

Members,

This week, Unifor has submitted a common employer application for Expertech technicians and clerical workers to the Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB), claiming that Bell Canada is the real employer and not Expertech. Consequently, these members ought to be covered by the Bell craft and clerical agreements.

When Expertech was first created, Unifor members had exclusive rights to all of the work from Bell Canada. Over the years, the business model changed when SNC Lavalin became part owner of Expertech, which also gave us access to other contracts not related exclusively to Bell.

Since Bell Canada has once again become the sole owner of the company, we have seen a steady decrease in volumes of work being allocated by Bell. In fact, they have absolute control on who they contract out to, and we've seen many other contractors in both provinces have access to that work, which has resulted in member displacements, lay offs and a reduction in our membership.

Our experience in the most recent round of clerical bargaining has made it clear that Expertech is not the decision maker. Every step of the way Bell made every decision. It is obvious to the union that Bell Canada is in fact running the show at Expertech. Your local union leadership is unanimous in this belief; we can no longer sit back and let this go unchallenged.

But what does this actually mean for members?

First, in our view, bargaining for the clerical unit should be put on hold until we have a ruling from the CIRB. For technicians, we are of the view that there is no need to begin bargaining until the board has determined exactly who the employer is. We assert that we should be at the table with Bell, not Expertech.

We bargain with the employer that has the authority to make business decisions, and in our view, Bell is that decision maker.

The current collective agreement will remain in force throughout this process. And the company will manage the business as usual.

This may be a lengthy process, but it is vital to build our power and strength as a union. Your union leadership needs your patience and support. **Unifor is challenging Bell as we have never before and that will intensify as we fight for good Telco jobs across the country.**

Our Bellrealtalk.ca campaign has recently been launched and this is just another part of that discussion. We will no longer let Bell get away with things they have in the past. It's time to Talk about Bell for a change and this is a large part of that discussion.

We thank you for your solidarity and support.

In solidarity,

Chris MacDonald

Assistant to the National President

John Caluori

Assistant to the Quebec Director

CM:JC:lmc/cope-343