

Unifor - TTR Bargaining Update

The Unifor National Council 4000 Bargaining Committee resumed contract negotiations with Toronto Terminals Railway (TTR) yesterday in Toronto and we are continuing talks today, Wednesday April 20. Negotiations were last held on January 21 and 22. The present collective agreement expired at 23:59 Eastern Time on December 31, 2015.

The union faces some significant challenges this around given that Metrolinx, the provincial authority which operates GO Transit and the UP Express, is seeking tenders for flagging responsibilities in the Union Station Corridor and beyond. It is believed that a couple of other companies may be in the bidding process. If TTR does not submit a 'request for proposal' (RFP), or should they bid and not be awarded the contract, this could trigger significant layoffs within our membership. If they are successful, Metrolinx wants the contractor (in this example TTR) to be available to respond to their immediate requirements. TTR suggests this to mean wholesale changes would be necessary to some longstanding provisions in the collective agreement (i.e. concessions). One such change would be to eliminate the 48 hours' notice that the company is obligated to provide members when they change the starting time of assignments as in accordance with Article 4.7 of the collective agreement. They also wish to introduce 12 hour shifts, which are long difficult shifts for many and can also reduce the overall number of permanent jobs.

In addition to the flagging matters, TTR is also suggesting that the present economic pressures facing both CN and CP, of which TTR is a subsidiary of both railways, the economic offer (wages and benefits) may be less than the Unifor patterns set at CN and CP bargaining in early 2015 so as to be competitive with its competitors. No specific talks have taken place as of yet in regard to wage and benefit improvements.

The union will wait to get an update from the company when we meet at the bargaining table to see where they stand in terms of their dealings with Metrolinx before we determine our next steps in the bargaining process.

We will provide our TTR membership with an update once we conclude this current session of talks.

In Solidarity,

Unifor Council 4000:

Barry Kennedy, President
Mark Robinson, Regional Representative
Nick Ricci, Bargaining Committee Member

Unifor National Office:

Bob Fitzgerald, National Representative
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