

2018 Forestry Industry Bargaining

USW LOCAL 1-417 UPDATE

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Update #11

October 1, 2018

BARGAINING COMMITTEE CONCLUDES 5 DAYS OF MEDIATION WITH CONIFER

Your BC Interior Bargaining Committee sat down with CONIFER member companies for five days of mediation in Prince George this week with the aim of bargaining a fair collective agreement for the northern sawmill workers of USW Local 1-2017. Mediator Dave Schaub was called upon to kick start what can only be characterized as a slow start to bargaining, with meager progress.

It is with regret and disappointment that after 5 days and nights CONIFER, the employer bargaining agent, remains reluctant to bring a real offer to the table. As an added insult, they remain steadfast in their desire for concessions such as; Tuesday-Saturday clean-up shifts at straight time, statutory holidays paid at straight time rather than time off on alternate shifts, an extended probationary period and an increase in employees' costs for Health and Welfare benefits. It appears as though CONIFER is not serious about setting the pattern for the forest industry given the fact they have offered a package that falls well short of other recent settlements in the forest industry and far inferior to the 2013-2018 agreement.

Your bargaining committee remains focused and committed to obtaining a fair deal reflective of current and future conditions and the hard work members of the USW perform every day. USW members covered by CONIFER will be advised of the next steps related to potential Job Action and the issuance of 72-hour Strike Notice. Members covered by other master agreements (**Southern Interior Master— IFLRA**) (Independents— West Fraser, Canfor-Polar; Canfor-Chetwynd; Canfor-Plateau) will have bargaining resume shortly. A bulletin will be provided when that occurs.

The USW-CONIFER 2013-2018 collective agreement covers the following northern interior sawmill operations:

Babine Forest Products Ltd.; Canfor— Fort St. John, Houston, Isle Pierre and PG Sawmill; Conifex—Fort St. James and Mackenzie; Dunkley Lumber Ltd.; Lakeland Mills; Tolko— Lakeview, Quest Wood, Soda Creek; West Fraser—Williams Lake Planer

This agreement expired on June 30, 2018. Further updates to follow.

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