

The CUPE National Health and Safety Committee Meeting was held in Montreal on March 29, 31 and April 1, 2010, with approximately 15 members in attendance.

The meeting started on March 29th with the reading of the Equality Statement by Co-chair Delores Douglas. This was followed by a welcome and introductions.

The first afternoon consisted of general items such as approval of agenda, approval of minutes, administrative matters, reviewing the Committee Terms of Reference, and preparing for the all-committees meeting the following day.

The meeting on March 31st started with a discussion on April 28th Day of Mourning 2010. Committee members talked about what was done and/or being planned in their area/ province on that day. The Day of Mourning was founded based on a resolution written by CUPE's National Health and Safety Committee. The Canadian Labour Congress and affiliated unions across Canada quickly adopted the day and it has now been adopted in other countries.

Discussion was held on working with other committees. The Committee has met with several of the national committees and feels it is a good opportunity to meet and work with others; unfortunately, the drawback is the difficulty to co-ordinate schedules.

The afternoon's session started with members of the Persons with Disabilities Working Group in attendance. It was a very informative session and gave much insight into things that many of us take for granted. The Committee gave its support to the group and will work to ensure that health and safety issues for persons with disabilities get addressed.

Training was discussed. National staff is working on a three-hour course based on the Year of the Steward (Health & Safety 101). The 30-hour Health and Safety course is being modified, and it is hoped that the revised course will be offered the end of May in Saskatchewan. Concern was expressed about online training for health and safety topics eg WHMIS in that a hands-on approach is more effective. The Committee agreed that it would not plan a National Health and Safety Conference for this year but would look at 2012 since 2011 is the National Convention.

The last morning was spent discussing the resolutions that will be addressed by the National Executive Board and hopefully forwarded to the membership for adoption at the National Convention in 2011.

It was a very busy and productive few days, and I look forward to working with the National Committee. If anyone is interested in serving on the provincial Occupational Health & Safety Committee, please contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Pryor, Member
National Health and Safety Committee