



Grievance win nets classified jobs for driver examiners

Scores of unclassified driver examiners have won classified jobs in the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) in an OPSEU grievance victory.

The grievance applies to unclassified workers who had completed 18 months of service before Sept. 17, 2002.

Paul Dunseith, OPSEU chair of the MTO Ministry Employee Relations Committee, estimates 150 to 200 workers will qualify for conversion under yesterday's ruling from the Grievance Settlement Board (GSB).

"I'm extremely happy for these people," says Dunseith. "They deserved to be converted, and now they will be."

The case arose out of dozens of individual grievances and a union policy grievance filed in January 2002. The Ministry stopped converting unclassified employees at the end of December 2001. MTO said that, since driver examiners were slated for privatization, there was no "continuing need" for the work. The employer said this meant workers did not qualify for conversion under Article 31.15 of the collective agreement.

The union disagreed. The employer now says the sell-off of

Driver Exam could happen as early as March 31, 2003. In reality, though, no one really knows when – or even if – it will occur. In documents, MTO still talks about what will happen "if a successful bidder is found." The GSB ruled that a possible privatization at an unknown point in the future did not take away members' rights to conversion.

"This ruling significantly improves the case law on conversions, especially in instances of a pending or possible privatization," says OPSEU Grievance Officer Robin Gordon, who is working to have the conversions happen as quickly as possible.

Unclassified employees do not have to have filed a grievance to qualify for conversion under this award. If you qualify, go to your manager. Ask to be converted immediately. A refusal to do so would breach the award. The GSB is watching to make sure the award is implemented. If you need help, contact Robin Gordon at Ext. 312, OPSEU head office: (416) 443-8888, or 1-800-268-7376.

To read the complete award, check the web at www.opseu.org/ops/frontlines2oct25.htm.

OPS conference set for Nov. 2-3

At least 700 OPS delegates from OPSEU locals across Ontario will be heading for the International Plaza Hotel in Toronto next weekend. That's the site of the Nov. 2-3 OPS Conference and Divisional meetings.

"This conference comes at an important time," said OPSEU President Leah Casselman. "We are about to take the next step in building the Network for Better Contracts in the OPS. That means approaching all phases of the contract cycle with the same commitment that we demonstrate during bargaining.

"We are in the enforcement phase of the cycle right now. To make it work, we need more training, more communication, and better coordination of all our enforcement work. A year from now we will be starting work on our next contract. That work must be solidly grounded in strong enforcement of the contract we won this spring."

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Plenary sessions on Saturday morning, Nov. 2, will brief delegates on the challenges ahead and the supports that are in place to help Employee Relations Committees (ERCs) at every level. Afternoon sessions include:

- **Know your contract:** the new OPS collective agreement
- **Know your rights:** job security and the OPS collective agreement
- **Local Employee Relations Committees:** everyday union

representation in the workplace

- **Building the OPS network:** have your say in how OPSEU works for you
- **Tools** for effective Local Employee Relations Committees
- **Special meeting** of the Corrections Division

Participation in afternoon workshops is on a first come, first served basis.

Divisional meetings, i.e., by individual Ministry, will take place Sunday, Nov. 3. Expect elections

for new Ministry Employee Relations Committees to be the main event in most meetings!

Registration for the OPS Conference will take place on Friday, Nov. 1, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and on Saturday, Nov. 2 from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., and Sunday, Nov. 3. from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. at the General Registration Area.

For more information on conference details, contact Marisa Stagliano at ext. 762, OPSEU head office: (416) 443-8888 or 1-800-268-7376.



Authorized for distribution:

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