



UNION INFO – Jan. 2014

Detector Dog Handler National Bilat

On November 25, detector dog handler (DDH) Jason Layman and Second National Vice-President Jason met with CSC representatives Mr. Woodward and Ms. Matthews to discuss a number of issues. Here is a summary our conversations.

Dog Kennels – We discussed the prototype for dog kennels to be manufactured by Corcan. We requested the following as modifications:

- Replace wooden floor in outside cage with composite to prevent deterioration from weather, power washing, etc.;
- Extend the outside cage of the kennel by two feet.

The employer agreed with our suggestions and indicated this should not be an issue to rectify. We provided the employer with photos and specs of the kennel from the Prairies. Also depending on where the kennels are manufactured (likely Prairies Region), they invited us to come and look at the final product.

The employer also made it clear that they would have a supply of seven or eight ready to go for the arrival of new DDHs so there will be no delay.

We also discussed concerns around the dog kennel in Westmorland. The employer indicated they would be communicating with the site to include the DDH from Westmorland and our DDH from Dorchester to get this resolved. Once this issue of placement and security is resolved, we could use this as a model for other minimums. We will provide photos of the kennel from Riverbend to finalize a model.

Additional Training (Support) from Rigaud – The employer agreed that instructors from Rigaud would be used to assist dog handlers across the country with additional refresher training and would be made available to all dog handlers. They will submit a budget to EXCOM and indicated that the cost to facilitate this would not be unreasonable.

Vehicle Specs (Inserts) – We explained that there are some issues with the side door, mainly noise and vibration. We suggested a heavier door or fine tuning on the existing one. We also

requested a secured (stainless steel) dog bowl holder be installed as part of the insert kit. The employer did not see this being a problem to correct. The employer suggested that Ace K-9 systems be installed in all the vehicles prior to a dog handler assuming the position at the site. No objections from us on this matter.

List of Reimbursable Dog Items (Budget) – We discussed the control of the budget to start with. We told the employer that once we agreed on a list and a budget as per the new article in the collective agreement 43.01 (c), we want to be sure that the budget is there and not being taken from to subsidize other budgets which is sometimes the case at the local site. The employer agreed and indicated that they would not be able to control all of these budgets nationally but suggested that we could move towards the regional detector dog handler coordinators to ensure the budget is used for what it is intended for. The employer told us if there are any difficulties with items or budget to contact them directly to rectify situations. The employer then asked to submit a budget for them to move forward on for the next fiscal year. We told the employer we would do the following:

- Submit reasonable budgets to take into account supplies needed and rising costs (we have averaged submissions from our dog handlers that come within a few hundred dollars);
- We will establish and prioritize an annual list of must-have items (the lists that we gathered were virtually the same from five of our handlers);
- Then work on another list for replaceable items not required annually (not included in the annual budget and not a fixed budget).

As we have done most of the groundwork already we will be able to submit something shortly.

Uniform – We offered the employer a sample cargo pant with slightly larger pockets in our current cargo pant and one that provides for knee protection inside the pant (5.11 TDU pant). We suggested that we could build this cost into the annual budget as part of the DDH annual equipment list. The employer was happy to hear this and fully supported our submission. We provided the specs for the pants as requested by the employer. We also informed the employer about our goal to provide a long sleeve shirt for the handlers in addition to the



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t-shirt for searching as well as properly embroidered crest, which we will work through the national uniform committee. The employer welcomed this also and asked for a copy of the embroidered crest. We also proved this. Lastly the employer asked about jackets. We informed the employer that through the uniform committee we have secured a five-in-one jacket for all our members. The employer pleased to hear this as we both agreed it will be more suitable for the dog handlers also.

Seizure Statistics – We asked the employer to provide us with some statistics around seizures/drug interceptions, etc. The employer said that they were doing a wrap up of stats by region and will provide stats to us. We spoke of the importance of capturing many types of data e.g. urinalysis positive tests dropping. The employer agreed with us that this many of these stats are an indication of the success of the DDH program. The employer is also looking at a database program from CBSA that is supposed to be very thorough (capturing large amounts of data). The employer also indicated that they would be using more DDHs at other entrances in the institution, e.g. construction entrances, sally ports etc. The employer indicated that the statistics gathered thus far support the success of the DDH program.

Training – The employer indicated that the CBSA is in the process of overhauling their training program. We suggested that more emphasis must be put on training DDHs to search people (visitors) as that is the biggest part of the DDHs job. The employer agreed with us and took note of our concern to pass along to CBSA as an area that needs improvement.

Security Manual Review – Both parties agreed the committee review had gone well. The challenge now is to merge everything for presentation to EXCOM in April. We also spoke on the manager's guide and commented that it was a good start in terms of what needs to be done when a dog handler arrives at the site. The employer indicated that this manual needed some more input but was also genuinely pleased with how it looks thus far. We should have a final draft for review by the end of January early February for the security manual prior to it being tabled at EXCOM for April.

Pet Assisted Therapy Dogs Program – We provided the employer with an extensive file around this program (back to 2008) which often times interferes where the DDH program. It appears the program is expanding without consulting with security on this matter and is becoming a distraction for detector dogs. The employer promised to speak with the coordinator at NHQ for this program and explain that certain measures must be taken as to not compromise the DDH program. The employer will come back to us on this item.

Future of the DDH Program – The employer informed us that the CBSA is expanding its program and went on to say that the DDH program is not one of the DRAP (Deficit Reduction Action Plan) initiatives, meaning that funding the program is not an issue. In fact, further expansion will likely occur as the program is actually funded for DDHs.

Your UCCO-SACC-CSN representatives

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