

Unifor / VIA Rail

BARGAINING REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TENTATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN UNIFOR AND VIA RAIL

Unifor National Council 4000 - Agreements 1 and 2

June 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

Wage Increases

New Medical Benefits

Increased Short-Term
Disability and Life
Insurance

Improvements to
Part-Time Provisions

Modification of
Attendance
Management Letters

RECOMMENDATION

The bargaining committee has negotiated a tentative agreement that enhances our wages, conditions of work and improves our benefits.

Your bargaining committee unanimously recommends this tentative agreement and urges you to vote in favour of the recommendation for acceptance.

Message from Unifor President Jerry Dias



A Solid Agreement for the Future

The nation of Canada was built by railways; with the rails connecting us in a way that had not been possible before. As front-line workers at VIA Rail our members continue the tradition of building the society we want. I congratulate our bargaining committee who entered these talks with the goal to not only protect the financial security of our members but to also protect and enhance their physical and mental health and the well-being of their families.

The committee was able to achieve wage gains in every year of the agreement along with significant improvements to the benefit package. This collective agreement also recognizes the importance of maintaining positive mental health, adding in coverage for access to a psychologist for the first time.

There is a lot of uncertainty at VIA Rail with respect to their business plan and the future. During bargaining Unifor was clear that those issues are beyond the control of our membership. Our members work hard every day to ensure the equipment is maintained and customer satisfaction is achieved and preserved. It was important to seek gains in the collective agreement that recognize the contribution Unifor members make to the success of the employer.

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Message from Council 4000 Secretary-Treasurer Danny Andru



Strong Deal With Enhanced Wages And Benefits

After months of negotiations that began in late 2015, and a final week-long round of intense bargaining leading up to a strike deadline on June 13th, our bargaining committee was able to secure a tentative deal that we believe our members will overwhelmingly support. I would personally like to thank my fellow committee members for sticking together as a team and supporting each other throughout this challenging process.

The members should be proud of their bargaining committee. We achieved a strong collective agreement with enhanced wages and benefits. Several work rules were addressed and improved and important items were renewed, such as job sharing and the mediation-arbitration system.

It gives me great pride to introduce your Council 4000 Bargaining Committee; Regional Representatives Dave Kissack, Andrew Stephen, Jennifer Murray, Ron Shore and Mario Laroche. The committee was offered additional support and guidance from National Staff Representatives Bob Fitzgerald, Montreal Area Directrice Myriam Germain, and Council 4000 President Barry Kennedy. As the

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Unifor President's message *continued...*

We believe resolving our issues without a strike or lockout sends a strong message to the government to invest in new equipment and infrastructure to enhance passenger rail service across the country and solidify the future of our members.

This is a very good collective agreement. The gains made in the work rules, language, benefits and wages were the result of the hard work and determination of your bargaining committee. The agreement is recommended unanimously by the entire bargaining committee and we strongly believe that other bargaining tables will see this as a model that they will be seeking.

I join with the master bargaining committee in recommending you vote in favour of this tentative agreement.

In solidarity,

Jerry Dias, National President, Unifor

Danny Andru's message *continued...*

deadline drew closer, we were joined by Assistant to the National President Bob Orr, National Rail Director Brian Stevens and Unifor National President Jerry Dias. The agreement would not have been achieved without the support and collaboration from the Local 100 (Agreement #3) Bargaining Committee.

This agreement would also not have been possible without the unwavering support of the membership, who showed their solidarity and backing with a strong strike mandate. This was accomplished by the great work done by the army of Strike Captains, Local Chairpersons, Local Presidents, Local Union executive and National Council 4000 Strike Coordinator Ken Cameron. The importance of membership support in their quest for a fair collective agreement cannot be stressed enough.

In the days to follow members will be asked to vote on whether you want to support the agreement. The Bargaining Committee unanimously recommends you vote to accept but, as always, it will be the membership that ultimately decides whether to accept the new collective agreement.

There will be meetings planned to discuss the new collective agreements. We urge all members to attend these meetings.

In solidarity,

Danny Andru, Secretary Treasurer
National Council 4000, Unifor

MASTER AGREEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Wages

There is a wage increase in each year of the collective agreement:

- 2% – January 1, 2016
- 2.5% – January 1, 2017
- 2.5% – January 1, 2018
- 3% – January 1, 2019

Benefits

- Vision Care increase from \$250 to \$300
- **NEW** Vision Care will now include laser eye surgery
- Paramedical coverage increase from \$400 to \$500
- **NEW** Paramedical coverage will now include massage therapy
- **NEW** Psychologist benefit at \$1,000 per year to include access to Master of Social Worker and Doctor of Psychology
- **NEW** Vaccine benefit up to \$500 per year
- **NEW** Coverage for AeroChamber devices
- **NEW** Coverage for wigs and hair pieces up to \$300 following chemotherapy
- **NEW** In the event of an employee's death, coverage for spouse and dependants will continue for two years
- Short-Term Disability increase – 70% of weekly base rate to a maximum of
 - Current \$610
 - yr 1 \$620
 - yr 2 \$630
 - yr 3 \$640
 - yr 4 \$670
- Life Insurance increase from \$36,000 to \$44,000

Pensions

- Letter continuing practice of granting consent to an unreduced Pension (55/85) during the life of Agreement

Woman's Advocate Program

- VIA Rail has agreed to the introduction of the Unifor Women's Advocate Program, recognizing 5 positions (one per region with at least one Francophone position)

Canadian Community Fund

- Access to travel for community charity events and undertakings. VIA Rail, which is part of the fabric of the nation joining communities from coast to coast, has agreed to partner with Unifor in support of local Canadian community initiatives.

WAGE INCREASES

AGREEMENT 1

JOB CLASSIFICATION	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
		2%	2.50%	2.50%	3%
Counter Sales Agent	\$1,188.40	\$1,212.17	\$1,242.47	\$1,273.53	\$1,311.74
Locomotive Attendant	\$1,200.08	\$1,224.08	\$1,254.68	\$1,286.05	\$1,324.63
Stock Checker	\$1,082.40	\$1,104.05	\$1,131.65	\$1,159.94	\$1,194.74
Station Service Agent	\$1,057.20	\$1,078.34	\$1,105.30	\$1,132.94	\$1,166.92

AGREEMENT 2

JOB CLASSIFICATION	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
		2%	2.50%	2.50%	3%
Service Manager Transcon	\$1,455.84	\$1,484.96	\$1,522.08	\$1,560.13	\$1,606.94
Assistant Service Coordinator	\$1,152.67	\$1,175.72	\$1,205.12	\$1,235.24	\$1,272.30
Senior Service Attendant	\$1,047.41	\$1,068.36	\$1,095.07	\$1,122.44	\$1,156.12
Chef	\$1,177.20	\$1,200.74	\$1,230.76	\$1,261.53	\$1,299.38

LOCAL AGREEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- **NEW** The addition of “paid” lunches for work schedules (article 4.1)
- **NEW** Agreed to provision to discuss during closed period an “extra pay” program based on performance targets
 - The union and company will explore ways where reductions in operational costs could be shared with the members
- **NEW** Process to allow two (2) General Bids per year if needed
- **NEW** Parking availability in downtown Montreal for on-train members reporting before 6 a.m.
- Improvements to part-time provisions regarding employee seniority rights
- Modification of Attendance Management letters that will take into consideration absences due to WSIB/CSNSST/Sunlife/ and authorized leave of absences
- Improvements in the Investigation procedure when held for company business
- The ability to postpone or split bereavement leave to a later date and the addition of grandchild to the bereavement list
- The removal of estoppel letters submitted by the Corporation that would have negatively affected seasonal employees
- The removal of estoppel letters concerning vacation and holidays submitted by the Corporation that would have removed an extra vacation day during holidays
- Successfully resolved a number of outstanding issues in each region such as the Concierge position in the West



Unifor National Council 4000 Bargaining Committee



JERRY DIAS
National President,
Unifor



PETER KENNEDY
National
Secretary-Treasurer,
Unifor



RENAUD GAGNÉ
Quebec Regional
Director, Unifor



BOB ORR
Assistant to the National
Secretary-Treasurer,
Unifor



BRIAN STEVENS
National Rail Director,
Unifor



BOB FITZGERALD
National Representative,
Unifor



MYRIAM GERMAIN
National Representative,
Montreal Area Director,
Unifor



DANNY ANDRU
Secretary-Treasurer,
Council 4000



BARRY KENNEDY
President,
Council 4000



JENNIFER MURRAY
Regional Representative,
Atlantic Region
(Local 4005)



MARIO LAROCHE
Regional Representative,
St. Lawrence Region
(Local 4004)



ANDREW STEPHEN
Regional Representative,
Great Lakes Region
(Local 4003)



DAVE KISSACK
Regional Representative,
Prairie Region
(Local 4002)



RON SHORE
Regional Representative,
Mountain Region
(Local 4001)



UNIFOR NATIONAL 4000 BARGAINING COMMITTEE

Four-year agreement: January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2019

