



2019 Forest Industry Bargaining

USW LOCAL 1-1937 UPDATE

2019 BARGAINING UPDATE #32 – November 18, 2019

Coast Bargaining Committee - News Release

WFP DELAYS MEDIATION

WASTES TIME WITH VERY POOR OFFER THAT WAS ALREADY REJECTED

After recommencing mediation on November 12th, 16th and 17th, WFP decided it would not respond to the Union's last offer at midday yesterday (Sunday, November 17th).

It is unfortunate, but not surprising that WFP walked away from the bargaining table again. In today's letter, they have attempted to undermine our members' solidarity, rather than negotiate in good faith in mediation, in order to reach an agreement.

The result is that more time has now been wasted in game playing, rather than getting on with the serious issue of collective bargaining.

USW Local 1-1937 has now held a conference call with all of its elected Chairpersons, Officers and Staff to review WFP's mediation delaying action. After discussing all of the details of mediation, as well as WFP's weak proposal, including all of the USW Memberships proposals that the WFP proposal refuses to mention or address; **The Unions leadership group comprised of WFP and Contractor Chairpersons has passed a unanimous motion directing the Bargaining Committee to reject WFP's proposal in its entirety. The leadership group further stated that WFP should stop its delaying tactics and get back to the mediation table.**

The proposal made today by WFP is a desperate attempt and has failed to undermine the solidarity of members. Our members remain united in our effort to reach a fair agreement for the Coastal Forest Industry. For WFP's information, this does not mean copying what the separate and fundamentally different Interior Forest Industry has negotiated. It means reaching an agreement that puts the safety, security and well being of Coastal Forest workers where it needs to be.

WFP's proposal today is a bare-bones proposal that does not address numerous member proposals including:

- Appropriate wages (USW's last proposal - 4 years at 3%, 3%, 2.5% and 2.5%)
- Appropriate H&W Benefits and Shift Differential and First Aid premium increases
- Addressing fatigue-inducing, unsafe, family wrecking Alternate Shifts
- Addressing WFP's abusive Drug & Alcohol Policy designed to terminate and discriminate against workers (rather than help them with possible addiction issues)
- Introducing a boot allowance
- Allowing for severance pay for members working for contractors, in a permanent partial closure.

2019 BARGAINING UPDATE #32 – November 18, 2019 *(continued)*

The WFP proposal also eliminates 17 other tentative agreements the parties have reached in the mediation process, essentially wiping out much of the work already completed. These tentative agreements provide for improvements including but not limited to:

- Union security language improvements
- Health and Safety language improvements
- Apprentice selection improvements
- 6 Arbitrator and Umpire appointments to speed up arbitrations
- Member support during drug and alcohol investigations and testing
- Assurance that our EFAP providers will continue for the term of the next agreement

This letter by Don Demens today falsely claims that their proposal removes any item that could be viewed as concessionary. **This is false.** Their proposal still has over 40 separate concessions as it cancels practices across many operations, most of which would be significant losses to the membership in those operations.

This letter by Don Demens also falsely claims that their LTD proposal will allow for LTD to be extended past age 60. **This is false.** Nowhere in the proposal is a statement of this assurance. The Union has a proposal to extend LTD coverage past age 60 for members, but WFP has refused to accept it.

Demens also makes a misleading statement that the Union's wages are nearly 40% higher than any established industry agreements. Our last proposal was 11% over 4 years, which is only 3% higher than the 8% over 4 years WFP has proposed.

WFP's proposal completely ignores all of our membership's proposals and key issues which we have been fighting for; Therefore their proposal today is rejected by the USW Local 1-1937 Bargaining Committee.

Our bargaining committee urges WFP negotiators to get back to the bargaining table and move forward with the mediation process. We did see some progress in the last three mediation meetings and that is the only place an agreement will be reached.

The USW Bargaining Committee remains available every day to continue mediation. We urge WFP's bargaining committee to contact the Mediators to schedule more dates. We are available starting tomorrow.



Brian Butler – President, USW Local 1-1937

Phone: (250)746-6131 Fax: 250-746-1012

USW Local 1-1937 Offices: Duncan, Port Alberni, Courtenay, Port McNeill, and Burnaby

Website: www.usw1-1937.ca

|

Facebook: [usw1-1937](https://www.facebook.com/usw1-1937)

BB/jm
usw1-1937