



VIA EMAIL

October 26, 2020

The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos
President of the Treasury Board
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Dear Minister,

I am reaching out to you to provide you with information related to an equitable retirement regime for members of the FB bargaining unit (Canada Border Services Agency employees). As you may know, PSAC has been advocating for such an equitable retirement regime for FB members for many years. We are seeking an arrangement for these members that is consistent with other law enforcement officers in the federal public service, including RCMP members and Correctional Officers.

Employees in the FB bargaining unit carry out a vast range of duties associated with the enforcement of the law, including collaboration with other law enforcement, intelligence and security agencies in joint operations. Despite the ongoing pandemic, these members continue to proudly work and deliver on behalf of Canadians.

Border Services Officers (BSOs) represent most of the workers in the bargaining unit. These employees work at airports, land border and marine ports of entry, and at Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) postal operations.

BSOs have the power to seize and arrest and are required to undergo regular Control and Defence Tactics (CDT) training as a condition of employment. Since 2006, BSOs working in land border and marine environments are equipped with firearms. This arming initiative has also come to include Inland Enforcement Officers, Intelligence Officers and Investigators, all three groups also being required to undergo regular CDT training.

The nature of the work performed by members of the bargaining unit, and the fitness standards that are required for employees to perform their duties, are entirely consistent with what is found with other law enforcement agencies, be they federal such as the RCMP and Corrections, or in other jurisdictions such as the Ontario Provincial Police and the Sureté du Québec. It is because of the work and the fitness standards associated with the work that these other law enforcement agencies have adopted early retirement regimes. Simply put, it is increasingly difficult for officers as they advance in age to meet

the standards required. Employers are required under Human Rights Legislation to accommodate up until undue hardship. Early retirement regimes alleviate this burden on employers and staff. The same is true in the case of CBSA.

Given the nature of the work performed by employees in the FB bargaining unit and the crucial importance of that work in terms of ensuring the safety and security of Canadians, it is in the interest of both the federal government and the broader Canadian public that employees in this occupational group have access to an early retirement regime to avoid risks to public health and safety.

It is only fair that workers in the FB bargaining unit are afforded benefits that are comparable to that of other law enforcement officers. Other federal public service workers facing similar workplace demands, such as Correctional Officers, already have this type of retirement regime.

As such we have been advocating for CBSA members to be able to access retirement without penalty 5 years earlier than existing Group 1 members of the Public Service Pension Plan, consistent with operational service provisions for employees of Correctional Services Canada.

In order to achieve equitable retirement for FB members specifically, changes are required to the *Public Service Superannuation Act* and its regulations.

FB members have been advocating for an equitable retirement regime for many years. The issue is before a sub-committee of the Public Service Pension Advisory Committee. We are urging you to support the work of PSPAC and to support legislative changes to allow for CBSA employees to access the same early retirement provisions that are available to many law enforcement officers across the country.

Further, we would welcome the chance to meet with you via videoconference to discuss this important matter at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Chris Aylward
National President

c.c. Jean-Pierre Fortin, National President, CIU
Liam McCarthy, A/Director, NPB
David-Alexandre Leblanc, A/Coordinator, Negotiations Section
James Infantino, Pension and Disability Insurance Officer
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