

STTRC'S NEWSLETTER

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On the lookout for good faith

Good faith with Radio-Canada cannot be presumed, it must be verified. And two examples show us that they sure don't get a passing grade.

1. Disappearance of temporary assignment bonuses (25.2)

On the pretext of the implementation of a new assignment management software (ScheduAll), the information department in Montreal no longer pays bonuses for temporary assignments of less than four weeks (TUG). The employer claims that we are replacing a person, not a function. Now come on! Article 25.2 says: "Employees who are assigned temporarily to perform the main functions of a better paid classification than their permanent position for over two (2) consecutive hours shall receive, in addition to their regular pay, a set amount..." Can it be any clearer than that? For the moment, it is mainly journalists who are affected, but as in any good pandemic, the evil will quickly spread to all functions. And we understand that on April 1, temporary upgrades of more than four weeks will also be on the radar. Which brilliant manager had this clever idea ??? And even better, during the renewal year of the collective agreement. Genius ...

2. Contributors excluded from the union

Some managers have decided to exclude dozens of employees from the union who have nevertheless always been members in the past. These are journalists or specialists who regularly appear on our airwaves as commentators or columnists. They have the status of contractual workers and are covered by article 48 of the agreement. Who in management decided to exclude them and why? Mystery. Even stranger, the same employee will pay union dues on a contract related to his participation in a program of the Quebec station, but not in Montreal. For the union, it is not a question of money, but of respect for the accreditation certificate, the key word here being RESPECT.

RADIO-CANADA HAS GIVEN UP ON RCI

Senior management at Radio-Canada now admits that it has gradually dropped RCI when it has made substantial financial and technical efforts to develop the digital platforms of the French and English networks. While rcinet.ca (quite an address!) struggled with meager human resources in an increasingly obsolete technological environment, the machine was in full swing to increase digital circulation on radio-canada.ca and cbc.ca. As a result, rcinet.ca looks like a ghost town in the face of what could be described as Radio-Canada's two digital metropolises. And instead of giving it a second wind, management decided to make it a marginal medium for members of a few Canadian cultural communities. How can three journalists working in Punjabi and Tagalog from Toronto compete with existing media? Ditto for the five brave souls who will remain stationed in Montreal. Only the name of Radio Canada International will remain, and for how long?

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TANDEM, OUTCRY DRIVES CUSTOMERS AWAY

The opposition from coast to coast of several hundred Radio-Canada employees to the launch of Tandem, a Radio-Canada commercial initiative, has scared customers away, few interested in being associated with a controversial product. If the company maintains Tandem, it has already made changes to avoid any possible misunderstanding between Tandem's advertising content and the rest of the production (information) that Radio-Canada puts online on its platforms. During a series of meetings with employees, the vice-president of the French network, Michel Bissonnette, explained that he still believes in the potential of Tandem but added that Radio-Canada is ready to impose greater constraints than do the competing media to guarantee the clear line between advertising and information. The addition of a more visible banner where we should find the term "contenu publicitaire" (advertising content) and a distinct typography should minimize the risk of confusion, he believes. A good start, but there is still work to be done. If there are no more Tandem podcasts, the brand is still present on Twitter, among other places, with the Radio-Canada logo. The outcry of colleagues and the dialogue that followed were promising, and this is good news.

\$ 40 MILLION THAT SIMPLY DISAPPEARED

Where has our \$ 40 million gone? This is the total of 0.1% deductions from our salary increases between 2009 and 2019 that were used to build up a contingency fund in the event of an explosion in drug prices. Price explosion there has not been. The result: a prize pool of \$ 40 million. Radio-Canada has refused since last June to present us with a financial statement of this fund in which it has not contributed a single penny. What is Radio-Canada doing with this money? The unions are kept in the dark. We will have to take legal action (\$\$\$) to find out where our money is. Contempt must end.

I HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT MY RIGHTS AT WORK. WHAT TO DO?

The first thing to do is to try to find the answer in the collective agreement, which you will find under the "Convention 2018" tab of the [union website](#). You can also talk to your delegate. The list of delegates by section can be found [here](#). Don't know which section you belong to? Send your question to scrc@scrc.qc.ca. If there is no delegate in your section, you can send your question (giving as much detail as possible) to scrc@scrc.qc.ca or call 514-842-4010 and your message will be directed to the right person. Write directly to the president or to a member of the union office? This is not necessarily a good idea. The members of the office are not released full time and their release days are often occupied with various tasks. Unfortunately, your message may get lost. Talk about it on Facebook? Not ideal either, because there is no specific recipient and some messages may go unnoticed in discussion threads.

Some people recently told us that they appealed to the union without receiving a response. We are sorry and are reviewing our procedures to ensure that this does not happen again.

What does the collective agreement say?

How many sick days am I entitled to?

In the event of illness, it is possible to be absent for three consecutive days without having to provide a doctor's note, but it is necessary to notify your manager or a designated person. As of the fourth day, you must have the doctor fill out the form entitled Medical Absence Report, available on the iO website.

Regarding medical appointments, you are asked to schedule them outside of working hours or in such a way as to minimize work disruption. The manager may, at his discretion, authorize time off with pay for a medical or dental appointment.

If you are eligible for benefits and are ill, you have access to Short Term Disability (STD) benefits. The number of service days is set at 85 and these days are paid at 100% or 66 2/3 of your salary, depending on the length of your continuous service. Details can be found in article 57.8 of the collective agreement.

In the case of term employees who receive social benefits, the value of the benefits paid in STD is calculated based on the average of the days worked during the last year preceding the disability and the salary earned upon departure on disability.

At the end of the STD leave, you may receive Long Term Disability (LTD) benefits provided you meet the eligibility criteria of the insurance policy. These benefits, worth 60% of base salary, are paid to you until you recover or retire.

In the case of term employees, the calculation of the salary for the purposes of benefits to be paid in LTD is based on the average salary paid to term employees and not the salary actually earned by an employee, all in accordance with the provisions of the insurance contract.

The terms of sick leave are detailed in article 57 of the collective agreement.