



April 2012 Staff Bulletin

Implementing Trades and Maintenance Workers' Expertise

Last year, a survey was circulated to Trades and Maintenance staff to gather their input and expertise.

This was a joint survey, called "Joint Project Seeks Trades and Maintenance Workers' Expertise", from Health Employers and the Hospital Employees' Union.

The survey was the first step in the work of the new Trades and Maintenance Committee Pilot Project; a collaborative committee between union members and Facilities Management. It is intended that together, we will engage workers on how to lower costs, increase productivity, and expand opportunities for union members.

The Union and Employers met to review the survey responses and discuss how to move forward on the best suggestions. There was a great response to the survey and we thank all those who took the time to participate and share their thoughts. The survey was very useful to further discussions between the Union and the Employer.

The process validated there was room for improvement in managing manuals, providing appropriate training, and purchasing supplies necessary to do the work. In reviewing these issues, it is clear the Employer has substantial practices and policies in place; however, there are opportunities to increase the consistency in application and enforcement. It is also clear there are diverse opinions from staff on these issues. The Employer will take steps to ensure information is more readily available to staff and there may be new measures and practices that could be put in place to increase access to manuals, access to training, and ensure we are more efficient in the purchasing of supplies.

From joint talks between the Union and the Employer, this is what is being discussed:

I. Manuals

It was identified in the survey that equipment manuals may be missing or unavailable. Equipment manuals should be available to all staff in departments. If a staff member is unable to access a manual themselves or through the Clerk in their department or the



Supervisor, this should be brought to the attention of the Manager, and then to the Director if there is no satisfactory response. As a result of the survey, the Employer is also looking at storing electronic copies of manuals on a SharePoint site for improved accessibility across the Lower Mainland. The Employer is also looking at a Central Code Repository.

II. Training

If there is training needed by any employee on a piece of equipment, a request should be made to the Supervisor in the area. If there is no satisfactory response, this should be raised with the Manager or Director.

As a result of the survey, the Employer is also looking to actively identify and develop experts in certain areas. An example would be experts in “lifts”. The Union and the Employer will discuss how employees can become subject area experts, and how others can access these experts across the Lower Mainland.

III. Purchasing

Employees made many sourcing and supplier suggestions through the survey. The employer will continue to look at these suggestions, and employees should also ensure they bring up their specific suggestions with their Supervisors.

In general the purchasing policy for goods and services (non construction project related) is set by HSSBC. FMO follows this policy. Generally the preference is for three quotes for “non standard” purchases under \$50,000 including tax. There are certain instances where sole source single quotations are acceptable.

Purchases between \$50,000 to \$75,000 require three quotations.

Purchases over \$75,000 require a publicly tendered competitive bid and must be made in compliance with government policy.

In addition to continuing to discuss these measures, the committee will meet April 30th to discuss:

- Contracting out
- Multisite work crews
- Capital work crews



Facilities Bargaining
Association

- A more robust preventative maintenance plan

We look forward to your continued participation as we move towards mutually beneficial goals.

For more information, please contact:

Mitch Weimer, Mitch.Weimer@fraserhealth.ca

and/or

Chris Kinkaid, FBA/HEU Research & Policy Director, ckinkaid@heu.org