



POWERWORKS

Please forward to all members and post.

President's Report



Don MacKinnon

Labour Update

As reported earlier, Jim Leech, former head of the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, was commissioned by the Ontario Government to review the pension plans at Hydro One, Ontario Power Generation (OPG), the Independent Electricity System Operator and the Electrical Safety Authority with a view to making recommendations to improve the sustainability of these defined benefit plans.

PWU Legal Counsel Chris Dassios and I, along with representatives from the Society of Energy Professionals met with Mr. Leech. On behalf of the PWU, Chris and I made our views clear that we will work closely with government and the employers to ensure the sustainability of the pension plans. Mr. Leech is also aware that the plans have a long history of lessons learned and negotiated provisions that are enshrined in the respective collective agreements.

It should be noted that Mr. Leech is well respected in the industry and has been a proponent of sustainable, defined benefit pension plans. As discussions proceed I will keep you informed.

The trade union movement in Ontario is gearing up to respond to attacks from Progressive Conservative Leader Tim Hudak. Until recently, Hudak proposed so-called "right-to-work" laws for Ontario. His plan would have scrapped the Rand Formula that requires that everyone represented by a union in the workplace pay dues. Hudak supported legislative changes that would have allowed workers in unionized workplaces to share in the direct benefit of union representation without sharing in the cost of that service. Maybe a better term would be the "right-to-freeload."

The obvious goal was to undermine the financial strength of unions. Right-to-work laws make the provision of union services, such as bargaining and enforcing collective agreements, mandatory for unions but the payment of union dues to fund those activities would be optional. Employers would have been restricted by law from deducting union dues from pay cheques even if they had the permission of employees.

Imagine how long public health care would last if the government required agencies to provide health care services but made the payment of taxes that support those services optional.

After much public debate, push back from workers (including several meetings with the PWU), a by-election loss to the NDP in Niagara Falls and open dissent from PC back-benchers, Mr. Hudak announced that he will not implement these measures if elected even though he still supports all the principles of right-to-work laws.



Hopefully, he will reconsider his positions on the privatization of Hydro One, OPG and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, getting rid of defined benefit pension plans in the public sector and making public sector work contestable and accessible to non-union contractors.

When a provincial election does come, the PWU will ask all major parties specific policy questions directly related to the working lives of PWU members and retirees. The responses to those questions will be communicated to the membership and retirees for your information and consideration.

At the federal level, Bill C-4, the omnibus budget bill that had an unbelievably broad scope was passed into law just before Christmas. That

legislation includes changes to **49** different federal *Acts* including the *Canada Labour Code*, plus amendments to regulations and the restructuring of federal bureaucracies.

The Bill changed the definition of danger in the *Canada Labour Code* to "imminent or serious threat to the life or health of a person" when determining a worker's right to refuse unsafe work. Removing the concept of potential hazard from the definition of dangerous work could put workers' lives at risk.

In a radical departure from the previous *Code* provisions, the overriding powers of Health and Safety Officers throughout the *Code* are now transferred to the Minister of Labour. Until now, federal Health and Safety Officers have been impartial, autonomous specialists in workplace health and safety. The Minister now has the authority to decline to conduct an investigation upon receiving a report of an employee's continued refusal to work, effectively forcing an employee to return to work.

Bill C-377, the thinly-disguised Private Member's Bill that would require the public disclosure of union finances has been sent back to the Senate for reconsideration. The Bill was changed slightly to reduce the penalties to unions for non-compliance.

As you will recall, the Senate was asked to approve the Bill last June and they did not. Many labour representatives, including PWU in-house Legal Counsel Chris Dassios, made extensive submissions to the Senate Committee reviewing the Bill. Those submissions pointed out that C-377 was designed solely for the purpose of weakening trade unions and their ability to effectively represent their members.



In a rare demonstration of independence, the Senate, led by dissenting Conservatives, sent the Bill back to the House with sweeping amendments that removed the anti-union/anti-worker bias from the text.

The Prime Minister prorogued Parliament soon afterward. This action usually signals the end for Private Member's Bills but not C-377. The Conservative government brought the Bill back and once again it was

passed by the House. It sits with the Senate for review for the second time.

Bill C-525, another anti-worker Private Member's Bill supported by the Prime Minister's Office, is still worming its way through the legislative process having passed second reading. The Bill would drastically change the processes for federal union certifications and decertifications.

It is not particularly surprising that the Conservative majority would change the card-check system for federal union certifications to a double majority process. At present, a bargaining unit will be certified in favour of the union if the union can demonstrate that a majority of the employees in a bargaining unit have signed union membership cards. Bill C-525 would require that, in the first instance, at least 40 percent of the employees in a bargaining unit must sign union cards for the union to make an application for certification. Following the application, the Canada Industrial Labour Relations Board would conduct a secret ballot vote of the employees in the bargaining unit. The Harris government enacted a similar system in Ontario when they revised the *Labour Relations Act* in 1995.

Bill C-525 goes much further by changing the method of counting ballots to one that is outrageously slanted against workers' rights to organize. Instead of requiring a majority of those casting a ballot to be in favour of joining a union, the new legislation would require a majority of the employees in the bargaining unit to vote in favour of the union. That means that anyone who did not cast a ballot would be counted as a vote against the union. This measure would truly be an assault on democracy.

Electricity Industry Update



Even though the Long-Term Energy Plan (LTEP) was revised in late 2013, the PWU has continued to push for the repurposing of the OPG coal generating stations to use biomass and natural gas. As reported earlier, the government has announced that both the Atikokan and Thunder Bay Generating Stations are to be converted to biomass but will run at a very low percentage of capacity, at least initially. We believe that Northwestern Ontario would benefit greatly from converting the Thunder Bay Generating Station to natural gas in addition to advanced biomass, in order to meet growing demand requirements from the mining sector as well as to meet peak needs during colder than normal winters and to backstop

hydroelectric generation in years of low water levels. Many people and politicians from the local communities from Thunder Bay to Red Lake have been adamant that the conversion of the Thunder Bay station is essential for the reliability and security of supply in the northwest.

In Southwestern Ontario, it makes much more economic and environmental sense to convert the Nanticoke and Lambton stations to natural gas, with the possibility of offsetting carbon emissions by co-fuelling with biomass, than it does to build new gas plants at five times the cost. We will press the case for these sound projects in these supportive communities with the government and the opposition parties.

The best news from the LTEP relates to the mid-life refurbishments of all four OPG Darlington nuclear units and six more at Bruce Power. We will do everything we can to help ensure that these projects are a success for Ontario. As always, the stakes are very high for Ontario's 165-company nuclear industry, the province's low-emission affordable electricity production, the supportive host communities, and thousands of PWU members. The refurbishment plan is designed to keep the Bruce and Darlington units running for another 30 years or more.

The government continues to support the PWU-preferred philosophy of "willing buyer-willing seller" when it comes to Local Distribution Company (LDC) mergers and amalgamations. Unless mergers and amalgamations are managed with care and vision, they can create unnecessary upheaval for employees and customers. The PWU has highlighted the potential risks of government-mandated amalgamations to successive governments and we were pleased that the current Minister of Energy, Bob Chiarelli, rejected proposals for forced amalgamations. Merger activity has been relatively slow of late but Hydro One has tentatively purchased Norfolk Power and Haldimand County Hydro subject to Ontario Energy Board (OEB) approval.

I am concerned that the OEB has been encouraging the licensing of more transmission companies in Ontario to create "competition." In fact, transmission companies that have no employees are now being licensed by the OEB to build, own and operate individual transmission lines. Clearly, service quality including system maintenance and storm repair capability will be compromised if this trend continues. There are now 14 licensed transmission companies in the province.

Once again, I would like to thank all PWU Bargaining Committee members for their tremendous hard work, commitment and dedication in negotiating the very best collective agreements possible for all PWU members.

Sector 1 Update

Bargaining



Bob Walker
Vice President
Sector 1

We are currently in bargaining with AMEC Nuclear Safety Solutions and Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL). The COMPASS Group (Darlington) and Nuvia Collective Agreements both expire on December 31st and the Ontario Power Generation (OPG) Collective Agreement expires on March 31, 2015. The call for OPG bargaining submissions will go out in the spring and we will then develop our bargaining agenda for talks that will likely begin early in 2015.

Bruce Power

The newly ratified PWU-Bruce Power Collective Agreement will help set the pace for agreements in our industry. The efforts of our PWU bargaining team during months of tough negotiations deserve recognition and are greatly appreciated by all PWU members.

Other committee members included Larry Alderdice (Sector Representative), Doug Bohnert, Linda Crombeen, Ken Bellan, Bob Masterson, Steve Piper, Paul Seaman, Hank Turcotte, Kevin Squires and Howard Phorson, Scott Duff (Staff Officer), John Sprackett (Staff Officer), and Keri Borg (Senior Administrative Assistant).

Now that the Bruce Power Collective Agreement has been ratified, the Bruce Power Chief Stewards will revise their strategic plan with an emphasis on the long-term sustainability of our work at the Bruce Site.

OPG

The OPG-Nuclear Chief Stewards developed a new strategic plan last year and it was updated in late February. One major focus was member communications ranging from utilization of the PWU website and newsletters to local initiatives such as Unit Advisory Committee meetings (UACs), Joint UACs and membership meetings. We are also reviewing the

effectiveness of Sector meetings, Grievance Review Boards and Joint Union/Management meetings.

OPG launched its Business Transformation Strategy in 2012 and it has been an evolving process ever since. The job security provisions in our collective agreement have meant that any staff reductions have been done by attrition. Most of the changes for PWU Members have been organization changes and revisions to reporting structures. To date, there have been a small number of moves of PWU members using the provisions in Article 11.0. OPG has told us they are planning a few more moves. We continue to work through OPG's proposed moves in advance to help reduce any negative impact on our members. We are also starting to see some vacancies advertised.

The biggest challenge facing us at OPG is the end of the Pickering Nuclear Generating Station's operating life scheduled for 2020. This closure will make OPG a much smaller company. We have had preliminary discussions with OPG but it is still early days.

AECL

Earlier this month, the then federal Minister of Natural Resources, Joe Oliver, announced the next step in the restructuring of AECL: the launch of the process to qualify



potential suppliers to manage and operate AECL's Nuclear Laboratories, in the context of a government-owned, contractor-operated model. Interested suppliers will have to demonstrate that they have the experience, expertise and financial capacity necessary to manage a nuclear organization as complex as AECL's Nuclear Laboratories. Should they qualify, suppliers would then be able to engage in detailed consultations with the federal government and, ultimately, to submit bids in response to a Request for Proposals. The introduction of a private sector operator will mark a significant change for our members at the Chalk River Laboratories and we have begun working through a range of issues that have emerged.

Canadian Nuclear Association Annual Conference

The Canadian Nuclear Association held its annual conference in Ottawa at the end of February. The release of Ontario's Long-Term Energy Plan (LTEP) and the commitment to the refurbishment of units at Bruce



Power and the Darlington Nuclear Generating Station has resulted in an alignment of Canada's nuclear industry for the first time in many years. The Ontario government is demanding successful refurbishments and they want to see the industry working together. The LTEP took the building of new reactors off the table for now but the PWU will continue to promote the need for, and the advantages of, nuclear power in Ontario so that new build nuclear will be the supply choice when demand forecasts confirm the need.

PWU Workers Ratify New Atlantic Power Collective Agreement



The PWU reached a new Collective Agreement with Atlantic Power at conciliation in early February

and the membership subsequently ratified it by a 79 percent margin. The three-year agreement includes salary increases in each year, and improvements in vacation for long-term employees. The PWU represents workers at four Atlantic Power thermal plants in northern Ontario at Calstock, Kapuskasing, Nipigon, and Tunis.

New Power Purchase Agreement for TransAlta's Plant in Ottawa Comes Into Force



Late last year, the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) and TransAlta Corporation agreed to a new Power Purchase Agreement to secure electricity production for the next 20 years.

The contract will guarantee TransAlta's natural gas-fired cogeneration facility in Ottawa will provide electricity to the provincial grid and will reduce the need to build new generation. Locally, the plant provides heating and cooling to the Ottawa Health Sciences Centre, which includes the National Defence Medical Centre and the Rideau Veterans' Health Centre.

The contract will help secure PWU jobs at that facility for the long-term. The PWU Collective Agreement with TransAlta runs until the end of 2015.

Hydro One Apprentices

A stellar achievement of the PWU Hiring Hall at Hydro One is its apprenticeship program. Through the Joint Apprenticeship Council, over 1,400 apprentices have been hired. After successful completion of training, apprentices receive the provincial Certificate of Qualification. We recently caught up with three starting Powerline Technician apprentices - Kalven Reasbeck, Lance Boddington and Kurtis Hamilton - at Hydro One's Training Centre in Kleinberg.



Kalven Reasbeck, Lance Boddington and Kurtis Hamilton

All three apprentices come from rural parts of Ontario: Kalven from Stayner, Lance from Barrie and Kurtis from Beaton. Each one said that the outdoor life is one thing that attracted them to the trade. Two of them had completed two-year college programs. Kurtis commented "I had worked as a residential electrician for a couple years and got all my basics but always wanted to be a lineman."

Each one came to the program from different places. Lance commented that "I liked the electrical side of things and that grew into something more when I worked for a tower company in communications."

Each of these young PWU members looks forward to picking up the basics of the trade as they work through their apprenticeships and are looking forward to working in the field with journeymen to learn more about troubleshooting and electrical theory. One thing that the apprentices appreciated was the emphasis on safety in their classroom program so far. From Kalven's perspective, "the instructors are very thorough about safety because it's the most important thing." Kurtis added, "we know that we can look forward to a safe working environment."

All three thought storm response to be exciting work. According to Kalven, "in Stayner, there was lots of on-call work with the ice-storm. I want to go work on one of the major storms because it brings together so many of the guys and builds camaraderie. It sounds pretty neat to have ten buckets working on ten poles in a row on the side of the road."

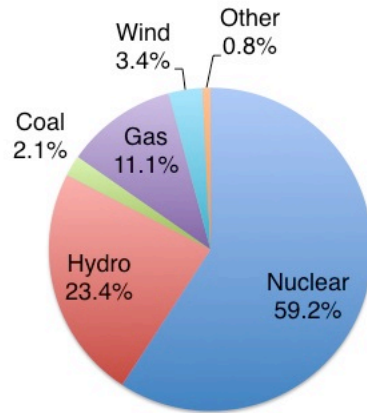
New Job Classification Staff Officer Joins the PWU



On March 24th, Suzanne Hotson joined the PWU staff as Staff Officer, Job Classification. Suzanne worked for the PWU for over a decade in the 1980s. Previously based in Ottawa, she has worked in CUPE's national office and has provided training to the PWU and the Canadian Labour Congress among others. Suzanne replaces Barb Duncan who, after approximately ten years in Job Classification, will move to a Staff Officer position in the Hiring Hall. Welcome back, Suzanne!

Where Do We Get Our Electricity?

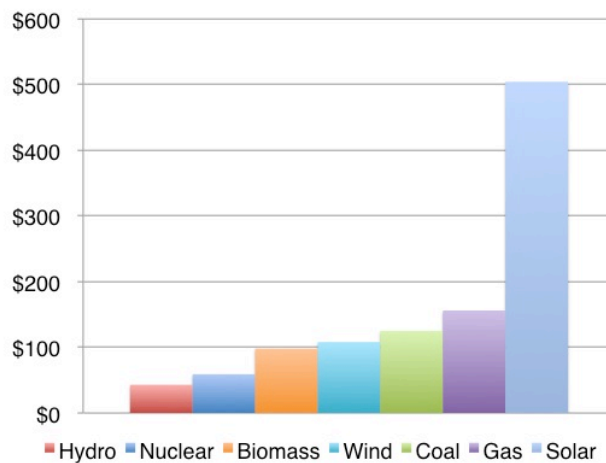
Ontario Electricity Generation by Fuel Type, 2013



Source: Independent Electricity System Operator

What Do Different Forms of Generation Cost?

Unit Cost for Generation by Resource in Ontario, 2013, MWh (\$2012)



Source: Ontario Ministry of Energy

Ontario College of Trades Reminder

The PWU strongly advises all members to obtain their Certificate of Qualification (C of Q) in their prescribed trade and to register with the Ontario College of Trades (OCOT) as required in order to keep their certification valid.



ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES
ORDRE DES MÉTIERS DE L'ONTARIO

All apprentices in registered apprenticeship programs must maintain their membership in the OCOT. Failure to maintain membership in the College will result in their removal from the apprenticeship program by the College and they will not be eligible for trade school, apprenticeship grants or a trade licence through the federal or provincial governments. **Failure to maintain your membership in the College and complete your trade licence could affect your employment.**

The PWU advises Hiring Hall members with a C of Q to maintain membership in that trade as required by the OCOT to maintain the ability to accept any job within that trade. **Failure to maintain your membership in the College could affect your employment opportunities.**

PWU Supports Student Robotics Team

PWU Training Inc. has been a sponsor of Team 781, the Kinetic Knights, a For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) Robotics Competition team since 2001-02. High school students, working in teams and assisted by expert adult mentors, build robots to take part in tournaments, which feature on-field competitions, judged awards and other forms of recognition. The student-run team from Kincardine recently participated in Greater Toronto FIRST Regional-East competition at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology in Oshawa.



PWU President Don MacKinnon and PWU Health and Safety Staff Officer Dave Trumble are pictured here meeting with the team. The PWU has been deeply involved in FIRST's Safety Advisor and Industrial Safety Award Programs for the past ten years. These programs, which are deployed during competitions, use positive reinforcement and coaching to engage students in finding solutions together.

Top Stolen Vehicles

Every year, the Insurance Bureau of Canada releases a list of the top ten most stolen vehicles in Canada. In 2013, they were:

1. 2000 Honda Civic SiR two-door
(#1 seven times in nine years!)
2. 2006 Chevrolet TrailBlazer SS four-door 4WD
3. 2002 Cadillac Escalade four-door 4WD SUV
4. 2005 Cadillac Escalade four-door 4WD SUV
5. 2006 Ford F350 SD 4WD Pickup
6. 2006 Cadillac Escalade ESV four-door AWD SUV
7. 2006 Acura RSX Type S two-door AWD SUV
8. 2007 Ford F250 SD 4WD Pickup
9. 2007 Ford F350 SD 4WD Pickup
10. 2003 Acura RSX Type S two-door



A thief can steal your car in about 30 seconds. Almost 20 percent of stolen cars have keys in them. Never leave your keys in the ignition while your car is unattended. For more information, visit www.ibc.ca.

Choosing a "hot" vehicle can result in higher insurance premiums. Contact your insurance provider before purchasing a vehicle to see whether it will affect your premiums.

As a PWU member, you are eligible for exclusive group rates on your home and auto insurance. Call HUB at 1-877-506-3092 for a free, no-obligation quote.