



Unions advance health and safety, workplace representation, diversity and inclusion issues in facilities subsector negotiations

FBA wraps up second week of contract talks with health employers

After two weeks of bargaining between the 44,000-member Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA) and the Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC), FBA lead negotiator and HEU secretary-business manager Jennifer Whiteside says talks are proceeding respectfully as the two parties dig into an extensive bargaining agenda.

The 10-union FBA opened the first week of negotiations with a strong presentation on how increased fragmentation throughout the health care system is impacting the ability to provide coordinated health care services and members' rights to secure effective steward representation at multi-employer sites.

By the end of week two, the FBA had tabled several demands related to diversity, equity and inclusion as well as a number of occupational health and safety proposals aimed at reducing high injury rates in health care.

“Across the board, regardless of the job they are in, our members are working in pressure-cooker conditions, where their own health and safety is continuously at risk,” says Whiteside.

“We’re looking for concrete changes in this round of bargaining that will make our members’ health and well-being a top priority.”

At this time, talks are scheduled to continue into October.

“We’ve made it very clear to the employer that the health care system is experiencing serious challenges that will require comprehensive discussions, if we are to improve our members’ working lives and the quality of care British Columbians receive,” says Whiteside.

The multi-union FBA is led by HEU with 41,000 facilities members. Approximately 3,000 members in the FBA are represented by the B.C. Government and Service Employees’ Union, the International Union of Operating Engineers and seven smaller unions.

Members are encouraged to keep tuned to the HEU website (heu.org) for news from the bargaining table. Members can also sign up for updates at heu.org/updates, and by texting **FBA** to 604-265-7417.