

ST.LUCIA CIVIL SERVICE ASSOCIATION

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
6th April, 2011

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

A. INTRODUCTION

- Report covers the period 10th February to 1st April;
- Signals the end of the first quarter of the planned period;
- The quarter was somewhat eventful in terms of kick starting activities on the Housing Cooperative and the transfer of the Group Health Insurance Plan;
- The second quarter may prove to be more eventful with the start of Government Negotiations, May Day, Observance of the Diamond Jubilee and other planned events;
- The implications of these events call persons at all levels to play their part;
- The eyes of members, staff and the world are on the NEC.

B. INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

1. Collective Agreements

- (a) Attempts being made for the signing of the Collective Agreement with RSL;
- (b) Negotiations with LUCELEC has started, and thus far it is progressing smoothly; negotiations were also started with CBN Inc., Credit Union;
- (c) A tussle developed with Bel Jou Hotel regarding the proposal and the process of negotiations; the posture of the Management is to sideline the Union at the

workplace: Meetings were on the proposal were held and negotiations in the sense did not take place; Since the posture of Management is to de-unionize the bargaining unit, the matter was referred to the Labour Commissioner; a meeting with the Management of Bel Jou was planned for April 4.

(d) GOSL: Shortly after the directive of the General Council was sent, the Cabinet Secretary responded on behalf of the Prime Minister, indicating that the Ministry of the Public Service was requested to arrange to begin the negotiations.

- A letter was directed to Ministry of the Public Service requesting a date by which to begin.
- Shortly after, correspondence announcing the GNT and Cabinet Committee which is responsible for the negotiations, was received.
- Subsequently, a letter was received announcing April 26 as the date for the introductory meeting.

(e) WASCO

- Attempts to get a date for negotiating with WASCO have not borne fruit;
- WASCO's latest letter on the matter made a date more remote by having indicated that a financing proposal was being prepared for discussion with Cabinet;
- The matter was discussed at a meeting with shop stewards;
- It was agreed to hold a general meeting jointly with the NWU for members of both unions;
- The NWU has not responded to CSA's invitation for a joint meeting;
- We may have to hold our own meeting with our members.

(f) Proposals were prepared and submitted to: -

- ✓ St.Lucia Fish Marketing Corporation
- ✓ St.Lucia Social Development Fund
- ✓ St.Lucia Tourist Board

The Computer Centre has posed some difficulty to start negotiations; the matter was referred to the Labour Commissioner, Sports St.Lucia Inc.

2. GRIEVANCES

Grievances were being pursued for members in various branches, on a diverse of matters.

- ❖ Bordelaise Correctional Facilities – honorarium
- ❖ Computer Centre Limited – Health and Safety Concerns
- ❖ Advance Building Maintenance Service – delays in submitting members dues to the CSA
- ❖ SLASPA – anomalies in salary structure
- ❖ SALCC – time-off for farm employees, on pay day
- ❖ Ministry of Home Affairs – Health and Safety hazards in the workplace
- ❖ CCC – Uniforms for employees; pay rate to be made commensurate with transfer
- ❖ Economic Affairs Division – Health and Safety concerns
- ❖ CBN St.Lucia Inc. – issuance of uniforms, unsanitary conditions

3. REPRESENTATION

(a) Consultation on HR Legal framework: Two (2) meetings were attended with consultants; the thrust is to prepare rules and procedures for the Public Service Commission; part of which is to devolve some of PSC's authority to Permanent Secretary's and Heads of Departments; the legislature instruments once implemented will bear serious implications for Public Officers and for the operations of the Union in the Public Service.

(b) Joint Management (Registrar) CSA meeting with employees of the High Court Registry; Civil Status, etc.

(c) Monthly meeting with LUCELEC

(d) Regular Meetings

(i) Ministry of the Public Service (29th March)

- Status reports on the host of matters which were being pursued; many were satisfactorily resolved; there have been delays on many others, especially those where placement have to identified for members seeking transfers and promotions.
- “Non-established staff” and the NWU;
- After over one (1) year the CSA received a response from the Ministry of the Public Service on a request for clarification on

which group of workers was referred to as “non-established staff”;

- This was as a result to having recognized NWU as the bargaining agent for “non-established staff” in the 2007/2010 Collective Agreement, where it did not exist in previous Collective Agreements;
- From a legal opinion, Ministry of the Public Service did not respond to CSA’s request on clarification of the term; instead they admitted that Government cannot give recognition on its own, there is a process to be followed.
- It is important that CSA get clarification about the term, we have written to the Ministry of the Public Service a second time to get clarification before deciding on our options.

(ii) Quarterly Meeting: Victoria Hospital

- The first quarterly meeting with Victoria Hospital was held (February 25). Issues discussed: -
 - Refrigeration in passage way
 - Telephone line in Micro-lab department
 - Foul stench
 - Water seepage

(iii) Monthly meeting: Ministry of Justice (28th February)

(iv) Ministry of Agriculture (15th March)

C. BENEFITS

1. SAGICOR

- The Group Medical Plan was finally transferred;
- First payment of premiums for January was made;
- Another payment is expected to be made this week
- CSA received the following from SAGICOR: -
 - Contract
 - Administrator’s Manual
 - Life certificates
 - Members ID cards (medical)
 - Employee handbooks
 - Members have started receiving their claims

2. CLICO

(a) Members have started receiving outstanding claims which was due after closure of the policy.

(b) Investment with CLICO International Life

- Attended meeting with Registrar
- Registrar did not tell us anything new;
- Except that CLICO International Life was going to be put under judicial management;
- Because of the process involved, money owed to CSA will take a long time to be paid;
- And that only a % of every dollar will be paid;

(c) Broker

- o As advised by the NEC meeting, the information was submitted to the Caribbean Law Offices.
- o We have not received feedback.

(d) Attempts were made to include the following business places in the Discount Scheme: -

- Healing Waters Pharmacy Inc.
- LNS Shoe Store

D. TRAINING

1. A Women's Symposium was successful, held in observance of International Women's Day and the 100th Anniversary – 40 women participated in the discussion on Women's Health.
2. The Young Workers Committee is organizing a Symposium, on April 20. The intended theme is Youth and Financial Management.

E. ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

(a) The first General Council for the planned period was held on 2nd March. Sixty-eight (68) members attended. The output from discussions: -

- ❖ Government given the end of March for a date by which to begin and complete the negotiations.
- ❖ Need for a proposal to review the mileage allowance. At appropriate time, convene a meeting of traveling officers.

- ❖ Ministry of Agriculture, etc. to address mosquito problems at Engineering Division.

(b) Branch meetings were held: -

- ❖ Credit Union (21st February)
- ❖ Ministry of Home Affairs (2nd March)

(c) A small cross-section of shop stewards was identified to closely review the revised Draft Constitution. The meeting is scheduled for 20th April.

(d) Started the distribution of the questionnaire on Housing Needs. Completed forms are already being received. Experiencing some delay in finalizing the identification of land so as to approach Government.

(e) Staff

- (i) We have put an end to overtime work for security officers. There is a problem of swipes for the front door – not all staff members have swipes.
- (ii) We have communicated to NWU on the 3.5% increase for staff. Have received no response.
- (iii) Started rolling off preparations for May Day and 60th Anniversary. The month of May will be an important one for CSA. NEC members, Secretariat staff, the Committee, need to come on Board. Propose a special meeting for all these parties as early as next week, on going forward.