



## **Questions and Answers – 2022 AGM**

Thank you for sending in so many questions both ahead of and at the 2022 AGM. As we did not have time to go through them all, as promised, we have put together this document.

Please remember that you can always send questions, at any time, to [general@acep-cape.ca](mailto:general@acep-cape.ca).

To keep up to date, please [sign up for email updates](#), check the [website](#), follow us on social media: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#). CAPE publishes updates on a weekly basis.

For the questions below we have confirmed they come from members. Questions have only been edited to correct spelling, grammar, or formatting issues.

### **I. Collective bargaining**

Many questions received were about collective bargaining. The following ones were very similar and general in nature, so we provided a fulsome answer for those. Those that were different are answered individually farther below.

#### **General questions – collective bargaining status update:**

***Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Local 503:*** *Where are the negotiations for the new EC convention at and can we be kept more in the loop about the whole process (meetings, points of dispute, way forward, points of agreement, changes from the previous convention, etc.)? Merci.*

***Natural Resources Canada, Local 520:*** *When can we expect negotiations to wrap up? What is TBS not budging on that is stalling resolution?*

***Statistics Canada, Local 503:*** *What is the status on rate of pay agreements?*

***Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Local 525:*** *What is the status of negotiations for the collective agreements? What are the main elements being negotiated? Where can members find this information? Are there on-going discussions regarding telework flexibility? If so, what are some of the details/goals of these discussions?*

***Statistics Canada, Local 503:*** *When should we expect the next EC agreement be signed and be put in place?*

***Infrastructure Canada, Local 526:*** *I would like to have more information on the current negotiations, including the demands from both parties and the expected deadlines, thank you.*

***Indigenous Services Canada, Local 517:*** *Could you please provide details on the collective agreement negotiations? Thank you.*



**Indigenous Services Canada, Local 517:** *Could you please provide a detailed update on the negotiation process for ECs such as requested changes and next steps? Thank you in advance.*

**Health Canada, Local 512:** *In a time of rising costs and inflation, why are negotiations for our new collective agreement dragging out? Would it not be best to take some level of salary augmentation now even if it isn't as high as it could possibly be? If we wait months or longer for a new agreement, we will continue to face these economic headwinds without relief from augmented salaries.*

**Statistics Canada, Local 503:** *Do we have an update on the new EC collective agreement?*

**Global Affairs Canada, Local 516:** *Can you please update us on the progress of pay increase negotiation? What is the wage percentage increase we are asking for, and what is the government's counteroffer? What is the final percentage we will aim for?*

**Statistics Canada, Local 503:** *What's the current status of the collective agreement?*

**Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Local 504:** *What is the status of discussions on salary raises and will this be the top priority of negotiations?*

**Finance Canada, Local 527:** *Moving forward, how will CAPE ensure to be more responsive and transparent with members on the status of EC negotiations and priorities advanced? The periodic high-level updates we get now are not sufficient.*

**Statistics Canada, Local 503:** *Regarding strike action. The Return to Office has completely changed working conditions and the bargaining landscape. It is not the same situation as when collective bargaining began. We need to reconsider a strike or be forced to accept a collective agreement that will put CAPE members at a disadvantage. Is there another avenue to pursue a strike action or to hold a strike vote?*

**Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Local 511:** *Does CAPE have strike abilities? I'd be interested to know how arbitration is advancing.*

**Answers:**

**Bargaining priorities:** Members choose their bargaining priorities through a survey of their respective bargaining unit before negotiations begin. Bargaining surveys were sent to all bargaining units, and a majority of members who filled out the surveys determined that salary increases and telework were amongst the priority items to be included in this round of negotiations. The current level of inflation has been a key argument to increase wages.

**Bargaining timeline:** Current bargaining is following due process, which takes time. We continuously [update our website](#) and send bargaining updates to the members. It is common for bargaining to take many months to conclude and for a collective agreement to 'expire' before a new one is signed. We hope to secure deals for all 3 ongoing tables as soon as possible without compromising our position on the issues.



Under each group's [bargaining updates on the website](#) is the history of issues being brought to the table, as voted on by members before collective bargaining began, as well as the current known dates or timelines for the process.

**To strike or not:** For our EC and TR members, prior to each round of bargaining, the membership has the opportunity, via the bargaining surveys, to decide whether binding arbitration or strike should be used if an impasse is reached with the employer during negotiations. For this round of bargaining, the dispute resolution mechanism identified by both the EC and TR members was binding arbitration. Once the selection of dispute resolution mechanisms is made, it cannot be changed during that round of bargaining.

For our LoP members, the *Parliamentary Employees and Staff Relations Act* does not allow for strike so binding arbitration is the only option.

**Updates from CAPE:** Bargaining updates are shared via email and posted to the website under [News](#) and [Bargaining Updates](#) as soon as the Bargaining Committee makes them available. To register and ensure your email communications are set to your preference you can [register or login on the website](#).

**Scope of information shared with members:** Due to the sensitive and confidential nature of bargaining, both parties agree that specifics of negotiations are not to be shared during bargaining. Sharing positions publicly could undermine bargaining strategies and trust between the parties at the negotiating table. The CAPE bargaining team has a mandate that comes directly from the membership. In order to achieve it, there needs to be space for confidential discussions at the table with the Employer. Respecting confidentiality can lead to higher levels of trust and greater transparency between the parties, and ideally lead to better negotiated outcomes. Ultimately, any negotiated deal must be ratified by the membership.

### Specific questions – collective bargaining:

**Employment Social Development Canada, Local 514:** *Given that working from home is such a great priority for so many workers, and given that a wage increase is a greater cost than allowing workers to continue working from home, will you be willing to compromise on the size of wage increase for the right to work from home? Can this option be voted on? I think many would take a smaller wage increase for the right to work from home.*

**Answer:** Members had the opportunity, through their pre-bargaining surveys, to identify issues that were important to them. The information is then disseminated into a bargaining mandate that each team uses to negotiate for its respective members at the bargaining table. Mandates and updates are shared via email to the membership and can be found on the [CAPE website](#).

**Natural Resources Canada, Local 520:** *Some of the justification for the bargaining stance on telework comes from the survey. However, we don't think the survey asked whether telework should be given the same priority as compensation or would be grounds for stopping an agreement. In the presentation you use absolute numbers (38) accommodation issues. What percentage of the membership has not had*



*accommodation issues (for example)? We would like to see the survey ask instead: What percentage of members would prefer better compensation over an enhanced telework arrangement?*

**Answer: As the question comes from an EC member** - The negotiation mandate was informed by a separate bargaining survey sent to members in November 2021 before negotiations began. Wage increase came out as the topmost important term to negotiate, followed by telework and other benefits. It is not feasible to comprehensively compare every pair of issues in the membership survey format. However, preferences for wage increases were compared with other “direct cost” items such as increased vacation leave or and additional grid step.

**Statistics Canada, Local 503:** *I am wondering if increased vacation leave is being discussed as part of EC contract negotiations (if that information can be shared). Thank you!*

**Answer:** The EC bargaining survey polled members on this issue and so the bargaining team is aware of the overall member sentiment on this issue, and to see improvements made. We did have demands focused on improving leave not just vacation leave; however, the current status and specific positions cannot be disclosed.

## II. Telework

Some questions were very similar. We have listed all of the questions together here but have just provided one answer for all.

**Statistics Canada, Local 503:** *My top priority is wfh and the ability to work from anywhere in Canada. What is the union doing to get us the right to wfh indefinitely? Can this be in our next collective agreement?*

**Health Canada, Local 512:** *Is CAPE fighting for the option of full-time Work from Home for remote-capable jobs to be secured in our collective agreement as a priority item?*

**Health Canada, Local 512:** *Many members who moved away from the NCR during the pandemic have been given full-time Work from Home. Does CAPE agree that, for fairness reasons, all members in a remote-capable job should also be given that option of full-time Work from Home? (This fairness issue also impacts mental health and morale). As noted by the World Health Organization, low organizational justice (i.e. perceived fairness of workplace practices) is associated with subthreshold mental health symptoms (WHO Guidelines on Mental Health at work, file:///C:/Users/Owner/Downloads/9789240053052-eng.pdf at p. 14)). Thanks.*

**Natural Resources Canada, Local 520:** *What is being done to advocate for remote work, particularly in relation to fighting for regional representation and continued recruitment/retention of those located outside of the NCR?*

**Finance Canada and Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, Local 527:** *I would like to know the status of teleworking option.*



**Natural Resources Canada, Local 520:** *What are the efforts being made to support the option for folks to work at their discretion either in office or out? When are the next negotiations and what are the efforts for our pay to reflect rising inflation?*

**Statistics Canada, Local 503:** *What is the current situation for tele-working and for anyone who has a legitimate medical reason not to go back into work and still working from home?*

**Employment Social Development Canada, Local 514:** *return to office / remote work: time it takes to setup at office and troubleshoot when stations not working (1 hour this morning), transporting equipment to and from office (including ergo equipment like keyboard, mouse), lack of justification for days in office, cannot plan ahead for child care because employer allowed to change RTO frequency anytime (e.g., don't know if/when will need before/after school care - paying \$400/month now but not using it but can't cancel in case) - parents need to know each year by Feb what office schedule will be for next Sept to August period to research and apply for child care, fear of long covid (at office and commute)*

**Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, Local 508:** *With growing COVID cases, how can management insist employees go back to the office, as we know by the number of cases this fall, that the current guidelines don't work. If one needs an ergonomic work arrangement (i.e., ergonomic chair), after an ergonomic assessment has been performed, how can the employee mandate a return-to-work situation where there are no ergonomic stations available.*

**Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, Local 508:** *Can CAPE advocate for the GCCoworking offices (in Kanata, Orleans, Barrhaven) to be considered designated workspaces? ISED currently does not count going there as a day in-office. It would help people in the suburbs not have to do the expensive, stressful and time-consuming commute into the downtown core 2-3 days per week.*

**Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, Local 508:** *How will we be advancing a strategy to reverse return to office (RTO) policies in departments imposing aggressive RTO?*

**Answer:** CAPE believes [telework](#) is the way of the future and has been advocating for the employer to show more flexibility for telework work. Telework is also being discussed at the bargaining table. Meanwhile, political efforts are also ongoing. [CAPE's RTO survey results](#) were shared with the Treasury Board Secretariat, and the President of the Treasury Board later publicly expressed her support for telework, admitting hybrid work was the way of the future. However, because remote and hybrid work are currently managed department by department, members need to seek support from the supervisor level and specific to your region/office location, until the matter is solved at national level.



### III. Return-to-office and accommodation

Some questions were very similar. We have listed the questions together here but have provided one answer for all.

**Public Health Agency, Local 512:** *How will employees who refuse to return to the office for health and safety reasons be supported?*

**Transport Canada, Local 506:** *Does the employer not have an obligation to continue with ergonomic accommodation in the hotel model? A member at TC was recently told to “suck it up” and was reminded that it is OK to put up with just two days a month.*

**Answer:** Canadian law prohibits discrimination based on any of the 13 grounds identified in [section 2 of the Canadian Human Rights Act](#) (CHRA) and employers have a duty to accommodate employees to avoid such discrimination. Employers must accommodate employees who fall into the groups protected by the CHRA up to the point of undue hardship, taking into account health, safety and cost.

It is a question of fundamental human rights, and that obligation does not disappear because office layouts are changing. It may be that new accommodation plans need to be put in place to address the fact that office layouts are changing however, this assessment needs to be done on a case-by-case basis. If you have any accommodation related questions or concerns, please contact your Labour Relations Officer by emailing [general@acep-cape.ca](mailto:general@acep-cape.ca).

**Employment and Social Development Canada, Local 514:** *Hi, I'd like to know if CAPE has had to support any members in making OHS complaints about lack of masking in the workplace, given that this is the one recourse we apparently have on this matter?*

**Answer:** Some members have raised concerns regarding the use of masks in the workplace and have been advised of their rights to raise occupational health and safety issues under the Canada Labour Code Part II. CAPE has also raised concerns at National Occupational Health and Safety Policy Committees and National Labour Management Consultation Committees as appropriate on behalf of the membership. [CAPE has provided guidance on health and safety concerns related to return-to-office plans during COVID-19.](#)

### IV. Member engagement

Some questions were very similar. We have listed the questions together here but have provided one answer for all.

**Statistics Canada, Local 503:** *What will be done to increase engagement among CAPE members now and going forward?*

**Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, Local 508:** *Do you have any programs or initiatives to engage with youths/people who have recently graduated and joined the public service,*





*especially those who are unfamiliar with a unionized environment?*

**Answer:** In-person engagement in the workplace is the most effective way to engage new and existing members, and the pandemic clearly threw a wrench into that practice. This new reality calls for a new strategy, and so in the last few months the National President has gone across the country and met with many Locals.

There are also Local AGMs, ways for Locals to call on more volunteers to get involved and sit on various committees etc. Engaging with new members is on our agenda to improve. We are supporting Locals to better enable them to outreach to new members and will continue to increase these efforts as we continue in this new model of hybrid working. The National Office has recently created and filled a [Local Liaison Officer](#) position dedicated to guiding and supporting Locals as they seek to strengthen their ability to carry out their mandate.

**Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Local 504:** *I have not heard any mention of the Territories tonight. How are you engaging CAPE members living in the North?*

**Answer:** CAPE has regional Locals to represent members outside of the National Capital Region to ensure their unique needs and situations are represented. The Regional Local for the Northwest Territories can be found on our website. Local Leadership are also part of the President's Council and the Local Leadership Council to ensure representation. There is also a Labour Relations Officer dedicated to each region, which can be found on our website.

If you are interested in getting more involved with the union to represent members in your area, please reach out to CAPE's Local Liaison Officer at [general@acep-cape.ca](mailto:general@acep-cape.ca).

## **V. Equity, diversity, inclusion**

Some questions were very similar. We have listed the questions together here but have provided one answer for all.

**Translation Bureau, Local 900:** *Did you partner with an equity group member who could better understand certain realities, situations of discrimination, racism, unfairness in the workplace? This would make employees more willing to come forward and feel better understood in many cases. For example, telling an employee that it is insubordination to want to stop attending meetings where they have been verbally abused is an inappropriate statement from CAPE!*

**Public Services and Procurement Canada, Local 521:** *How will CAPE work to advocate for Black employees on critical issues as per the Clerk's priorities - representation, recruitment and retention especially at the highest levels; setting and measuring real targets; addressing harassment and discrimination.*

**Answer:** [CAPE acknowledges that ongoing systemic barriers](#) in the federal public sector are detrimental in many ways to members belonging to minority or equity-deserving groups. CAPE also recognizes that they experience unique challenges in the workplace and has acknowledged the need to learn more about their reality. We have been working collaboratively with the [Canadian Centre for Diversity and](#)



[Inclusion](#) to boost its understanding of systemic racism, discrimination and harassment to increase our expertise on these matters and the National Executive Committee has established an [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Sub-committee](#). CAPE routinely recognizes various thematic days and months that are important to raise awareness for various equity-deserving groups – these can be found on our social media and our [website](#). CAPE has also been proactively reaching out to various equity-deserving groups and networks including the Federal Black Employee Caucus, in the last few years as part of an effort to engage in meaningful dialogue. Racism and discrimination, including anti-Black racism, are issues CAPE stands strongly against. The Employer is subject to the application of the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and violations in the workplace can lead to formal complaints. Employees who feel discriminated against or harassed have recourses and CAPE's Labour Relations Officers can assist in identifying the best options to seek redress or justice. In the spirit of allyship, CAPE is consistently raising the issue of systemic barriers at political level as well. Fighting racism, discrimination and harassment is a key part of CAPE's advocacy agenda.

## VI. Dues

**Transport Canada, Local 506:** *The last motion to increase union dues and then index to inflation was voted down by the membership. Given the current high inflationary environment we're in, are there plans to revisit this or something similar (e.g., a flat rate \$5 per month increase proposal) or is CAPE in a strong enough financial position to absorb the increased costs while still being able to serve the membership?*

**Answer:** At the 2021 National AGM a resolution was put forward to increase our dues. It was subsequently voted down by the membership. As a result, we have had to think outside the box and get creative to keep up with the increased costs to doing business as well as rising inflation. The last dues increase was in 2014 and so it is very likely that a dues increase will be needed in the future to be financially viable. Not only is the dues rate very low as a percentage of salaries, but due to inflation the funding per member has gone down in real terms. This essentially means that, at some point in the future, we will need to revisit a dues increase.

## VII. RCMP

Some questions were very similar. We have listed the questions together here but have provided one answer for all.

**Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Local 504:** *RCMP civilian members - what's the plan?*

**Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Local 504:** *In what ways has CAPE been representing the interests of Civilian members since the Deeming date of May 2020 was postponed indefinitely? Has CAPE included the RCMP Civilian Members in their notice to bargain for the Public Service Employees it represents? Will CAPE be insisting to maintain the MOU (Appendix L of the latest expired collective agreement) that protects the Civilian Members Terms and Conditions of Employment in this round of bargaining? Does this MOU essentially freeze the Terms and Conditions of employment of the CM, or can RCMP management change them at their discretion? For example, there have been changes to Disability*





*Insurance premiums, but CAPE isn't a member of the committee that made the decision for these changes. Are Civilian Members eligible for CAPE representation in workplace issues (such as grievances or cases from the RCMP Independent Centre for Harassment Resolution)? Are Civilian Members represented by CAPE at the bargaining table? Is there even a "bargaining table" for Civilian members?*

**Answer:** CAPE provides advisory, representation and advocacy services to [RCMP ESS and TRL Civilian Members \(CMs\)](#). CAPE Labour Relations Officers raise systemic and policy issues with the Commissioner and staff at the National Consultation Committee meetings. Additionally, CMs benefit from the wage increases negotiated through the EC and TR bargaining tables.

Civilian issues are being raised at the [EC bargaining table](#) as the 'home' for civilian members. CAPE can also engage with the RCMP and TBS at a national level to address current issues with the unilateral terms and conditions that until deeming occurs are unfortunately still in effect.

CAPE ESS and TRL Civilian Members are also eligible to receive support and representation of CAPE officers through the Office for the Coordination of Grievance and Appeals Adjudication process for grievances and complaints for RCMP members, as well as the normal advisory services for external appeals through your CAPE Labour Relations Officer.

Now that deeming has been delayed, CMs find themselves in a limbo where the unilaterally imposed Terms and Conditions of Employment still apply, with few exceptions, even though they have unionized. For the time being, CAPE's position is that the Civilian Members terms and conditions of employment are frozen until CMs are deemed or new terms are freely negotiated, with the exception of those terms tied to the EC and TR collective agreement (see the EC Collective Agreement, [Appendix L](#)). Apparent violations of this freeze should be brought forward to your local executive or Labour Relations Officer for investigation.

## **VIII. Interpreters**

*Translation Bureau, Local 900: We need to do something to protect our interpreters from acoustic shock caused by inadequate audio equipment. Could we do something concrete to force the employer to provide, check and monitor the use of adequate audio equipment to protect the hearing of our interpreters who are experiencing a high rate of serious accidents due to acoustic shock? Does the union intend to take concrete action on this issue and not just pay it lip service?*

**Answer:** CAPE has been advocating for the health and safety of its interpreter members for more than two years. A timeline and summary of updates can be found on CAPE's website under [Issues: Virtual Parliament and Interpreters](#), including issuing complaints to the Labour Program, briefs to the House of Commons Board of Internal Economy, and testifying before the House of Commons Procedure and House Affairs Committee. While there have been incremental improvements, CAPE continues to meet with elected officials, the Translation Bureau, and other stakeholders to find permanent solutions to these issues. These issues are also being raised at the bargaining table.



## **IX. Public Service Health Care Plan (PSHCP)**

Some questions were very similar. We have listed the questions together here but have provided one answer for all.

***Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, Local 508:*** please explain why we are cutting physiotherapy benefits for those who use unlimited physio currently we the disabled people were not consulted, and many may not be able to continue work without it. please consider an advanced physio option like with hospital benefits... my question was not answered by union before when emailed weeks ago. This policy may end workforce participation others has.

***Transport Canada, Local 506:*** I would like to know why the new health plan cut back so much on the physiotherapy. This is devastating to some of us that require this on a regular basis for rehabilitation.

**Answer:** Unlike collective bargaining, recourse options are limited as the bargaining agents do not have jurisdiction over the plan directly. A National Joint Council committee maintains and reviews the plan provisions. Ultimately, maintaining affordability of the plan, and having as close as possible similar benefits, and equity in benefits, for users were prioritized by the Employer.

## **X. Other unions**

Some questions were very similar. We have listed the questions together here but provided just one answer for all.

***Statistics Canada, Local 503:*** Does CAPE stand in solidarity with the CUPE educational support workers on strike? Is there any action we can take to uphold the striking educational workers? What does CAPE plan to do to fight back against the trampling of our constitutional rights to strike by the provincial government.

***Public Health Agency of Canada, Local 512:*** With the ongoing talk of solidarity and support for CUPE, what is CAPE's commitment to supporting striking workers belonging to other unions?

***Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, Local 508:*** Is National going to release a statement in solidarity with education workers and against the Ontario government's trampling of labour rights.

***Statistics Canada, Local 503:*** What is CAPE's position with respect to the Ontario government's labour dispute with CUPE members? In particular, the use of the notwithstanding clause in the way the Ontario Conservatives are attempting.



***Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Local 507:*** Given the recent situation in Ontario with the CUPE strike at the provincial level, Does CAPE plan for any sort of solidarity statements? I am not sure what the union's ability to do so would be I, given that we are employees at the federal level. Thanks!

**Answer:** CAPE released two statements in solidarity with CUPE education workers. The [first statement](#) was shared on social media, and the [second statement](#) was also emailed to all members.

CAPE is 100% supportive of CUPE. The Ford Government's move was a disgrace, and we made our position public. CAPE shows its solidarity for other unions through its membership in the [Canadian Labour Congress](#) (CLC). The CLC has advocacy resources we do not have, and this was one of the principal reasons why we affiliated with them. Our membership dues to the CLC allow us to contribute to advancing the National Labour movement by being part of national advocacy efforts to fight against the erosion of collective bargaining rights. Partnering with the CLC allows us to support other unions on a national scale.

Our membership in the CLC also means that we are part of a greater support network which means that we are part of labour movement activities on a national scale and allows us to access resources, platforms and audiences that we wouldn't otherwise be able to.

We also have influence and access to the Federal government, do backroom advocacy, use political channels and our own platform to rally the public and our members.

***Global Affairs Canada, Local 516:*** ACFO recently signed a new agreement with Treasury Board and got salary increases of 3,5 % in 2022, 3 % in 2023, 2 % in 2024 and 2 % in 2025. This is absolutely horrendous and would be similar to what we would get pre-covid. It's also a disgusting precedent with a government that notoriously spends like there is no tomorrow. I hope CAPE is not anticipating something similar in its negotiations as inflation is likely to remain high for the next few years and a deal like this would represent a huge setback for our purchasing power and would impoverish us by a significant margin. A lot of us may go to the private sector if salaries don't get more competitive. You need to get this right and please do not sign long term at ridiculously low increases. How will you ensure that our purchasing power will remain acceptable?

**Answer:** ACFO is one of the many federal public sector unions who were bargaining in 2022.

The recent ACFO agreement does not affect our bargaining process. ACFO's bargaining team had its own independent mandate and their own priorities as identified by their membership. It is interesting to look at other unions bargaining deals, but it is not always an accurate predictor of our own bargaining outcomes.

***Statistics Canada, Local 503:*** What to expect in case of potential strike action by PSAC?

**Answer:** Our process is independent of what happens at PSAC. We follow different bargaining timelines. A PSAC strike could prompt the government to close deal faster with other unions but could also slow things down. Should PSAC members go on strike, communications with instructions will be sent to our



local leaders and will be provided to our members.

**Employment and Services Development Canada, Local 514:** *How are we safeguarding ourselves from draconian measures like the use of the not withstanding clause? We know that a change in government will bring this. We need to address it now.*

**Answer:** As we saw with the CUPE example, a strong pushback from unions joining together and from the public helped to overturn this. CAPE would also encourage members to do some research into their candidates for future elections and be sure to vote for those who they think will best represent and protect their interests.

## **XI. Phoenix**

Some questions were very similar. We have listed the questions together here however, just one answer is provided for all.

**Canada Border Services Agency, Local 500:** *Are you doing anything about the ongoing issues with pay and compensation? Is there anyone who's furious on our behalf about how "normalized" pay issues are in the government? A file transfer between departments takes years, an acting or promotion processing and pay adjustment takes months and months and once you get your backpay finally it's taxed heavily and it's on you to correct it. It's very demoralizing to work and perform at a level higher than what you are paid.*

**Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, Local 508:** *On average, what are the current delays being experienced in processes being used to resolve outstanding pay issues from the phoenix pay system implementation?*

**Answer:**

The Phoenix pay system continues to be abysmal and unfortunately the backlog in processing transactions has been trending upwards since March 2021 (See: <https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/remuneration-compensation/services-pay-pay-services/centre-presse-media-centre/mise-a-jour-update-eng.html>)

Nonetheless, employees still have the right to be paid on time and accurately for the work they perform. CAPE members who are experiencing hardship because of inaccurate or late payments should contact their Labour Relations Officer (LRO) at [general@acep-cape.ca](mailto:general@acep-cape.ca). We are still dealing with Phoenix matters for many members, and we encourage you to speak to your LRO if you are experiencing any Phoenix related issues to see how they can assist.



## **XII. Miscellaneous**

***Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Local 525:*** How much does our membership with the Canadian Labour Congress cost annually? Do we get our money's worth?

**Answer:**

The membership voted to join the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) in 2020. Our dues are now 81 cents per member per month for our membership – it works out to about \$228,420 this year, reflecting the increase in CAPE membership. The value of this affiliation can be measured through the new opportunities in networking, advocacy work, showing of solidarity in cases like that of the CUPE education workers recently, resource sharing and more through the membership, but ultimately it would be up to the membership to decide if they feel they are getting value for their membership fees.

***Statistics Canada, Local 503:*** Why is the marginal increase in remuneration from EC03 to EC04 (7.9%) the lowest as compared to other promotional levels, such as EC02 (11.9%), EC03 (9.7%), and EC05 (19.6%)? Especially given that at EC04 employees start having more managerial duties. \*Calculations are done in 2021 rates of pay.

**Answer:**

This is the result of the EC classification negotiation. Back in 2000, the ES and SI group were to merge into the EC classification. CAPE (then SSEA) and TBS were to negotiate the new EC classification based on ES and SI groups. SSEA bargained that the salaries at each level, and each step within each level, be higher than the equivalent SI and ES salary, but it had to agree to the general structure of the ES and SI level alignment (e.g. ES-01 and SI-01 to match EC-01, etc.). Unfortunately, during the negotiation and harmonization process, the EC salary grid was not standardized compared to SI and ES.

Since then, the Employer is not keen to give more adjustments to one level but instead provides general salary adjustments that are applied to all levels uniformly, which maintains the unbalanced salary grid.

***Transport Canada, President Local 504:*** What is the objection to relinquishing current CAPE office lease at \$1M per year and purchasing an office space? To generate additional funding - can CAPE switch from a \$1M per year lease of office to a purchased premises?

**Answer:**

A thorough analysis was done by experts in the field, and we looked at various options. We took into consideration the cost of maintenance, upkeep and repairs, office management, location, telework, etc. Purchasing a property would tie up our limited funds in a non-liquid asset. So, for now the benefits of leasing outweigh other options.

***Natural Resources Canada, Local 520:*** Can the union advance members getting access to natural medicine and movement classes (ie gyms, yoga from Independent providers) from our insurance provider?



**Answer:**

The Public Service Health Care Plan is administered through the [National Joint Council](#) (NJC). The plan was recently updated through the NJC and is not due to be reviewed for another five years. Prior to the most recent review, CAPE conducted a survey of the membership to see what your priorities were for improvements. The result of this survey was then shared with the NJC team. Since the PSHCP is the same for every government employee, CAPE does not advise on this by itself, it needs to be done alongside the other bargaining agents.

**Statistics Canada, Local 503:** *I have concerns on the significantly increased amount of work activities data being collected through the cloud migration and how this data will be used. For example, in MS Teams, we can see daily statistics of messages/audio call/video calls. The access to Azure Virtual Desktop cost models are based on hours. That said there are significantly more data are being collected in details about worker's activities. All these data can be used to inform both employees and employers in terms of productivity or other things. Should some sort of directive or guidelines being in place to ensure the collection and use of such data are not being misused? Is there any ongoing discussion between union and employers on this issue? How can workers be protected? Thank you!*

**Answer:**

This issue was one of the [bargaining priorities identified by our EC members](#). As a result, CAPE is trying to negotiate a new provision against electronic surveillance in the collective agreement.

### **XIII. Vaccine mandate**

**Translation Bureau, Local 900:** *The Employer issued a mandate for what it calls "COVID-19 vaccination" as a condition of employment for CAPE members. The vaccine shot is actually an experimental gene therapy that has proven to be ineffective and dangerous, contrary to the claims of the government and CAPE leadership, who even decided to ban "unvaccinated" CAPE members from attending the general budget meeting in person on May 5, 2022.*

*The requirement to receive an experimental gene therapy shot had disastrous effects on some CAPE members. Some lost their salaries for months, others quit or retired. Of those who accepted the shot, many experienced adverse effects that forced them to miss work for days or even weeks. Some CAPE members died after receiving the experimental gene therapy.*

*What inquiry will CAPE make with membership and the Employer to assess the effects of the experimental gene therapy on its members, including the number of hospitalizations and deaths before and after the "vaccination" campaign?*

*What action will CAPE take with respect to its members who died, became ill, or lost their salaries as a result of the government's experimental gene therapy campaign which CAPE agreed with?*

**Answer:**

CAPE [made its position clear](#) [PDF] during the vaccine mandate and supported, and is still supporting, its





members impacted by the policy whose cases are legitimate and have merit. Should you have any questions about your rights in the workplace, please contact your Labour Relations Officer at [general@acep-cape.ca](mailto:general@acep-cape.ca).