

I am very pleased to inform you that, thanks to the initiative taken by your AJC, the union and the employer met on November 14 for the first time, with mediator Kevin Burkett in Ottawa.

At the mediator's direction, we are initially dealing with non-monetary issues. Once we have worked through the non-monetary issues, we will proceed to mediation on the monetary issues.

We now have three full weekend mediation dates scheduled, beginning in the New Year.

In addition, the mediator also has scheduled an evening meeting in mid-December, at which the employer has been told to table a comprehensive response to our non-monetary proposals.

We know that you, the members of the AJC, are losing patience with the process. You want and deserve a collective agreement. By moving the process forward to Mediation, we believe we have taken an important step in that direction on your behalf.

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## Key issues at stake in bargaining with the employer

The issues we have identified and are pursuing at the bargaining table stem entirely from what our [Initial proposal of 2004](#), as well as from what we have learned in our many meetings with members, from the results of our bargaining survey, and from the negotiating team's detailed review of existing DOJ working conditions and the PIPSC collective agreement.

On the salary front, our proposal is, in brief, as follow:

- Significant retroactive pay scale adjustments and corresponding salary increases for each individual lawyer, including those who retired on or after the effective date of increase. This date is to be set as early as possible in 2006.
  - o LA1: pay scale increase of 35% (new scale: \$73,683 to \$105,117)
  - o LA2 merged: pay scale increase of 45 % (new scale: \$109,663 to \$173,964)
  - o LA3A: pay scale increase of 40% (new scale: \$145, 880 to \$185,220)
  - o LA3B: pay scale increase of 35% (new scale: \$163,080 to 199,530)
- Salary increases of 3.75% per year for 2007-08 and 2008-09
- Maintain current evaluation criteria for PREA and PMP but make a 5% adjustment to bonus pay earned for 'fully meets expectations' in the PREA system
- Automatic progression from LA1 to LA2 after four years of service
- Creation of a merged LA2 level starting with LA-2A revised upward, and ending with LA-2B revised upward (LA-2(i) = LA-2A and LA-2(ii) = LA-2B)
- Increase to the number of lawyers to be promoted to the LA3 level

In addition to our salary issues, there are a number of other significant monetary and non-monetary issues at stake in the bargaining of our first collective agreement. These include:

- The increase of the number of vacation days per year as outlined in the chart below:

Number of Years of Service (Current)	Number of Vacation Days per Year (Current)	Number of Years of Service / Bar (Requested)	Number of Vacation Days per Year (Requested)
0 to 5 years	15	0 to 3 years	15
5 to 15 years	20	3 to 5 years	17.5
15 to 17 years	22	5 to 10 years	20
17 to 18 years	23	10 to 20 years	25
18 to 25 years	25	20 years or more	30
25 to 28 years	27	-	-
28 years or more	30	-	-

**Key issues (cont'd)**

- Important protections for individual lawyers, including:
  - o vacation carry-over rules that take into account lawyer workloads,
  - o the use of timekeeping data,
  - o dues and collective agreement coverage rules for lawyers on secondment or in acting positions,
  - o health, safety and security protections (especially for lawyers working on files involving an unusual degree of risk for the lawyer),
  - o access to vacancies and job opportunities,
  - o codification and/or improvements to existing leave entitlements, and
  - o access to alternate work arrangements and parental leave entitlements.
  
- Significant issues involving our professional obligations, including:
  - o education and training opportunities,
  - o reimbursement for certain lawyer-specific expenses,
  - o the need for closed door offices, and
  - o legal indemnification rules governing entitlement to independent legal representation.
  
- Monetary issues other than salary, including:
  - o compensation and/or compensating time off entitlement for excessive hours of work,
  - o vacation entitlement,
  - o health, vision and dental benefits, and
  - o access to sick leave to bridge to long term disability.
  
- Basic institutional safeguards to ensure that AJC can function effectively in advocating on behalf of the lawyers it represents, including:
  - o dues deduction rules,
  - o basic information about lawyers included in, and excluded from, the bargaining unit,
  - o the rights of AJC appointed and elected representatives,
  - o ensuring that AJC representatives, elected officials and bargaining team members are not prejudiced by participating in AJC representational functions, and
  - o a practical and efficient grievance and arbitration procedure.

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Negotiating our first collective agreement is a complex and time-consuming process. This memorandum presents only an overview of the AJC's demands without entering into all the details. These legitimate demands represent the wishes of our members as you have told your Association in the survey. We have a great Bargaining team and I have full confidence in all of them.

We all know that there is no guarantee that all our demands will be met but the best guarantor of success is for the employer to understand that you, AJC members across Canada, are united in your determination to achieve these proposals in a new collective agreement.

Let us continue to stand together and support our Association which is devoted exclusively to you

Patric Jetté  
President

**MORE INFO:**

If you need additional information about the collective bargaining process, please contact us:

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