

## **Changes to MPPAC media and member communications**

Our recent media release about proposed changes to government employees' pay administration has created a great deal of interest in MPPAC. It seems to have stirred a great deal of controversy and some backlash from members as well.

First, know that the message that went out was not directed at members as the primary audience, nor was it meant to create fear, panic or controversy. We responded to news of government plans to cut employee wages. While the story did not identify the RCMP as being one of the affected groups, neither did it distinguish us as being unaffected by this measure.

In the past 24 hours, we have heard from some of you. We want you to know that we understand your comments and your concerns.

One of the comments that came out was that the information was false and misleading.

If indeed it turns out that this proposed cut does not affect RCMP rank-and-file members, then our efforts can perhaps be seen as a zealous righteous indignation. Our intent was to speak up for members in general in a public fashion. This is something that is not normally done, and it is something that should happen frequently. The current SRR model does not permit this nor, as we pointed out, is there a duty to consult as there is no such process in place between members, the Pay Council and the Treasury Board.

Our intent in distributing this document to you was to inform you on a subject that we believe has the potential to affect us all. The CHRO response notes that the proposed pay change does not affect members, yet those of you who followed this story in the media may have already had similar concerns. It was MPPAC communications that prompted the CHRO to weigh in on the issue. The message ended noting that "should there be any further developments on this issue, employees will be advised as early as possible." There is some ambiguity in there that leaves opening for change to the status quo, especially in light of Bill C-42's passage into law yesterday. While there is no defined timeline, civilian members being transferred to the PSE may still be affected. We may not have hit the bullseye, but we will have been on target all the same. Time will tell.

Did we jump the gun? In a sense, yes. We did speculate based on information at hand. However, it was our speculation that forced the SRR to share information that they had last week. Will we apologize for wanting to stick up for members publicly? Never. While not the intended effect, members got a response—two responses, in fact. One that, while not mentioning MPPAC directly, noted that the SRR would "as always...continue to provide members with accurate, fact-based information." Yet, if they had this information prior to yesterday, why was it not shared?

Another concern was that we were attempting to create fear-mongering as a means to drive membership.

Again, RCMP officers were not the intended primary audience of this document. This was sent to MPPAC members as a courtesy, advising you of our position to media if these proposed cuts were to be implemented to the Force. While we saw an increase of traffic to the MPPAC website in the past 24 hours, we have had neither a rush of membership applications nor a flood of requests from members wishing to leave the association. While we did not expect the former, we are also grateful for the latter.

We do not want to create fear and chaos within the organization. That is neither our intent nor our mandate. We seek to obtain what is right and fair for all RCMP officers across Canada: the right to lawful representation of our choice. We seek to empower our brother and sister officers with the rights to collective bargaining, secured benefits, improved health and safety and a fair and impartial grievance system. We have too much to lose by taking an ill-advised approach such as creating animosity between members and divisions. If issues of the past have taught us anything, it is that we must work together and communicate openly and freely if we are to move forward together.

We have heard from you on this issue, directly and indirectly. We got our message out, but the message was also co-opted by those who were forced to speak only after we had spoken. To that end, we propose a couple of new strategies to ensure that we foster dialogue and build cooperation and participation within MPPAC and hopefully build public support for our cause:

1. We will change the process of sharing information with you: this means that we understand that what we say has weight and needs to carry both a professional and relevant tone. We will no longer provide copies of media relations tools to all members. They will be available upon request, however. We do this not to be secretive or to work covertly. We are changing our approach to our messaging to the greater Canadian public—one that seeks to establish trust in the organization and confidence that a unionized RCMP would be better for all.
2. The information we share with you will be for you and directed to you. This is perhaps the most important thing we can all take away from this. We will continue to keep you updated on what is happening within MPPAC and throughout our efforts to gain ground and strengthen the movement. But, rather than provide you with information that can be unfortunately interpreted as crying wolf or declaring that our sky is falling, we will seek to inform you with issues that we ourselves are monitoring. And when we have information that can be shared with you that we know has (and most likely will have) the potential to affect you directly, we will communicate it to you directly. You are our primary concern—and you need to be the audience we respond to directly, in a consistent and timely fashion.

We do not believe we have heard the last of this issue. While it has been "put to bed" for the moment, we will continue to monitor for any new developments. However, as mentioned before, we will not apologize for something that forced management to respond with information that should have been provided to all members in a timely fashion prior to June 19.

Thank you for your continued support of and belief in MPPAC. We welcome your comments and your feedback at all times.

## **LET US BE YOUR ADVOCATE**

MPPAC urges you to consider the RCMP you want to work in and to be active in recruiting anyone interested. Visit our website at [www.mppac.ca](http://www.mppac.ca), become familiar with the issues, and feel free to contact anyone in the executive. We are here to assist you in any way we are able.

MPPAC is fighting for the right to engage in collective bargaining through an independent association. Become a member today and let's put forward a collective voice on work issues that concern us all.

## **The Interim Directors of the National Executive —**

**MPPAC | Mounted Police Professional Association of Canada**  
**ACPMP | Association Canadienne de la Police Montée Professionnelle**

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