



PRESIDENT'S WEEKS IN REVIEW JANUARY 6 – 26, 2020

Hello all,

I'm back to my week in review after a short break to start the year – I hope all of you have been able to find some time for family and rest over this busy winter.

My week of January 6th was taken up by an ITF case study of Ferry Operations on the West Coast, with a particular focus on the Alaska Marine Highways funding crisis, where the Alaska Government slashed yearly funding from \$140 million to \$96.4 million. Further, the Alaska Department of Transportation has just produced a study showing the only feasible way to reach Government's target subsidy level would be to cut service to certain communities all together, reduce service to many other communities, and slash union wages by 8.7% while increasing fares by 25%. This is something we will continue to watch closely, and offer whatever assistance we can.

The following week was filled up by several meetings, the first of which was with myself, SOC President Kimmerly, 2nd VP Carl Campbell, and the Union side of our SailSafe Fatigue Working Group. At this meeting, we went through the group's progress, and looked at next steps. One point of shared emphasis from this meeting was doing everything possible to ensure systemic issues of fatigue are addressed before placing further burden on the workers.

Next up were the Provincial Executive meetings. This two day meeting was a bit turbulent with all the snow, and resulted in a bit of a late start for the second day with staff given a snow day. All in all, the biggest takeaway from this meeting was BC Ferries continued failure to provide appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for cold and heavy weather, while simultaneously telling members they can't wear their own gear to stay warm. Suffice to say, our Union has been pressing this matter for over a year, only to have been told, "this is a supply chain issue, not a safety issue."

On Monday of the next week, I had a meeting with BC Ferries CEO Mark Collins. The meeting was productive on many fronts, but finished with consensus on how the lack of PPE for cold and heavy weather is very much a safety issue, and can give our members cause to refuse work as unsafe. Please see Union Bulletin, #2 "Personal Protective Equipment for Cold and Heavy Weather" for more info.

Tuesday was bumper to bumper meetings, with the most significant one happening between several Maritime Unions regarding the introduction of Temporary Foreign Workers on our coasts. In this meeting, it became evident that further co-ordination and understanding between the Unions would need to take place lest we end up in conflicting positions. The next discussions on this matter will be in advance of a meeting with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) on February 10th.

Before concluding, I'd like to take a moment to thank the crews of the Alberni and Tsawwassen Terminal for dealing with a very messy and traumatic situation last week. Once again, Ferry Workers have shown incredible professionalism and dedication in their work. Please remember, if

you are exposed to any unsafe chemical or biological agent that results in any medical treatment and/or time loss, please call WorkSafeBC at 1.888.967.5377.

Next Week: A meeting with Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Strategy, Hon. George Heyman; the Ocean's Protection Plan BC forum; and a meeting with a couple local Maritime Unions.

Thanks for reading, and I hope to see you soon!

In Solidarity,

BC FERRY & MARINE WORKERS' UNION



Brother Graeme Johnston
Provincial President