

## GOOD NEWS AT THE DOG HANDLER MEETING

On March 15, 2018, the National Vice President, the CSN's Union Advisor and five regional representatives (one per region) met with representatives of the Dog Handler program in Ottawa to discuss the program's exclusive points.

The first half of the day was reserved for discussion among us. Then, we met with the employer and discussed the issues below:

### **A new Advisory Committee set up by CSC and UCCO-SACC-CSN**

Five (5) dog handlers, representing each of the regions, were selected to discuss and be consulted exclusively on the work of the dog handler. We exchanged viewpoints on this new role which is technical consultation. Our first meeting was positive and we discussed the following:

#### **Staffing**

We asked CSC what the staffing objective was for the coming year. Nine CO's will be sent to Rigaud for initial training and 12 places are available for recertification.

#### **New Ford Explorer vehicle**

We invited a representative from CSC Technical Services who explained the process for vehicle purchases and the requested specs. There is a specific list that CSC cannot deviate from, which explains why UCCO-SACC-CSN had requested the Ford Explorer interceptor type, and that we received regular Ford Explorers. The National V-P will make the necessary representations to change the list of authorized vehicles for purchase. This will help with all vehicles purchased by CSC; for example, the Ford Transit escort vehicle.

#### **Work schedules**

Good news! Dog handlers will now be able to benefit from a variable schedule because of the amendment to article 43.01 of the collective agreement. Obviously,

as with each timetable, the usual process for design and acceptance must comply with Appendix K of the collective agreement. The only restriction of the Dog Handler program is that the dog must not work more than 12.75 hours.

### **New pilot project for progressive training - Port-Cartier, Grand Valley, Beaver Creek, Grande Cache, Stony Mountain, William Head**

The pilot project is to bring in dog handlers from remote institutions twice a year so that they can train with their peers. The pilot project will last a year.

#### **Other discussion points**

- **Training kit:** We asked CSC to include training on opioids and fentanyl.
- **Weapons training:** We discussed the issue of weapon certification for handlers at minimum institutions and Women's institutions. The matter will also be discussed at the National Committee of Women's Institutions by the National V-P and the CSN.
- **Kennels:** Dog Handler program representatives want a standard for the whole country.
- **First aid for dogs:** We requested an update that complies with the same standard as humans.
- **Powder on the insertion cage:** We raised our concerns about this problem that has been going on for several years now. CSC asked us to send them examples.
- **Manual:** The new version will be released on April 1, 2018, and will be available on the Y.
- **Budget for dog handlers:** We explained the issue surrounding the budget and the difficulty of using it. CSC will get back to us.