



# Federal Government Dockyard Trades & Labour Council (West)



# BULLETIN

June 10, 2020

## To All Members

It seems like it was only yesterday that the workplaces were reduced to minimum manning due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the world was in a turmoil, yet here we are now in June and our workplaces are beginning to slowly return to business although in a much-reduced manning capacity. We can be sure that this return to the workplaces for our members is only occurring because of the vigilance and determination of Vancouver Islanders to listen to the medical professionals and to diligently follow their guidance. Well Done!

We now see the FMF Cape Breton moving into a new work posture, with the workforce being split into two teams working on alternating weeks to give sufficient space in the workshops and on the vessels for physical distancing. The facility has been set up to allow for one-way lanes and distancing between benches and machinery, supplies of masks and sanitizers, signage etc. This new way of working will not be without its growing pains, and all members should report any errors they see or suggest a better, safer way to do our business.

We must give full credit to the FMF CB Commanding Officer Capt. (N) Martin Drews and his senior management team for the manner in which they adjusted to this pandemic, and how they have consulted, collaborated, and communicated with all of the Labour organizations representing the workforce in the Fleet Maintenance Facility. It has been an example of how the Union/Management relationship can and should work. I have stated this very proudly to the head of the RCN Vice-Admiral Art McDonald; the Deputy Minister of National Defence Jody Thomas, and to many others over the past weeks.

We also need to acknowledge the tremendous work that has been performed by our members who have been preparing for the return of the workforce. For many weeks now a team of volunteers from a cross section of the entire FMF Cape Breton has been producing the large quantities of masks required for our workforce in Production as well as for all other areas of the FMF. Many folks are involved in this, doing everything from delivering materials to residences, cutting materials required, and sewing the final product. After the masks are produced, our members in GM7

have been assembling individual mask and sanitizer kits for each employee, as well as producing kits for the workforce to take to the ships/ submarines with them. Great work all, this has been a tremendous effort from you all. On behalf of our entire membership thank you for your efforts!!!

Throughout this crisis, the National Bargaining Agents for the federal public service have been in continual contact with the employer Treasury Board of Canada as well as Public Health officials (through daily teleconferences at the beginning, now through twice weekly calls that will continue into the foreseeable future). The Council has also maintained continual contact with all levels of National Defence in Ottawa through telecons and virtual meetings via Zoom and Microsoft Teams. The new reality has taken a great deal to adapt to and now seems like a normal way to do business.

The Council office itself will begin to be manned as required, and in person meetings will be available on a pre- arranged appointment only basis. Telephone and email will continue to be the preferred contact. As you are aware due to the size of our offices it is very difficult to maintain any type of physical distancing, so for any meetings within the office masks/ face coverings will be strictly required.

Brother Jeremy Chow (Local #9, Shipwrights)

On a closing note, we wish to acknowledge the very untimely passing of a long time FMF CB and Local 9 member, Brother Jeremy Chow. After a long battle with cancer, Jeremy passed last week. We have lost a good man who was always there for shop members, FMF members, and above all family. He leaves behind his wife Evelyn, and two daughters, Maile (11) and Jayla (9).

Jeremy started his Dockyard career in Shop 122 as a Shipwright/Joiner apprentice in Nov 2002. As he progressed through his training, he took on the JOSHE safety rep for the Shipwright shop, and was A/ MGT-01 at various times. Jeremy was a regular Local 9 meeting attendee, and could always be counted on to not only raise issues but to also offer solutions or volunteer to find a solution. Jeremy touched so many people within his Local and the greater FMF family that his loss will be deeply felt.

Please take a minute to reflect on Brother Chow, his loss, and his impact on all our lives. He will be sorely missed.

Stay safe, practise good social distancing, and take care of yourselves and your families. I reiterate please bring any issues to us that we can assist with.

In Solidarity,

Des Rogers  
President  
FGDTLC (W)