

# Road Transport Council (RTC) Road Transport Newsletter

**UNIFOR** Road Transport Council

December 2013

Conseil du transport routier

Volume 3 Issue 1

#### **Special points of interest:**

- Unifor—Ontario Regional Conference—December 6—8, 2013
- Road Transport Council will hold a meeting for Road Transport and Specialty Vehicle Manufacturing upon adjournment on Friday December 6th at the Ontario Regional Conference.
- Armed and Safe Campaign
- Keep RTC Active
- Message from Robin Dudley
- ITF Violence Against Women is a Trade Union issue
- DHL Membership—Serves Strike Notice and are meeting now to get a deal
- RTC—What Now?
- Diesel Fumes a poisonous co-worker
- Whistler, BC fuel-cell bus program in jeopardy
- RTC Executive list and Per Capita Dues Form

Keep the Road Transport Council active and participate in brining the common goals forward.

Attend your Regional Conferences and make a point to attend the special RTC Meetings in every Region that we have Road Transport and Specialty Vehicle membership. Our Sector is important and we need to stand together.

# Unifor — 1st Ontario Regional Conference being held December 6-8, 2013

The 1st Unifor Ontario Regional Council meeting will take place December 6th through 8th at the Toronto Sheraton Centre Hotel.

The Council will convene at 9:00 am on Friday, December 6th and will continue until the conclusion of business on Sunday, December 8, 2013. This is the 1st of Regional Conferences under the new Unifor Constitution. Regional Conferences will take place throughout the country for local leadership and regional issues.

There will be an announcement at the Ontario Regional Conference that the Road Transport and Specialty Vehicle Ontario Council delegates will meet upon adjournment on Friday December 6th in the Sheraton Hall C.

This will be an opportunity for Road Transport members and Specialty Vehicle manufacturing members to discuss the future of the Road Transport Council and it's sub-committees. If you work in this sector please attend.

#### **Road Transport**

# **Unifor RTC Website and Blog – Jim Sadlemyer**

We have continued work on our Website and Blog thanks to Jim Sadlemyer (Local 114).

Please visit the website and if there is anything that you want to have posted just send it to Bill Gaucher at: gaucher@uniforbclocals.ca and it will be forwarded to Jim and placed on the RTC Website. There is also an exciting feature on the "Blog" giving you the ability to share your news stories on our website using social media links.

So please visit our website at:

http://www.cawrtc.com and our

Blog at: http://cawrtc.blogspot.com/

Sign the "Armed

- and Safe" petition.
- Enhancing public
- safety and
- preventing crime
- through better
- regulation of
- Canada's armoured
- car industry.

www..unifor.org

## Unifor "Armed and Safe Campaign"

### Armoured Car – Brinks -

Brinks Canada are introducing a new 1 person All Off crew for ATM crews across Canada. Clearly this puts are members in an unsafe position and the Union is fighting this "Race to the Bottom" with regards to Health and Safety in the Armoured Car Industry. So far we have had 2 successful Work Refusals in Ontario , along with a Work Refusal in New Brunswick. Clearly as part of Unifors "Armed and Safe Campaign " to get some basic regulations in this industry, the need is greater than ever. We had a scheduled meeting with the Minister of Public Safety – Steven Blaney, however he was too busy to meet us on Nov. 28<sup>th</sup>, and has pushed us off until early in the new year( nothing confirmed). Reported by: Mike Armstrong Unifor National Representative working out of Ottawa, Ontario

http://www.unifor.org/en/take-action/campaigns/keep-workers-safe-their-cargo

# **Keep the Road Transport Council Active**

Keep the Road Transport Council active and participate and bring together all Locals involved in the Road Transport Industry, to share information about the industry and try to harmonize contractual language where ever possible, and to work with the individual Locals for the mutual interest of the rank and file of all Unifor Road Transport Locals.

The Road Transport Council will discuss ways to implement and lobby for improvements to the National Safety Code, Federal/Provincial Statutes and Regulations pertaining to the Road Transportation Sector for which our members work in.

The Road Transport Council will also look at building coalitions in our Local and International communities such as the ITF (International Transport Workers Federation) to further our objectives and assisting in those campaigns that mirror our own Industry and Sectors.

Attend your Regional Conferences and make a point to attend the special RTC Meetings in every Region that we have Road Transport membership.

Road Transport Council Conseil du transport routier

UNIFOR

Whether we drive it, or manufacturing it, in Unifor:

Volume 3 Issue 1

"We make it

move"

**Robin Dudley** from Local 1917 is also the President of the Truck, Bus and Specialty Vehicle Council, which was formed back in August 2004. We welcome the Truck, Bus and Specialty Vehicle Council to joint us in our Road Transport Council





Greetings.

I want to give you a brief outline of what the Bus, Truck and Specialty Vehicle Council is, where it came from, likely where it is headed and why I am writing in your Road Transport Newsletter.

The Bus, Truck and Specialty Vehicle Council in particular was started many years ago and has gone through many challenging times up to and including today.

It is a Council that is based on the manufacturing of the items mentioned in the title. Buses, Trucks and Specialty Vehicles. They products range from transport trucks, transit busses, luxury busses, rail car and other types of rail equipment, mining trucks, trailers, at one time John Deere Gators and military equipment. In a nut shell anything that moves that isn't a car or an airplane.

This Council has become stagnant a couple of times through no fault of the members. It was caused by nothing less than the devastation of the manufacturing sector which has caused so much job loss and membership loss. The executive now and a number of times pervious have been just about eliminated because of this.

In an effort to keep this Council alive and functioning I have been in contact with the National Office and the Road Transport Council in attempt to bring our very important sector into a new and more stable Council. The RTC.

Further discussion will be needed but I do personally feel like this is a great fit for the Bus, Truck and Specialty Vehicle Council manufacturers and we welcome the opportunity to join your Council.

In Solidarity,

Robin Dudley President Unifor Bus, Truck & Specialty Vehicle Council





Violence against women is a trade union issue

25 November 2013

ITF unions at the forefront of tackling violence against women today received extra support as the ITF launched a ground-breaking new publication: ITF Action Guide on: violence against women.

For many women and girls the world over, violence is an all-too-common occurrence. According to the latest available UN statistics, up to 59 per cent of women in some countries will experience violence in their lifetimes<sup>\*</sup>. Women transport workers can be particularly vulnerable to sexual, physical and economic violence; many women transport workers fulfill highly visible and publicfacing roles, and can often bear the brunt of passenger aggression.

facing roles, and can often bear the brunt of passenger aggression. The new guide shows how unions are well placed to tackle violence against women. It offers examples of best practice from ITF unions around the world to empower unions to take action on violence. It contains examples of progress, further resources to strengthen union activity, and practical tools to support union campaigning. This includes best practice advice on maximising media coverage, overcoming limited resources, and working with men and boys.

Diana Holland, chair of the ITF's women's committee, explained: "Millions of women worldwide today face physical and mental aggression and brutality – domestic violence and abuse, sexual assault, sexual harassment, violence at work, economic violence and human trafficking. This is a denial of their human rights and fundamental freedoms."

"We are proud to introduce this guide for unions who want to play their part in ending the scourge of violence against women. We hope to inspire more action by highlighting some of their successes, and by sharing fresh ideas, information and resources to support campaigning."

ITF women transport workers' coordinator Alison McGarry further commented that violence is a trade union issue, and that every ITF affiliate exists in a society where women suffer violence. She praised the stunning work already being done by many ITF unions around the world to combat violence, and encouraged more unions to use the guide to develop their own campaigns against violence.

The 50 page *ITF action guide on violence against women* is designed to empower trade unions to take direct action against the worldwide problem, and can be downloaded now from www.itfglobal.org/infocentre/pubs.cfm/detail/41208.



# Unifor members at DHL Express across Canada vote to strike

Unifor members across Canada working at DHL Express delivery service have voted on average 98 per cent in favour of a strike if necessary, during a series of votes over the last two months.

Unifor represents more than 600 DHL workers across the country in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Nova Scotia. There are five regional collective agreements.

"It is imperative that we bargain a settlement that reflects the contributions that our members have made towards the success of DHL. The last collective agreement was bargained during the toughest of economic times when all DHL jobs were at risk," said Bob Orr, assistant to the National President

"We must move forward on behalf of our members and we must negotiate an agreement that ensures the integrity of the last collective agreement is maintained. It is paramount that the employer bargain in good faith and not only reward our members for what they have done but also they live up to all provisions of the last agreement that were negotiated in the best interest of our members and the Employer."

Unifor members at DHL Express deliver and pick up packages across Canada, including international freight. Negotiations have been ongoing since May 2013 and are scheduled to resume November 29 in Toronto, with a possible strike deadline set for December 5 at 12:01 am. Strikes would begin simultaneously across Canada.

DHL is part of the world's leading postal and logistics Group, Deutsche Post DHL, and encompasses three divisions: DHL Express, DHL Global Forwarding, Freight and DHL Supply Chain.



Our Road Transport Council began it's early formation in the 1996-2000 periods and our official founding meeting was held at the Port Elgin Family Education Centre on April 19th, 2001. Our By-Laws were created at that meeting and approved and still hold purpose even more today. We welcome and have the ability to create sub-committees within our Council to address every sector in our Road Transport Council. Moving forward we need discuss our future and to seriously consider requesting to our National President under Article 11 of the Unifor Constitution to consider us as an Industry Council, so we can continue our work for our Road Transport and Truck, Bus and Specialty Vehicle Sectors.....

Bill Gaucher President Road Transport Council

# ROAD TRANSPORT COUNCIL BYLAWS

#### Article #1 PURPOSE

**1.1** This council shall be known as The Unifor Canada Road Transport Council. The bylaws of the Council shall at all times be subordinate and subject to the provisions of the Constitution of Unifor Canada. In the event of any conflict the constitution shall govern.

**1.2** The primary purpose in the formation of this Road Transport Council is to bring together all Locals involved in the Road Transport Industry, to share information about the industry and try to harmonize contractual language where ever possible, and to work with the individual Locals for the mutual interest of the rank and file of all Unifor Road Transport Locals.

**1.3** The Road Transport Council will discuss ways to implement and lobby for improvements to the National Safety Code, Federal/Provincial Statutes and Regulations pertaining to the Road Transportation Sector for which our members work in.

- **1.4** The Road Transport Council will also look at building coalitions in our Local and International communities such as the ITF (International Transport Workers Federation) to further our objectives and assisting in those campaigns that mirror our own Industry and Sectors.
- **1.5** The Road Transport Council will lobby Unifor National Office and it's Director of Transportation to help facilitate and finance a "Road Transport Conference" to be held at least once every two years.
- **1.6** The Road Transport Council will include all Unifor Locals who wish to participate that are involved in the Road Transportation Industry in Canada.
- 1.7 The Road Transport Council shall also establish sub-sector committee chairpersons within the Road Transport Council to address the needs of specific sectors such as but not limited to; Transit, School Bus, Motor Coach, Trucking, Owner Operator(s), Taxi(s), Storage and Moving, Distribution Center(s), Armored Car and Courier Industries.
- **1.8** The Road Transport Council will work with the Unifor National Organizing Department to establish contacts within the Industry in the hopes of organizing more members into our Union.
- **1.9** The Council shall not, however, have the right or power to abridge any rights guaranteed to individual Local Unions under the constitution of Unifor Canada.

You can find the full text of the Road Transport Council By-laws at: http://www.cawrtc.com

# Diesel Fumes a poisonous co-worker

November 29, 2013 Bill Gaucher President Road Transport Council 326 – 12th Street New Westminster, BC V3M 4H6 Dear Bill,

Re: Diesel Fumes a poisonous co-worker

In 2009, Coast Mountain Bus Company started receiving the new Nova bus that Translink had ordered. As soon as the buses started to hit revenue service, the Occupational Health and Safety committee started getting complaints regarding the odour of fumes inside the coaches.

Any member that started early in the morning knew exactly what the problem was; it was the Webasto Heater. The blue grey clouds of diesel exhaust hung low in the air as the heaters came to life during the Operator's daily pre-trip inspection.

To deal with the problem, Operators were instructed to not turn on the defrosters during the inspection, which was not an easy task in the winter, late fall and early spring months. Likewise the mechanics were told to disconnect the heater when bringing the coach into the garage for repair.

A short time later, we started receiving complaints from our members that they were subjected to diesel fumes while operating the coach. They would complain of dizziness, a bad taste in their mouths and on occasion, nausea. These complaints were occurring on an irregular basis and were only limited to two of the three garages operating this style of equipment.

The Occupational Health and Safety Committee would conduct the joint investigation and unless there was mechanical failure they could not track down the cause of the problem. The Union started investigating the issue over the course of the next 2 years. During this time, there were now over a dozen complaints. We had WorkSafe B.C. involved; they recommended that the joint committee conduct air quality testing on different coaches. We, over the course of several weeks, conducted these tests, at different times, on different coaches and on various routes, for 8 hour periods.

During the testing period, Paul Hudson, the Occupational Health and Safety Representative who was doing the investigation, would receive the odd complaint from passengers about smelling fumes. The equipment during this time period was testing for traces of NO, NO2, and CO, and would always come back negative. We were still receiving



complaints from time to time from members that had been exposed to fumes, however, due to the testing,

the Employer took the position that the complainants were "over sensitive" and were being subjected to fumes from other vehicles.

The Union, during this time period was adamant that the issue was with the Webasto Heater that was venting directly beneath the engine compartment, behind the rear left wheel well. We had seen the clouds of blue smoke that were being emitted when a Webasto would turn on. This cloud was the evidence of improper burning injectors. The heater would cycle 3 times before shutting down. The Union had asked to have the exhaust port moved to the rear of the coach, so as it would not emit smoke into the engine compartment or up the side of the coach and into the open windows. We were told that the exhaust could not be extended as it would not vent properly, and that it was against the manufactures specs.

We were continually meeting with the Employer to see what was causing the fumes problem with these

coaches and were constantly being found by the company engineers. year, we stumbled across an e-mail had sent out to the maintenance ferred to the cause of the probengine compartment access hatch. when the engineers, in conjunction sentative smoke- tested 6 coaches; smoke getting into to the passenger was identified as the Webasto properly, would smoke. The smoke



told that there was no fault Then, in the spring of this that the engineering group division. The e-mail relem... a broken seal on the They had discovered this with a Nova Bus repre-3 of these coaches had compartment. The problem Heater, when not burning on occasion would be

drawn or blown directly upwards into the engine compartment. When the coach started to move the negative air pressure from an open window would in turn suck the fumes through the access hatch and into the



passenger compartment. If the Driver's window was open the fumes would be drawn towards the front of the coach subjecting the members to fumes for a prolonged period.

The reason that there was only a limited number of complaints, and only from two depots, was because of the design of the new coaches. These new coaches are referred as T-Drive models, as the engine is located in a traditional manner in the middle of the rear of the coach. Due to this configuration the access hatch was located under the rear seats and as such was shaped the same way. This U shape made it difficult to design a hatch that would be air tight. The other style of Nova bus is an L Drive, its engine is located behind the left rear wheel. This style has a rectangular-shaped access hatch that is easier to create an air tight seal. The Employer was now forced to admit that there was a problem and was mandated to fix it expeditiously. We developed a system that made the seal air tight by adding an additional lock, and by constructing a panel that made the edges smooth. We also had the Webasto exhaust extended to the rear of the coach so it would exhaust the diesel out the back of the coach; it seems that it was not against manufacturers specs. We also added a thicker seal; with these adjustments we tried a smoke test and the trial coach passed.

The Union had just seen 15 skilled trade members laid off; they were recalled so as to do this new mod. We had all the Webasto heaters turned off, and over the last month have been repairing the coaches. The coaches have been repaired based on complaints, those that have

a fumes issue are first to get retrofitted and the time line is that all of the nearly 200 coaches will be repaired by summer's end. We have also had all denied Work safe claims re-opened, as well as we filed a grievance with the Employer seeking damages.

Just after this all came about we experienced a similar situation with our new Community Shuttles, a coach made by International. Due to what we had just been through with the Nova coaches we had a committee already in place and as such did not have to re-invent the wheel. The Occupational Health and Safety Representatives at the depot involved, Stacey Crandlemire and Jim Armstrong, could not determine the problem immediately. Due to the fact that these were new buses and the frequency of the complaints the entire 16 bus fleet was removed from service. The fault was thought to be with the blow by tube, as it was extremely short and vented directly in front of the cabin air filter. This tube was extended to the rear of the coach, by the exhaust pipe. Further tests were conducted and the problem persisted. It was examined more closely and the problem was with a lack of presence of a seal around the clamp that attaches the exhaust to the turbo charger. Navistar and International are now working on a retro fit that is more than a temporary fix. The temporary fix that was agreed on, and works, is tested on every bus on a weekly schedule as these buses have now returned to service.

The new Internationals that are being ordered will not go into service until the long term solution has been installed. Furthermore any new coach that has a Webasto heater will have the extension added to its exhaust. We have also established a Fumes committee to deal with any fumes complaint regardless of the style of coach. The fumes committee has also been working on getting a 3rd party to conduct any further fumes testing due to our equipment being inadequate in testing for the proper volatile compounds.

We have now possibly identified another problem and that is when our Diesel particulate filters start to regen. The fumes that are created by this process find their way into the passenger compartment, when conditions are right. We are currently trying to determine if this is the case and if so get it corrected as quickly as possible. Stay Tuned!

If your local has experienced a similar problem please contact us so as we can share faults and fixes with all of our Locals.

### Sincerely, Gavin Davies Local III Vice President Cell: 604.790.1464

#### E-mail: vpgavin@Unifor | | .com

Gavin Davies is also the Recording Secretary for the RTC

#### Whistler fuel-cell bus program in jeopardy; High costs, lack of local infrastructure could doom grand scheme

Vancouver Sun Tue Nov 26 2013 Page: A1 / Front Section: News Byline: Kelly Sinoski Source: Vancouver Sun

The future of Whistler's hydrogen fuel-cell buses - the largest fleet in the world - is in doubt after BC Transit said it cannot afford to continue to run and maintain the fleet when the \$89-million demonstration program wraps up next spring.

Information obtained under a Freedom of Information Act request by the Canadian Autoworkers' Union 333 suggests Whistler's 20 hydrogen fuelcell buses cost three times more in maintenance and fuel costs than the conventional Nova diesel buses they replaced in 2009.

BC Transit deployed the hydrogen bus fleet in 2009 as part of a grand scheme by Gordon Campbell's Liberals to showcase fuel-cell technology during the 2010 Winter Olympic Games and have a "hydrogen highway" stretching from Whistler to California.

That didn't happen and hydrogen is now trucked from Quebec every 10 days, instead of from a hoped-for fuelling station in B.C. Much-hyped plans for growth in the fuel-cell market, which would have pushed down the costs for infrastructure and parts, also didn't materialize, which means BC Transit is paying a higher price for maintenance and labour for hydrogen buses compared with the diesel buses.

The buses - which cost \$2.1 million each, about four times the price of a diesel bus - are powered by hydrogen fuel-cells provided by Burnaby's Ballard Power Systems. They produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions and can be twice as energy-efficient as conventional buses, notes Ballard Power.

But because the hydrogen used to fill the buses is hauled in from Quebec, the savings in greenhouse gas emissions is limited, according to the David Suzuki Foundation, which had panned the project in its climate scorecard for the Games, recommending trolley buses instead.

About 60 kilograms of hydrogen is held in eight tanks, on which each bus should be able to travel 500 kilometres. But a midterm evaluation included among the FOI documents suggests the average fuel range is below the amount specified in the contract and is worse during the winter months, when water in the fuel-cells can freeze and prevent the buses from starting or running efficiently. It notes hydrogen fuel costs, at an average \$2.28/km, are three times the cost of diesel, while maintenance costs \$1 per kilometre, compared with 65 cents/km for diesel buses.

"It is expensive to maintain and expensive to fuel," BC Transit spokeswoman Meribeth Burton said.

The hydrogen fleet has been integrated into the regular operations of Whistler's transit system, accounting for two-thirds of all buses in the resort municipality. Whistler and BC Transit, which is responsible for transit systems outside Metro Vancouver, share the fleet's operating costs. The province pays another \$1.8 million annually to cover the incremental costs of the hydrogen fuel-cell project over the five years.

The resort municipality pays about 46 per cent of the fleet operating costs through property taxes and fares, which cost \$2.50 per passenger ride.

Burton noted that while her organization had "anticipated surprises" when the program started, it isn't sure what is going to happen next March, especially if the province decides it will no longer contribute the additional \$1.8 million. If that happens, she said, the hydrogen buses could be sold and replaced with diesel or other alternatives because the hydrogen costs are too much for BC Transit and Whistler to bear.

"Without the annual support for the incremental costs, it would not be feasible," Burton said. "We will not be able to assume those costs. It will be up to the province to decide what we do next."

Burton maintains BC Transit was excited about the project, which has recorded three million passenger trips since it started. But while many parts of the system were successful, she said, others fell short.

"On many levels it has been a success story," she said. "We've learned a lot about the technology and it was an opportunity to do something really unique in the market. We'll have to see what the future holds."

Ben Williams, president of CAW 333 in Victoria, maintains hydrogen buses should be scrapped and money used to provide transit in other areas of B.C., such as Victoria. It added it doesn't make sense to haul fuel from Quebec when the idea is to run the buses to reduce carbon and greenhouse gas emissions.

"I wasn't surprised to be seeing this unbelievable cost when they're actually trucking the hydrogen from Quebec," Williams said. "As it stands now it's not viable ... even though it's in Whistler, it affects riders in Victoria. Money is so tight when it comes to transit systems in the first place."

Whistler municipal officials declined to comment, referring any questions to BC Transit.

Burton expects a decision will be made soon on whether to keep the buses after next spring, noting it will take time to order new buses, if that's the route the province wants to take.

B.C. Transportation Minister Todd Stone was not available for an interview Monday, but ministry spokesman Robert Adam said in an email that more information should be available in a couple of weeks.

"We are working with BC Transit and industry partners and reviewing the demonstration pilot," he wrote.

TransLink, which runs Metro Vancouver's transit system, does not have any hydrogen buses, according to spokeswoman Jiana Ling. It had, however, experimented with buses that ran on a blend of hydrogen and compressed natural gas starting in mid-2007.

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