

**MEMBER COMMUNICATION 56**  
**July 30th, 2015**



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[national@mppac.ca](mailto:national@mppac.ca)

Dear National Membership

As most of you probably know, members have recently been invited by the Minister of Public Safety to participate in town hall sessions and to complete a survey about the future of labour relations within the RCMP. This has been described as the opportunity for members to have an impact on the development of the new framework for labour relations in the RCMP. MPPAC supports all sincere efforts to engage members in the legislative initiative and encourages all members to use this opportunity to make their views known.

***Members' Role in the Development of a Labour Relations Framework:***

The survey seeks feedback on a number of variables that could affect the way labour relations are carried out within the force. These are important issues, many of which are discussed further below. Unfortunately, the survey does not and cannot provide the full context for decision making. Until we see a proposed legislative regime, it will be difficult to fully assess how some of these variables will impact on our future. For that reason, we are urging members to not only complete the survey stating your support for MPPAC, the only national independent Association, but to attend the town halls and to urge the government to recognize our voices on an ongoing basis, so that we can participate in shaping the legislation into its final form. Although MPPAC itself will be making submissions on a number of these issues, we need all members to speak up and show our employer that we care about these issues.

***Key Variables in the Legislative Framework:***

The survey seeks feedback on a number of issues:

**The Scope of the Association:**

The survey seeks members' views on the best scope of the membership for an association engaged to represent members in labour relations. MPPAC was formed by members who strongly believe that the best association for members of the RCMP is a national association comprised of members from the RCMP. While we share many common interests with other federal public servants and with our fellow police officers, our greatest commonality is with each other. MPPAC believes that by joining together and working together we can best represent our own interests.

**The Bargaining Unit:**

MPPAC is of the view that we are part of a national police force that needs a national association representing a national bargaining unit. The RCMP is a national institution. As members, we joined to become a part of that national institution. As members, we expect to have the same treatment, whether we are in British Columbia or Newfoundland. As members, we need to stand together to fight for our rights and ensure fairness for all members. We think a national bargaining unit is the only way to effectively achieve these goals.

### **Dispute Resolution:**

MPPAC has never sought the right to strike, and we do not seek it now. We are all deeply committed to delivering our policing services professionally and responsibly and do not want to interrupt those services to support our labour relations goals. However, we do need a means to resolve impasses, should they arise and we advocate for the dispute resolution mechanism used by most police forces in Canada – independent binding arbitration. Recourse to binding arbitration will ensure that there is always a fair mechanism available in the event that a negotiated resolution cannot be reached.

### **The Applicable Statute:**

The *Public Service Labour Relations Act* provides the labour relations framework for most members of the federal public service. The survey seeks members' views on whether inclusion within this framework would be preferable to a separate statute created strictly for members of the RCMP. Which framework is best for members will be almost entirely dependent upon what it offers to members, therefore it is difficult to say which approach is best without knowing more. That said, MPPAC favours a separate statute for members of the RCMP, applicable to labour relations in the RCMP. A separate statutory vehicle would provide the greatest ability to focus specifically on the needs and interests of members and balance the requirements of the force. We believe this approach would also provide a greater ability for members to influence those factors affecting their working lives and conditions on an ongoing basis.

### **Key Labour Relations Issues:**

The survey identifies a number of labour relations issues and asks for member feedback to identify priorities. This exercise limits members to only two key issues, which are not a complete reflection of our actual interests. Therefore, we urge members to use the opportunity to provide unstructured feedback at question 14 of the survey to identify further priorities. This is your opportunity to let the government know that your issues of concern extend to the entire list of issues identified, and that you are looking for a robust regime that will allow your association to speak to your interests in all of those areas. MPPAC recognizes that all issues identified are matters of concern for the membership and the relative priorities may change over time. We intend to fight for members interests on all of these issues.

### **Think about it:**

MPPAC has provided our views on certain issues above, but we urge you to think these matters through, discuss them with your colleagues and develop and voice your own opinions to enhance ours. Share your views with MPPAC and help shape our feedback to the government - MPPAC is your association!

### **Where We Go From Here:**

Many of our members have expressed concern that the survey is not an adequate tool to capture the issues that need to be discussed and that members need to be actively engaged on the inside of the drafting process. MPPAC agrees. We have made repeated efforts to participate with the government in this process, without success. In our view, a genuinely respectful response to the Supreme Court Decision would have been to recognize MPPAC as a representative of members, and allow MPPAC a role in this process on their behalf. Given the government's stance, we consider it key for members to remain vigilant and vocal about their needs and interests to ensure that resulting legislation is true to the letter and the spirit of the Supreme Court's decision.

We remind members that we have fought long and hard to achieve the recognition of our rights provided by the Supreme Court decision. At any step along the way the government could have consulted with the members, asked members what they wanted, and listened to their responses but they did not do so. Instead they used significant resources and millions of taxpayer dollars seeking to deny our members their constitutional rights via every level of court up to and including the Supreme Court. Even at the Supreme Court, the Attorney Generals in almost every province intervened to stop your constitutional right to collective bargaining and independence. We must stand strong! We must continue this fight! We must continue to work together to advocate for our rights to ensure that we enjoy the full benefits of the court's decision. The survey and the town hall meetings proposed may be the first step towards a new era of labour relations; in which the government must respect all of our constitutional rights and we will be able to build a positive new workplace culture. We are confident in this and we ask members to engage in the process. MPPAC will continue to work to make the most of this process, providing feedback and assistance to you our national membership to shape our future regime, and remain vigilant in the protection of all members' interests.

## **LET US BE YOUR ADVOCATE**

*The Mounted Police Professional Association of Canada (MPPAC) aims to become the independent labour representative for all non-commissioned RCMP members. MPPAC was established in 2010 to fight for the right to engage in collective bargaining through an independent association on behalf of RCMP regular and civilian members across Canada. We strive for excellence in our conduct and obligations. We provide leadership to all of our membership, on justice issues which affect the quality of life of all Canadians. The Association does not seek or support the right to strike. To learn more, visit [www.mppac.ca](http://www.mppac.ca).*

*Become a member today and let's put forward a collective voice on work issues that concern us all. Please forward this message to your RCMP colleagues who are not yet members of MPPAC.*

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

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