



COAST TO COAST UPDATE
AU COURANT D'UN OcéAN À L'AUTRE
 INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS
 FRATERNITÉ INTERNATIONALE DES OUVRIERS EN ÉLECTRICITÉ



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January/February 2007

Greetings and Happy New Year:

Temporary foreign workers in this country have become, or are about to become, an enormous problem that will rival the plague of shipping our unionized manufacturing jobs offshore for the last twenty years. I want to make it clear that we're not talking about immigrants here; immigrants built this country, and most of us are not too many cycles away from when our fore-folks first saw the great Canadian coast.

What we are talking about are the employers that have found a willing ear with our Federal and Provincial governments and convinced them that we have a critical shortage of skilled workers in Canada; nothing could be further from the truth. Right now in the 1st District construction industry, as of January 30, 2007, we have 6912 Journeymen and 1935 apprentices out of work! And you can be sure that temporary foreign workers are just not a construction industry problem. All industries, our wages, benefits and security are at stake.

Brothers and Sisters our elected leadership in this country are taking the easy way out. They are listening to employers, owners and opportunists that know a temporary foreign worker will work for less, accept unsafe situations and say nothing about it; there are reasonable, if not obvious, alternatives, but our governments are not listening.

We have been telling the Federal government for 30 years that what we need is a clear policy on moving our workers across Canada, coast to coast, to where the work is at any given time. We need relief for these mobile workers in some form of tax motivation, up front funding from EI, or employer incentives to be passed on to the worker.

We need our government to initiate a *National Labour Mobility* support program for all industries.

We need proper safeguards in place to ensure employers don't create false notions of workers shortages so that the temporary foreign worker seems to be the only alternative.

We need clear and unequivocal guidelines on the certification, credentials, skills, and the need of those requirements from temporary foreign workers in all industries.

And we need the labour movement to be involved in the determination of labour markets, including the process by which wages and benefit comparisons are determined.

I know I am preaching to the choir and some IBEW Local Unions have taken this fight to the front lines, as you will see in this issue of *Coast to Coast* where we have quoted Business Manager's from two Local Unions on their initiatives, however, we need more!

We'll have our chance in Ottawa at the Canadian Building Trades Policy/Legislative Conference April 29 to May 2, 2007 to let the government know we aren't all warm and fuzzy about their inaction on this *give away* of our work. Put those dates on your calendar and let's make the IBEW unified voice heard on the 'hill'.

Phil Flemming, IVP

1st District Scholarship Winners!

The **IBEW 1st District Office**, in conjunction with **AIL Canada, Union Savings and MWG Apparel** is pleased to announce the five (5) \$1,000.00 Scholarship Winners:

- Nicole Di Battista – Local 353
- Joshua Hepditch – Local 37
- David Lebedoff – Local 213
- Jacob Martin – Local 37
- Katlyn Scott – Local 37

There were 51 applicants and all essays submitted were very well written and a true compliment to the IBEW. A random draw was held on February 7th, 2007 in the First District Office.

Congratulations to all!!!!

District 7 (Western Canada) Organizing Coordinator Hired

The IBEW First District is pleased to announce the hiring of Brother G. (Jerry) Larson as the new District 7 Organizing Coordinator for Western Canada effective March 1, 2007. This a first step towards implementing International President Hill's bold new Membership Development initiative that was presented to the delegates at the International Convention last fall in Cleveland, Ohio.

Brother Larson began his IBEW career as a Utility worker with Edmonton Power in 1972 in Local Union 1007. He soon became an apprentice Lineman and worked in that capacity from 1973-1977. He also worked for Edmonton Power as a Signal Technician from 1978-1997 before returning to his roots as a Power Lineman III, from 1997-1999. Jerry served Local Union 1007 as the assistant Busi-

ness Manager from 1999-2001, before becoming the Business Manager where he has worked until now.

Brother Larson is well aware of the challenges facing the IBEW, and is excited about the opportunity to work with the Local Unions and the International Membership Development team towards the goal of growing our great union. We hope you will all give Jerry the support he needs to help us all reach that goal.

Efforts are well underway to fill the position of District 6 (Eastern Canada) Organizing Coordinator and an announcement should be made soon.

Canada's New Government Announces Applications for \$1000 Apprenticeship Incentive Grant now Being Accepted

On January 17, 2007 in Ottawa, ON, The Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, announced that applications for the \$1000 Apprenticeship Incentive Grant are now being accepted. The grant is available to registered apprentices who have completed their first or second year in a *Red Seal* trade program, on or after January 1, 2007.

It is estimated that, annually, up to 100,000 apprentices in Canada will be eligible to receive this taxable cash grant to cover the costs of tuition, travel and tools.

The Apprenticeship Incentive Grant is one of the measures introduced by Canada's New Government to assist apprentices, tradespeople and employers in the skilled trades sector. Effective May 2006, the government introduced a Tradesperson's Tools Deduction to help eligible tradespeople across the country save on the cost of work-related tools. It also introduced an Apprenticeship Job Creation Tax Credit to provide employers with up to \$2,000 per apprentice for each of the first two years of their contract.

Application forms will be available at Service Canada Centres and on the Internet. Service Canada will also be responsible for processing applications.

For more information on the Apprenticeship Incentive Grant, please see the following options:

<http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca>, call 1-866-742-3644 (TTY 1-866-909-9757), or visit your local Service Canada office.

2007 All Canada Progress Meeting

The Local Union 230 – Victoria, BC Social Committee has been hard at work preparing for the upcoming All Canada Progress Meeting (ACPM) in Victoria, BC. One of the items we would like to notify the Delegates early about is the *Titanic* Exhibition.

Ninety-five years ago the ocean-liner *Titanic* hit an ice-

berg in the North Atlantic off our Eastern Coast sinking, and so started this epic man vs. nature story. During your stay in Victoria at the upcoming ACPM, it is encouraged to visit the Royal British Columbia Museum with their feature exhibit, *Treasures from the Titanic*; this is the first time this exhibit has come to the west coast of Canada. Our ACPM is being held during the height of the tourist season, therefore, the Social Committee would like to recommend Delegates get their tickets online at www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca; this will ensure they will get the opportunity to view these artifacts.

Edmonton Electricians Waiting for Work

February 5, 2007 – Daily Commercial News and Construction Record

Despite the construction boom in Alberta, 1,500 electricians are under-employed, thanks primarily to stiff competition between trade unions.

For the past year, members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 424 have been waiting to go to work. Of that number, 700 to 800 are "literally" and "officially" out of work, while the rest are underemployed in non-trade jobs like Home Depot "dispensing nuts and bolts for \$17 an hour," said Barry Salmon, Public Affairs Manager for IBEW.

Salmon places the blame squarely on a combination of a lack of steady work and competing trade unions, such as the Merit Contractors Association and the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) members in Edmonton and Fort McMurray.

"I wouldn't call (Merit and CLAC) unions, but yes, there is competition for electrical work," he said.

According to Salmon, contractors affiliated with CLAC or Merit have been breaking off agreements with the open-shop groups and asking IBEW contractors to come in and "clean up the mess" left behind by less skilled trades.

"A lot of the younger guys and migrant workers are picking up jobs wherever they can. They will do three houses in a subdivision or they will go to Fort McMurray, and those workers are the ones who CLAC and the open-shop contractors are picking up," said Salmon.

"The training and certification our guys go through is higher than a lot of these folks that CLAC and Merit have been using."

However, Stephen Kushner, President of Merit Contractors Association, says there is plenty of work for electricians who want it.

"My encouragement would be that there are a lot of jobs available if they want to apply for them. The construction industry is such that you apply with the companies that have the work," he said.

"It works no different than in any other employment market."

But Salmon countered that with Alberta's steady workflow, IBEW members are less willing to spend three days working on a "dirty" job in a boiler room than working for weeks on a job in Fort McMurray.

The situation is expected to be rectified soon as more work is being created by the Shell Scotford Plant outside of Edmonton as well as the construction of four more bitumen upgraders.

"It's not something that we see troubling us through the rest of this year, but right now we do indeed have 1,500 people who would pick up tools for more than a week's work," said Salmon.

Brian Baker, Staff Writer

Local Union 105 – Hamilton ON – Wind Solar Project

Local Union 105, Hamilton ON, has just finished drilling 3 holes (27 feet deep) and poured concrete to their 3 wind turbine installation, at their union hall. Local Union 105 has purchased an industrial 30Kw, commercial 5.8Kw and residential 1.8Kw wind turbines to show the 3 levels of machines that are available to the public. They have also installed 52 solar panels on the roof of their training centre. All the associated filtering & battery equipment has also been installed.

Local Union 105 Training Director Clarke Hurley has been looking at a multitude of basic training programs, and has been overwhelmed by the volumes of information on the subject. Some of the programs are suitable for the members and some are too technically advanced.

Ontario Electric was awarded the supply and installation contract as they have expertise on staff. They have assured Brother Hurley that their experts and engineers are willing to sit down with him to help develop a training program in the near future.

Local Union 105 members have been involved in the installation of the Port Burwell wind farm in the London area. These are huge wind turbines, approximately 1 megawatt each.

Brother Hurley is inviting anyone to visit Local Union 105 anytime to see the installation they have at their training centre.

The project should be completed by the end of March 2007.

Local Union 402 – Thunder Bay, ON – Bravery Commended

On October 19, 2006 Brothers Lawrence Larson and Ed Ronald of Local Union 402 Thunder Bay, ON were called

out after hours to repair an electrical transfer switch at a government facility.

For most of the night both men were working within a 600 volt transfer switch re-feeding a temporary power cable. Towards the end of the night, with the project near completion, Brother Larson was working alone in the electrical room and was two steps up on a step-ladder when the 600 volt equipment malfunctioned causing an explosion. The arc flash threw Brother Larson from the ladder towards an adjacent wall and left Brother Larson temporarily blind, 3rd degree burns to his left arm and unable to hear due to the loud explosion.

As Brother Larson lay incapacitated within eight feet of the still burning switchgear, and after hearing the explosion, Brother Ronald headed back to the electrical room to check on his partner. With the equipment still arcing and on fire, and with little regard for his own safety, Brother Ronald pulled Larson from the room immediately and began to administer first aid before calling an ambulance.

The Paramedics who responded to the scene, and later the Ministry of Labour inspectors, both noted that without the quick thinking and selfless actions of Brother Ed Ronald, Brother Larson may not be with us today.

Local Union 402, the electrical contractor the men were working for, and the entire IBEW are very proud of and owe a great debt of gratitude to Brother Ronald for his heroic actions. We are also all very thankful that Brother Larson's injuries were not more severe and that he did not become listed among the too many workplace fatalities.

Local Union 402 Business Manager Glen Drewes has nominated Brother Ed Ronald to receive the IBEW Life Saving Award.

Local Union 402 – Thunder Bay, ON – Organizing Success

Local Union 402 Thunder Bay ON, is pleased to welcome Nor-Tec Electric as a new IBEW signatory contractor in the province of Ontario. Previously only signatory in the province of Manitoba, Nor-Tec Electric was successful in securing a lighting retrofit project at the Safeway retail store in Fort Francis, Ontario. Local Union 402 Business Manager Glen Drewes, upon learning of Nor-Tec's contract, successfully salted four members of Local Union 402 into the ranks of Nor-Tec's workforce. Over the period of a couple of days, Drewes, with the assistance of his salts, managed to get enough cards signed to be able to file for a card based certification. Prior to actually filing, Drewes contacted Nor-Tec's owner to advise him of the situation and to explain that Nor-Tec and Local Union 402 could work together for their mutual best interests, or they could proceed to the OLRB, at significant costs to both parties. Business Manager Drewes was able to alleviate the concerns of Nor-Tec in regards to being signatory in Ontario and convinced Nor-Tec to sign a voluntary recognition agreement with Local

Union 402.

Congratulations to Business Manager Drewes on a job well done!!

Foreign Workers

The following are quotes from a letter written by Phil Venoit, Business Manager of Local Union 230 – Victoria, BC to The Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Immigration Citizenship & Immigration:

...However, with your announcement of streamlining the foreign worker application process late in 2006, the unemployment rate at 6.1% for the year-end 2006 and many Canadians still out of work and with little to no movement in terms of helping off-set the costs for qualified and certified Canadian tradesmen and women with their moving expenses (transportation, meals and accommodation from their domicile to their work destination) within Canada to help with any regional labour shortfall, causes us to question the Government's motives...

...The problem is exacerbated when neither Federal nor Provincial governments will take responsibility for this issue. The Federal Government says, they issue the work permits but we don't deal with any on-site issues; while the Provincial Government says, that it is out of our jurisdiction of how the work permit was issued so they are reluctant to step in?...

...until the federal government legislates a tax deduction for skilled certified and qualified Canadian workers to help with inter and intra-provincial mobility issues to help further reduce the unemployment rate, we stand opposed to any new foreign construction worker applications coming into Canada....

The following are quotes from a story in the Edmonton Sun coming out of a news conference with Tim Brower (and others), Business Manager of Local Union 424, Edmonton AB:

...Tim Brower, IBEW Local Union 424 Business Manager, says non-union contractors are using the "myth" of a labour shortage to bring in temporary foreign workers who are taking away jobs from Albertans...

..."There is a shortage of unskilled people in this province. I won't deny that," he told reporters at the legislature yesterday. "Tim Hortons is looking for people....but when it comes to skilled people in this province, there is no shortage. I am the expert. I have them available."...

...NDP Leader Brian Mason blamed contractors who apply for permits for temporary workers while claiming there isn't anyone available locally...

...He suggested the problem could be corrected by changing the process to require companies to prove they have contacted "legitimate" unions for workers before looking for overseas help...

...Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry spokesperson Lorelei Fiset-Cassidy said the province has no responsibility for the temporary worker program, but it has pressed the Federal government to make it easier to import foreign workers...

...But Alberta Federation of Labour President Gil McGowan said construction activity has declined recently but temporary workers are still flooding in....

..."We think it's a perverse situation," he said....

Local Union 1604 – Montreal, PQ – REUNITED!

Back in October 2005 Local Union 1604 was raided by a Quebec Union who specializes in raiding other Unions; they are the CSN/CNTU.

According to the Quebec law, if a certified Union is unable to negotiate a Labour Agreement within a year of their certification, they are open for other Unions to raid.

Local Union 1604 and its loyal ADT members took advantage of the law and managed to bring 154 ADT Brothers and Sisters back to the IBEW.

Thanks to all the members of Local Union 1604, Milt Biffin Business Manager, Executive Board members Kevin MacKaskill and Ron Farrow, Press Secretary Yvon Girard and Committee member Jean Francois Seeger for a job well done.

Talks Have Begun

In the past several weeks, the Alliance Syndicale made up of the Conseil provincial - International, CSD Construction and CSN-Construction has begun to negotiate the four collective agreements that will establish the working conditions for all Quebec construction workers until April 30, 2010.

A central bargaining committee has been set up, consisting of three representatives from each of the labour associations forming the Alliance Syndicale:

CSN-Construction – Ted McLaren, Daniel de Blois, and Yves Cote

Conseil provincial-International – Pierre Labelle, Donald Fortin, and Gerald Cyr

CSD Construction – Michel Fournier, Pierre Ross, and Robert Legare

Three sectoral bargaining committees and a committee for core bargaining issues (grievances, job-site stewards, em-

ployee benefits, etc.) were also formed.

Before the holidays, they tabled their demands with each sectoral management association and the AECQ for the core issues:

Alliance syndicale:

- Bargaining committee for the residential sector
- Bargaining committee for the roads and civil engineering sector
- Bargaining committee for the institutional/commercial and industrial sectors
- Bargaining committee for core issues

Demands that are specific to each trade, specialty or occupation were also handed over to each sectoral association of employers. Management also submitted proposals.

The conditions are now in place to pursue negotiations. A number of bargaining sessions already took place in January. Negotiations will intensify over the coming weeks.

Workplace Deaths Rising Sharply, According to New Report

The number of work-related fatalities in Canada is rising sharply, according to a study released last month by the Centre of the Study of Living Standards. The report, titled "Five Deaths a Day", analyzed data collected by the Association of Workers' Compensations Board of Canada, as well as the International Labour Organization.

The report reveals that there were 1,097 workplace fatalities in Canada in 2005, up 45% from 738 in 1993 and 18 percent from 958 in 2004. As Canadians work on average 230 days per year, this means that there were nearly five work-related deaths per working day in this country.

The 119 page-report includes the following findings:

- The most dangerous industry in which to work over the 1996-2005 period was mining, quarrying and oil wells (49.9 per 100,000 workers or one out of 2,000); followed by logging and forestry (42.9 per 100,000 per workers or one out of 2,300); fishing and trapping (35.6 fatalities per 100,000 workers or one out every 2,800), agriculture (28.1 fatalities per 100,000 workers or one out every 3,600 workers and construction (20.6 per 100,000 workers or one out of 4,900). Finance and insurance was the least dangerous industry, with only 0.2 fatalities per 100,000 workers or one death for every 500,000 workers.
- Like industries, workplace fatalities are highly concentrated in certain occupations. Over the 1996-2005 period, occupations unique to primary occupations had the highest fatality rate at 19.5 per 100, 000 workers, followed by trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (19.0 per 100,000 workers), and occu-

pations unique to processing, manufacturing, and utilities (10.2). All other major group occupations had a fatality rate less than 4 per 100, 000.

- Men are much more likely to die on the job than women. In 2005, the incidence of workplace death was 30 times higher among men than women: 12.4 deaths per 100,000 workers versus 0.4 deaths.
- Older workers are much more likely to experience a workplace-related fatality than a younger worker. In 2005, the incidence rate rises from 1.8 deaths per 100, 000 workers for the 15-19 years age group to 18.1 deaths per 100,000 for the 60-64 age group.
- In 2005, the incidence of workplace fatalities in Canada was 6.8 per 100,000, up from 5.9 per 100,000 in 1993. This rate represents one death for every 15,000 workers.

The ILO Workplace Fatality database shows that in 2003 Canada had the fifth highest incidence of workplace fatalities out of 29 OECD countries. Only Korea, Mexico, Portugal, and Turkey had higher workplace fatality rates.

A full copy of "Five Deaths a Day: Workplace Fatalities in Canada, 1993-2005" can be obtained from the Centre for the Study of Living Standards website at www.csls.ca.

Canadian Standards Association (CSA) revised Electrician's Self Assessment Tool (ESAT)

Canadian Standards Association (CSA) has a revised Electrician's Self Assessment Tool (ESAT) and they have provided the following description of ESAT, including the updates. We have received favourable comments about how ESAT has helped many electricians prepare for the Certificate of Qualification exam.

ESAT Tool: Based on the 2006 Canadian Electrical Code - Part 1

There's never been an easier way to help you get through the pressure and prepare for the final **Certificate of Qualification** exam. Get ahead of the game and get started now!

You get an interactive CD-ROM with **more than 1,100 sample questions** covering each block, task and sub-task in the HRSDC Occupational Analysis for Construction Electricians.

All questions come complete with:

- A wrong answer report, showing you the right solution, highlighting any relevant code requirement and giving you directions to other learning resources to help you get it right the next time.
- A 3-hour timer, for when you want to practice a 'reality' test against the clock to see how you're doing.
- A report summary, giving you feedback on your test

and your percentage of correct answers.

And there's no limit to how many times CSA's 'Electrician's Self-Assessment Tool' can be used as you will get a **different set of questions each time you access the tool**. It can be used as often as needed, until you know for sure you can ace the Certificate of Qualification exam!

Differences between ESAT 2004 and ESAT 2007

1. The 2004 version of ESAT was based on the 1994 National Occupational Analysis for the Construction Electrician Trade, while the 2007 version is based on the **current 2003 version** of the National Occupational Analysis for Construction Electricians.
2. Questions and answers in the 2007 edition have been improved for clarity.
3. An **optional voice-over feature** has been added to reinforce an understanding of each question.
4. We have increased the number of questions and added questions for the areas not covered in the previous edition. The length of the test has been reduced to 100 questions to match the length of the new Inter-provincial (Red Seal) exam.
5. The sections in which the questions have been placed have been changed to reflect the sections in the 2003 Occupational Analysis.

CSA is developing a study guide, which should be available in the summer of 2007, to further help in explaining the theory, application, etc. covered in the questions.

2007 Harley Davidson Tickets!

The Canadian Officers and 1st District Representatives have organized a "Harley Davidson Ticket Draw" to assist with the Canadian Hospitality at the 2011 International Convention in Vancouver, BC.

There will be only 1,000 tickets sold at \$100.00 each with the value of the early bird prizes being increased dramatically.

- The first "Early Bird" draw will be held on **May 24th, 2007** at the 19th Annual IBEW/MS Golf Tournament with the prize being a 2007 Dyna "Super Glide" FXD;
- a second "Early Bird" draw will be held on **July 4th, 2007** at the 1st District Office for a 2007 "Heritage Softail Classic" FLSTC; and
- the final "Grand Prize" draw will be held on **August 29th, 2007** at the All Canada Progress Meeting in Victoria, BC for a 2007 "Road King Classic" FLHRC.

All Early Bird prize winning tickets will go back in the draw and remain eligible for subsequent prizes and the grand prize. **That's right, for \$100.00 you could win all three Harleys!**

As with last years raffle, tickets are available through your International Representative and can only be purchased by IBEW dues paying members. Be sure to get your ticket(s) early to qualify for all three draws.

Projected Meeting Dates 2007

1/11 - 12/07	IBEW/NECA Employee Benefits Conference Phoenix, Arizona
2/19 - 20/07	Western Winter School Victoria, BC
3/5 - 6/07	Eastern Winter School Montreal, QC
3/22 - 24/07	IBEW Construction Conference Washington, DC
4/29 - 5/02/07	BCTD Legislative Conference Ottawa, ON
4/30 - 5/02/07	Railroad Conference Miami, FL
5/7 - 11/07	Broadcasting, Manufacturing & Telecom. Conference Wyndham Miami Beach Miami Beach, FL
5/24/07	IBEW M.S. Charity Golf Tournament
6/11 - 15/07	Utility Conference Buena Vista Palace Orlando, FL
8/24 - 25/07	Membership Development Conference Victoria, BC
8/27 - 30/07	All Canada Progress Meeting Victoria, BC
10/15-17/07	Membership Development Conference Hyatt Regency Hotel Atlanta, Georgia
11/26 -30/07	IBEW Nuclear Conference Bally's Las Vegas, Nevada