



SCRC'S NEWSLETTER

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NO LAYOFFS ON THE HORIZON

The minds of Radio-Canada management aren't thinking about cuts or layoffs; the priority is to make sure they have enough staff to keep the ship afloat, according to Marco Dubé, VP People and Culture. Radio-Canada hopes to maintain diversified programming, including variety and general television, the main source of revenue. For the moment, no one is looking at the expenditure column, we are told. These comments were made during a weekly meeting between senior management and the various unions. We will talk again in early April.

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Covid-19 : the point we have reached

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The coronavirus storm has been raging for just over two weeks. From the start, the union multiplied the interventions. It continues to hammer home to the employer that health comes before programming objectives and operational needs. Yes, you have to stay on the air; in a crisis, Radio-Canada is a beacon. But we can do it and respect the health of its employees. It is a question of choice and organization of work.

True, day by day, security measures are improving. Telework is now the rule. Those who still have to work in Radio-Canada facilities do so in conditions that put their health at risk less and less.

But when we are asked for flexibility, managers seem to be stuck in a sometimes rather rigid decision-making process. It's still long, too long. Although it should be noted, some managers listened to their employees and sometimes acted faster.

We also reminded the employer that if the premises are cleaned by a subcontractor, the equipment is cleaned by the employees who use it. Cleaning a transmission truck at the beginning of the shift is essential. And yes, that means that its operator will arrive later on the scene of his first assignment.

We have weekly meetings with Marco Dubé, VP People and Culture and responsible for Labor Relations, and with the other unions. We have agreed that we have the right to disagree, but with the obligation to maintain dialogue between us. These meetings are an initiative of the SCRC, to which the employer responded favorably and quickly.

In the meantime, the union office on rue Papineau is closed at least until April 13. All staff are working from home, and calls and emails are received and processed.

ACCOMMODATE YOUNG FAMILIES

There are still too many employees forced to use their leave bank to care for their children at home. We again asked for accommodation for parents of young children who cannot benefit from teleworking measures. Managers have invited them to draw on their vacation banks, a response that shows a deep lack of empathy. During our weekly conference call, the employer acknowledged that requests came from across the board. It is unacceptable that employees find themselves without leave, or worse, with a break in service or unemployed because they are unable to babysit. Supervisors should take this into account. In addition, the FNC and the CSN are pressuring Quebec so that parents of young children who work in the media can have access to emergency childcare services.

IN ACADIA: THE SCRC CALLS FOR AN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

In Moncton, the SCRC intervened to pressure for a local Occupational Health and Safety Committee meeting. The managers had canceled the originally meeting scheduled for Friday, March 20, because of the difficulties caused by the coronavirus. The union argued that it was even more urgent to bring the representatives together by videoconference, precisely because of the pandemic. In the end, the meeting took place and representatives of the various unions were able to speak on Radio-Canada's adaptation to the crisis. The employer then explained that the managers are supposed to communicate directly with its employees. The next committee meeting has been set for April 14. Subsequently, the SCRC made other interventions to have Radio-Canada check the morale of the employees, most of whom are on the job. And managers have actually started to do a virtual tour of the members.

VACATION, TEMPORARY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Unless you've been hiding under a stone, you will have noticed that containment measures make life a little more complex to plan, and even more complicated when planning your next vacation. The collective agreement provides that permanent employees must submit the desired vacation dates by March 31. The crown corporation admits that the staff responsible for scheduling work is currently overworked and that it would be almost impossible to comply with clause 51.8 which provides for the posting of permanent vacation schedules by April 30. Consequently, the employer admits that it will also be difficult to comply with the articles of chapter 47 on the creation of blocks of working hours for the period from June 15 to September 30. The SCRC is currently in talks to allow more flexible application of these sections - while maintaining their essence. There will be something new on this subject shortly.

Workload and Work Environment Committee: finally, a first meeting!

The Workload and Work Environment Committee (WWEC), originating from Article 69 of the collective agreement, met for the first time. Radio-Canada has been open to dealing with the many issues that the SCRC has submitted, particularly on the issue of overworking. The delegates from 20 of the 29 localities in Quebec and New Brunswick reported problems to us on this subject. Given the gravity of the situation, a meeting is scheduled for next week. A first emergency list will be drawn up in order to tackle the most pressing problems. Delegates will therefore be contacted in the coming days to help us establish a priority list.

Three cases of COVID 19 in Montreal

Radio-Canada informed members of two positive cases of COVID-19 in Montreal, one in the CDI, another one in radio and someone from a communication and marketing team. Management sought to be reassuring, in particular by doing a question and answer session with specialist Caroline Quach-Thanh, pediatrician, microbiologist-infectiologist and epidemiologist. The SCRC deplors the fact that some of its members have learned from a competitive network that a case of COVID-19 had been confirmed at Radio-Canada Montreal before the union was even notified and any communication was sent to employees. Note, however, that the last reported cases were communicated quickly to all employees. In today's environment, the transparency and quality of the information transmitted by Radio-Canada is essential to avoid people worrying unnecessarily. In addition, the SCRC was in contact with one of the infected persons, who is doing well. There is some information suggesting that Radio-Canada should perhaps have paid more attention to the state of her health.