



PRESIDENT'S WEEK IN REVIEW MARCH 27 – APRIL 3, 2020



Hello all,

While the COVID-19 situation remains hectic and difficult, there is a new normal starting to set in. In light of that, I'm bringing back my week in review.

Last week was busy with discussions internally and externally. Our Union Executive has been in tight communication with one another, and has been doing a good job of sharing information.

Our COVID-19 Committee with BC Ferries has also been meeting regularly, and providing updates. Our Union has expressed concern about the timing of these updates, and about whether BC Ferries is meeting its obligations to consult. Despite these concerns, the committee continues its efforts to work through issues as they arise, while our Union seeks to resolve any disputes regarding obligations of the committee.

Notwithstanding the good faith efforts of the COVID-19 Committee, the Union remains in dispute with BC Ferries regarding their illegal layoffs, while our understanding of the Company's actions has been evolving as new information comes in. Most glaringly, BC Ferries has informed our Union that it considers its decision to rescind layoffs and "furlough" or "off-duty" their employees as not encompassed by our original Article 12 grievance and Sec. 54 complaint. Out of an abundance of caution our Union has reluctantly filed a new grievance, and is considering a new Sec. 54 complaint; however, we maintain that the employer's actions are simply a less offensive implementation of the same illegal layoffs.

Through all this turmoil, I'd like to take a moment to recognize some largely unsung heroes: BC Ferries' incredibly hard working and capable payroll team who has been tasked with sorting out the payroll implications of this dog's breakfast, yet still managed to get payroll out on time. If you've been negatively affected by BC Ferries decisions and reach out to payroll office, please remember these Union family members are the front line workers delivering your pay, and are not making decisions about the amount.

As for me, I've been busy working with our Provincial Executive, Labour Relations staff, Legal Counsel, friends at the BC Federation of Labour, and contacts in the Provincial Government to ensure our issues are being heard. For all of my efforts, it is ever present in my thoughts that I get to work from the comfort and safety of my home, while knowing that so many of you are on the front lines or at home on reduced pay. Please know that even though our staff and I are confined to our homes, when you file a grievance or raise a safety concern we've got your back, and your Union family will stand shoulder to shoulder with you.

Stay safe, healthy, and solid.

In Solidarity,

BC FERRY & MARINE WORKERS' UNION

Brother Graeme Johnston
Provincial President