiring high-skilled workers," federation president Gil McGowan told CBC News.

"They're using the temporary foreign workers program to keep wages low." A hearing into the complaint by Kibanoff and Pepito is scheduled for February. Meanwhile, they say they've been harassed and intimidated, and friends who still work for Pelletier have asked them to withdraw their complaint.

"It feels like even if I'm not working there anymore he can still try to threaten us through other people that he knows," Kibanoff told CBC News.

2013 Retirees



- Ken Porter – Mine Op- 37 yrs
- Randy Ingham – Mine Op-33 yrs
- Jill Foster – Janitor-32 yrs
- Bill Trommer – Maint-38 yrs
- James Perosa – Process-37 yrs
- Richard Smuin – Maint-35 yrs
- Terry Glavin – Maint-35 yrs
- Gary Dortman – Mine Op-39 yrs
- Robert Turner – Mine Op-33 yrs
- Avtar Sidhu – Mine Op-32 yrs
- Liv Ward – Maint-31 yrs
- Len Haley – Maint-30 yrs
- John Neufeld – Maint-33 yrs
- Ron Staniforth – Maint-37 yrs
- Bob Larsen – Maint-33 yrs
- Archie Miller – Mine Op-21 yrs + staff
- Nick Wasylie – Mine Op-32 yrs
- John Mendoza – Maint -32 yrs
- Dave Sheppard – Mine Op-37 yrs
- Mukesh Sharma – Maint-32 yrs
- Gary Shiosaki – Maint-31 yrs
- Loren Brewer – Warehouse- 33yrs
- John Vanderlinden – Process-32 yrs
- Candido Canteras – Maint- 31 yrs
- Rati Lal – Mine Op-40 yrs
- Jim Abar – Maint- 36 yrs
- Mike Barron – Mine Op- 29 yrs + staff
- Mariano Mendoza – Maint-35 yrs
- Surjit Hayher – Mine Op-35 yrs
- Jack Ordway – Mine Op-33 yrs
- Dave Turcott – Maint- 32 yrs
- Cliff Dortman – Mine Op-39 yrs
- Don Tait – Maint-33 yrs
- Ellard Einarson – Maint-36 yrs
- Royce Robertson – Process-34 yrs
- Dave Anonson – Mine Op-33 yrs
- Mike Robitaille – Mine Op-33 yrs
- Paul Pirino – Mine Op-32 yrs
- Don Scott – Maint-31 yrs
- Lou Szgatti – Maint-35 yrs
- Ray Vanschouwen – Mine Op-32 yrs
- Harry Cryderman – Maint-33 yrs

January 1, 2013 – December 3, 2013 at Fording River

- 42 – Employees Retired
- 51 – Full Time Employees Quit
- 29 - Casuals Quit
- 13 Trades Quit
- 82 Casuals Hired
- 19 Trades Hired

It's My Opinion

As I embark on my ninth year at Teck coal I would like to give thanks to the retirees and long time employees for paving the way for us younger employees so we too can enjoy providing for our families and live a productive lifestyle. I have spent some time down at the Hall trying to answer questions and learn what it is like to assist people in there everyday issues. I have talked with lots of retirees and realize that after putting in thirty odd years of service there is time to enjoy life, and I realize that people are truly taking advantage of that vision. They joined a Union and supported that Union for many years and have created safe and sustainable employment for us all and for that I thank you. As for our newer members including myself I would like to say we have an obligation to continue the same relentless struggle to provide for ourselves and our families. I only ask that we support our Union as our peers have, and we to will watch ourselves and other prosper for years to come.

After jumping through the hoops of pre-employment testing I decided in 2005 to pack up all of my belongings and my spouse with her full support and move eight hundred kilometers west for a new beginning. I came with the attitude that I was going to do a great job and my work would be appreciated, and if I spoke up for Health and Safety my voice would be heard, not unlike my last employer, there are issues that arise that take time to correct and patients work through. The only difference is rather than going to the man I worked for and discussing the matter and coming to a simple resolve, here we have to go through an army of people who got their positions not by speaking up, but by keeping quiet and not rocking the boat.

I was asked at my first interview if I would be willing to train at some point or be a boss? My response was maybe in ten years or so when I know something about mining. Come to find out it only takes three years of truck driving to become a quality mentor. I truly believe that we all start a new career with a good attitude and take on that of the company we work for. In saying that I would like our employer to ask themselves what can we do different to retain our employees?

When we tell someone to be honest and forthcoming with us and turn around and call them a liar, our people skills need a little brushing up! To work at a harassment free work place and be told to do a job because someone else feels it is safe is wrong. But day after day we hear of this going on around the mine site.

Some individuals in our organization don't get the CSL message and mock its methods and that is to be expected but all I ask is don't let them train the CSL course! There is always an opportunity to change for the better and we have to believe that some day we may actually get to enjoy our time here before we go to Fort Mac.

Teck Coal Mountain Workers Vote to Go Steelworkers

The 220 members of the United Mineworkers at Coal Mountain operations voted 83% in favor in joining the United Steelworkers Union. At this point they will remain their own independent Steelworker Local, and the Steelworkers District office will do immediate needs assessment to bring the Local on stream with the other two Steelworker Locals in the Elk Valley.

Membership Meetings

**Every third Wednesday of the month at 5pm
12 Water Street Elkford BC**

**You Want to Rent the Union Hall
Banquet Hall?**

250-865-2223

\$150.00 for Members

\$300.00 for Non-Members

Happy Holiday Season

*The Executive of the United Steelworkers want to take this opportunity to thank the Membership for all of their support throughout the year, and wish you all a happy Holiday Season. Remember it's not **The Union**, it's **Your Union**. We also want to thank the Union Rep's for all of their hard work in representing your negotiated rights. It's a tough and sometimes thankless job, and we appreciate your commitment.*

**There was a Shop Steward School at the Union Hall on December 5th & 6th
We welcome the following new Shop Stewards to your shifts.**

- **Tyler Gigg** – F – Shift Mine Op • **Chris Dixon** F – Shift – Process Operations
- **Mike Quast** – F – Shift Mine Op • **Jason Watmough** – I – Shift – Process Op
- **Greg Sullivan** – I Shift – Process Op • **Jason Dobson** I – Shift – Maintenance
- **Adam Chislett** – I – Shift Mine Operations.

We will be having a Steward school in early 2014 for H & G shifts. We are looking for interested members who want to become Shop Stewards, especially on H Shift. If you're interested contact the Union Hall. 865-2223 – usw7884@telus.net