



Annual Report/Rapport annuel 2021-2022

Local 76000 IDRC/Section locale 76000 CRDI

May 2022

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear members of Local 76000,

First, please accept my gratitude for allowing me to serve as your local president. It has been the most rewarding experience of my career. I have grown so much from the experience.

Second, please forgive me for the length of this letter. I always fear being seen as long winded like another president we know! As I am writing this, I have learned that I will not be able to be present at our general meeting because of a personal matter and I feel it is important that these things be said. Also, I cannot stand for an executive position, and I must quietly exit stage left so I will not have the opportunity to say these words in an official capacity and nobody likes it when I ramble about the union at a party.

More than a year has passed since our last general meeting. Many challenges and commitments have kept us from focusing on this vital artifact of being a healthy local. As the president of our local it was my responsibility to make sure regular meetings happened, but it is the one administrative thing that I was willing to give up in favour of what I truly believed was the most important: representing members in the handling of their grievances. I hope you agree this was the right choice for the time.

Now, it is time for renewal in our small democracy. You must nominate and elect new representatives from across the Centre to fill the vacant positions; **all of them**. They are all needed to keep our operations, and those conducting them, healthy. Equally as important, if not more, is that you, members of Local 76000, stand for these positions. The roles needed to keep us running smoothly are well documented and well known by the outgoing and past executive and bargaining teams. Familiarize yourself with them and participate.

In the period since our last assembly, we have lost many good people in key positions and have not been able to adequately replace them. Whether it was a new opportunity outside the Centre or some other circumstance the loss rippled through our organization.

The position of secretary-treasurer has been vacant, making it a challenge to schedule meetings, keep records and has led to us only recently signing a service agreement with PSAC and gaining control of our almost \$50,000 dollars in dues. With this money now in hand we can augment our systems and pay for resources to mobilize.

We lost our human rights officer, leaving us without a resource for what have been our most difficult and prevalent cases. This, in a time where the borders of our rights are being redrawn. As an example, issues with the Centre's drug and alcohol policy remain unresolved despite a cease-and-desist letter served to them by PSAC legal counsel outlining the Centre's overreach and exaggeration of safety sensitive positions. The Health and Safety Committees have worked hard to revise this policy, but it has just now been returned to PSAC for review.

We lost a vice-president who was able to carry an exceptional workload and could only be described as having skillsets where any one of us has a skillset. They were my right hand covering where I could not and acting as a sounding board for when I was unsure of a course of action. They ensured our joint union management meetings happened and that, when it came to meeting with management, we had focused and clear messaging.

Our chief steward suffered a life-changing injury that prevented them from getting settled in their duties. Stewards are our front-line workers. They are our eyes and ears in the workplace and lend strength to our members when they must face the boss when their rights are not respected. The chief steward coordinates the work of all the stewards and makes sure representation is fair and the stewards have access to the training and resources to support the membership. Without this role filled, getting a complete picture of all the issues we face is difficult, if not impossible.

Despite these vacancies we have accomplished so much, so rather than think about what has been left undone let's imagine what profound things we can accomplish if everyone takes a turn participating in the life of their local.

Thank you Avi, Anne-Sophie, Ruhiya, Sam, Michele, Navsharan, Paul, Erin, Carrie, Alexandra, Madiha, Mano, David, Hingman, and Zee.

In solidarity

Sean Burns
 President, Executive Committee
 A.F.P.C. - P.S.A.C. Local 76000 @ IDRC-CRDI

1 PROGRESS REPORT ON 2021/22 PRIORITIES

The main work of the Local executive and volunteers involves representing members and improving dialogue with IDRC management to improve work conditions and uphold the Collective Agreement.

At our 2020 Annual General Meeting, we passed two motions and the executive committee announced several complementary priorities for the year. The executive's overall assessment of progress is summarized below.

Priority	Areas of progress / lack of progress
Representing members	Progress made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committees created by the Collective Agreement to promote dialogue are functional and these have improved understanding on a wide range of issues. More attention needed: <p>Resolution of grievances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase support from steward network
Implement 2020 AGM Motions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Regional office stewards 	Progress made: <p>Michele has rejoined the team as an appointed steward for WARO and will stand for election in 2022.</p> More attention needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold elections for stewards in regional offices and

	provide training for volunteers.
Improve dialogue between HR/PCC and regional offices members	<p>Progress made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Followed up on employment-related issues of staff moving to and working in regional offices and discussed findings with management <p>More attention needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult more frequently with regional office staff to exchange information and monitor unresolved issues (e.g., issues related to health insurance and parental leave)
Increase the number of stewards to replace those who have left	<p>Progress made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A few new stewards were recruited. <p>More attention needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steward numbers have declined. Responsibility for helping colleagues seeking help and guidance is falling on too few people.
Completing the transition to the new case management system	<p>Progress made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued using of SharePoint <p>More attention needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine the system to make it accessible, user-friendly and eliminate data duplication. Move backlog of messages from President and Chief-Steward email accounts.
Creating a standing communications team that will take responsibility for our website, email distribution and translation.	<p>Progress made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 33* communiqués sent to members between Oct 27, 2020 and May 6, 2022 (*including a few reminders but excluding messages about the AGMs) Updated the website (https://local76000.ca/) <p>More attention needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relaunch and update the website

2 OUR MEMBERSHIP AND EXECUTIVE

The following table summarizes the size of our membership at the time of our AGMs.

Event	Date	Total Membership*
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Union Certification	26-11-2015	243 (eligible to vote)
Special Assembly to elect Executive & Bargaining Team	18-02-2016	243
First AGM	03-03-2017	255
Second AGM	01-03-2018	251
Third AGM	07-03-2019	230
Fourth AGM	31-10-2020	207
Fifth AGM	15-05-2022	187

* Total membership includes all members including those on leave without pay and other leave.

It is important to note that membership numbers change throughout the year but as the table shows, our membership has declined every AGM. We are aware of and concerned about our shrinking numbers. Restructuring, contracting out, the precarious nature of employment associated with externally-funded programs are some of the reasons behind the declining membership.

The Local executive is made up of volunteers who serve two-year terms. Any member of the Local is invited to stand for election at annual AGMs. We encourage all of you to consider volunteering your time to support your colleagues.

The following candidates were elected to the Local Executive at the 2020 AGM for a two-year term.

Vice-President Regional Offices: Sam Oji Oti (2020-2022)

Vice-President: Hingman Leung (2020-2022, left IDRC in 2021)

Health and Safety Officer: Avi Caplan (2020-2022)

Communications Officer: Anne-Sophie Drouin (2020-2022)

The following executive committee members continued to serve and are up for election at the 2021/2022 AGM.

President: Sean Burns (2019-2021)

Chief Steward: vacant

Secretary-Treasurer: vacant

Human Rights Officer: Zee Leung (2019-2021, left IDRC in 2021)

3 THE LOCAL'S WORK: ACHIEVING OUR OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the Local are to:

1. Work with IDRC's management to ensure fair and equitable treatment of employees.
2. Represent staff coming under the Local's jurisdiction in matters of conditions of employment.

WORK WITH IDRC'S MANAGEMENT TO ENSURE FAIR AND EQUITABLE TREATMENT OF EMPLOYEES

Our Collective Agreement established one standing and one ad hoc committee to open dialogue with management. In addition, the President and Chief Steward communicate regularly with Human Resources¹ colleagues to discuss the interpretation and implementation of the Collective Agreement.

The Joint Union Management Coordination Committee (JUMCC)

Established by Article 61 of the Collective Agreement, this standing committee is co-chaired by Sean Burns and Andrée Leduc. The Local has been represented by Hingman Leung and Sam Oji Oti. Centre management is represented by Patricia Corrigan and Denis Trudeau.

The Terms of Reference, meeting agendas and minutes are stored in this site:
<https://oidrc.sharepoint.com/sites/int-grp-jumcc>

This Committee serves as the forum to discuss the interpretation and implementation of the Collective Agreement and compatibility with existing and proposed management policies and processes.

Meetings of the JUMCC are temporarily halted during the bargaining period.

REPRESENT STAFF COMING UNDER THE LOCAL'S JURISDICTION IN MATTERS OF CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

The Stewards Network

Stewards of the Local serve a critical role in supporting members. We had planned to increase our numbers this year to make it easier for members to reach out for information and guidance. Unfortunately, our elected Chief Steward took leave and the Local did not follow through on the motion to elect stewards in each regional office. Belatedly, elections will be held during the 2022 AGM.

The grievance process is confidential and as such, details of individual cases are not disclosed. That said, members have sought guidance from stewards and PSAC on a wide range of issues such as duty to accommodate under the Canadian Human Rights Act, violence and harassment in the workplace under the Canada Labour Code, overseas benefits and taxes, job descriptions and classification, secondments, and fairness of disciplinary action.

Stewards perform such an important function for those affected and we greatly appreciate the contribution of our volunteers to supporting their colleagues.

Communications

Our Communication Officer continued to send updates to members, and she helped organize members meetings on topics of interest. Last year we held open meetings to exchange views and gather issues of interest for the negotiations for the next collective agreement (our contract).

¹ People and Corporate Culture Division

Engaging colleagues in regional offices

The Vice President (VP), regional offices, maintained a dialogue with members in the regions to discuss workplace issues which are specific to regional offices and to promote a common interpretation of the Collective Agreement across regions and between regions and HQ.

A link between members in the region and the stewards' network was also maintained. In regions where there were vacancies for steward positions, the VP regional offices and Exec members reached out to members to take up these positions.

The VP regional offices organized a meeting of all regional office members in October 2021. Several issues of concern were discussed during the meeting (and via email) including inconsistencies in application of OHS benefits; clarity on claiming home travel benefits in arrears following Covid-19 restrictions; need for HR to do a better job with communicating to OHS; implications of the new pay-equity plans on OHS staff benefits; clarity on internal staffing processes regarding new EFPs; and managers denial of leave requests in accordance with an apparent (but unproven) requirement that regional offices must always have a program officer physically present at all times.

The VP regional offices also worked with others on the executive to support members who were threatened and mistreated by management in relation to their return to countries of regional offices following their repatriation early in the Covid-19 pandemic. We believe that the union's involvement played a significant role in management's change in position – though this unfortunately came after significant damage to the trust relationship with members.

Overall, there remains a need for regular communication and to monitor progress on identified challenges. Going forward, there is a need to ensure that the Collective Agreement continues to reflect the aspirations of regional members, and that management continues to be sensitive and responsive to their unique needs. Ensuring that all regional office steward positions are filled will help advance this proposal and improve representation.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety Committees: The Local continues to work to promote a healthy and safe working environment in Ottawa and in regional offices. This is principally done through the Health and Safety Policy Committee (HSPC) and the Workplace Health and Safety Committees (WHSCs). These committees identify and address health and safety issues in the workplace, and work to ensure that IDRC policies and practices comply with the Canada Labour Code Part II.

Return to the office: The most significant health and safety issues this year have of course been related to the reopening of offices during an ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The Local, in particular through the Ottawa Workplace Health and Safety Committee, has worked hard to keep the Centre honest with regard to its safety plans and their implementation, despite an approach by management that has unfortunately been quite uncollaborative.

Drug and Alcohol Policy: In April 2019, following a revision to the Centre's Drug and Alcohol Policy, PSAC identified a number of provisions which appeared to impact the privacy rights and human rights of our members. A cease-and-desist letter from PSAC legal counsel was sent to the employer. The main concerns with this policy relate to its definition of safety-sensitive positions in the workplace, and the that the employee's responsibility to disclose the use of drugs (recreational or medically prescribed) was excessive and not minimally intrusive. We have been advised by PSAC that the proposed policy is not in line with current case law nor with guidance provided by the Canadian Human Rights Commission on this topic. The Local continues to work through the Health and Safety Policy Committee to seek a resolution agreeable to both the Union and the employer. The latest (hopefully final) recommendation from the Committee has sought to clarify employee disclosure responsibilities and ensure greater specificity such that a minimum of information needs only be

disclosed when accommodations are being sought. We await further revisions to be available for review by the Local and PSAC.

4 APPRECIATION OF SUPPORT

We continue to receive guidance and advice from PSAC staff, who provided expert guidance on the restructuring, health and safety matters as well as essential support for the grievance and adjudication process.

We would also like to thank the members of the Executive Committee, the Stewards and other members who participate in union affairs. They make it possible for us to promote the importance of our collective agreement to all members of our bargaining unit. Please know that we are very appreciative of your volunteer commitment to our Local and we want to thank you warmly.

5 PRIORITIES FOR 2022-23

One of the motions to be voted on at the 2020 AGM was the election of bargaining committee members. The Union has commenced the bargaining process for our second collective agreement. The process has been slow-going, meetings between management and the bargaining team have been more infrequent than during the first contract negotiations, but there is progress none the less. Please look at our website <https://www.local76000.ca> for regular updates. The stewards and Local executive have been monitoring the implementation of our first agreement and we know what articles have been difficult to implement and interpret. We will look to add clarity to these and we will invest time in canvassing the views of all members to identify our priorities.

The dual impact of the pandemic and organizational restructuring has impacted our work and home lives. Supporting members through this period will continue to be an important focus next year.

The Local can only support our membership if there are volunteers willing to be there for colleagues in need and to uphold your Collective Agreement. We are grateful to all those who have volunteered and look to welcome new colleagues to become involved in the life of your Local!