

DATE: June 16, 2020

TO: Works Council  
Executive Committee  
Rick Hazelaar  
Al Pedro  
Dale Fleming/Chris Viau  
Guy Bilodeau  
Trevor Cochrane  
Quarry  
Bulletin Boards  
Catherine Barsby

FROM: Peter Schmidt

FILE: I-36

SUBJECT: Works Council Meeting – June 16, 2020

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**Present:**

Chris Georgei (Sawhouse)  
Dave Fletcher (Pressing)  
Mark Trueman (Finishing)  
Tony Pedro (Pressing)

**Management:**

Jason Nieman  
Peter Schmidt  
Al Pedro  
Chris Viau

**Absent:**

Ken Dairies (Quarry)  
Brad Shoemaker (Finishing)  
John Galway (Maintenance)  
Trevor Bruce (Sawhouse)

Peter Schmidt welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

**Old Business:**

**Management** – There is no old business.

**New Business:**

**Two weeks mandatory vacation time:**

**Works Council-** Will employees still have to take an extra 2 weeks vacation as per the ESA this year?

**Management** – No. Those 2 weeks were taken care of.

**Insurance Benefits:**

**Works Council-** If an employee dies from COVID-19, will they still receive their Arriscraft life insurance?  
Most policies have a pandemic stipulation.

**Management** – We'll look into that for you. \*Peter checked with our insurance carrier and Arriscraft employees are covered in the event of death from COVID-19.

### **Vacation Used During Layoff/Shutdown:**

**Works Council-** The memo that was put out for employees who took vacation time instead of the lay off, some found confusing. Could you please explain it?

**Management** –Our intent was to give employees options so that they could have a choice of what would work best for them and their individual financial situations. There were 3 options; employees could take a layoff, take vacation time or take a leave of absence. For the employees who chose the vacation option, we knew that some of them would not have enough vacation pay accrued to cover the full 3 weeks, so we said that we'd allow employees to go into the negative under their vacation pay accrual to keep their wages whole. But that negative amount would be made up once they returned.

Some employees who opted for a leave of absence, also asked for any vacation pay that they had accrued. This allowed those employees to keep their vacation days for when they returned and they were also kept whole, or close to it, pay wise. This wasn't something that we had thought about ahead of time. Once we realized this, we felt that it was only right to allow those employees who had chosen vacation, to get those vacation days back again if they hadn't gone into the negative in their accrual. We even went as far as to take it on a week to week basis to make sure that everyone got back as much vacation time as possible. For example, if an employee had had enough accrual for 2 weeks, but not week 3, we gave them back 2 weeks 'vacation time.

Does this make sense?

**Works Council-** Yes that's clearer. Thank you. We found the memo very confusing.

**Management** – Upon review of the memo, it appears that it was open to confusion in the distinction between vacation pay and the vacation time. Sorry for the confusion. If anyone has any other questions or concerns about their vacation time, they can speak with their Supervisor.

### **December Shutdown:**

**Works Council-** Are we still having a shutdown in December?

**Management** – Yes. We need that time for our autoclave inspections and maintenance. The shutdown will be from December 18<sup>th</sup> to December 24<sup>th</sup>. December 28<sup>th</sup> is a statutory holiday, the floater days will be December 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, and 31<sup>st</sup>. New Year's Day statutory holiday will be on Friday January 1<sup>st</sup>, first day back will be Monday January 4<sup>th</sup> as per the posting.

### **Senior Employees and call back:**

**Works Council-** A lot of employees were unhappy with how the call back transpired. They felt that a vote should have happened or that we should have followed the layoff recall procedure in our Works Council Agreement.

**Management** – We did get Works Council approval to do this. As we discussed, it was done to give senior employees who may have underlying health issues, an opportunity to stay home and younger employees a chance to work. What was their concern?

**Works Council-** They were just unhappy with it and felt that the Works Council agreed because it served their own interest. There were also some Pressing employees on the night shift who were not contacted about the shutdown.

**Management** – The clause was initiated by management and it was felt that it served the interests of both senior and junior employees. In the future, communication with all employees will be double checked.

#### **ROEs:**

**Works Council-** We were under the impression that the layoff occurred because of COVID-19, not because of a shortage of work which is what was stated on the ROEs. Can you please explain?

**Management** – Our primary reason for shutting down when we did was COVID-19. Our shutdown coincided with what the school boards were doing. One of the reasons that we were able to do it was because our inventory, at the time, was good.

When we went to fill out the ROEs, the government website was telling employers to use “shortage of work” as the reason regardless of it being for COVID-19 or not. The first few that we did, had both ‘shortage of work” and “COVID-19” listed as the reason, but the government said that going forward, we were to list, “shortage of work” only. We understand how that would have been confusing to see, but it was a government mandate.

#### **Pressing Product Schedule:**

**Works Council-** There’s been a lot of odd scheduling lately that’s making it difficult on the Pressing employees and inefficient with all the colour changes.

**Management** – We understand, but we haven’t had a choice. When we came back, we had a lot of orders that had to go out right away and no product to fill them. We prefer longer runs and we’re getting back to that now that the glut of the backlogged orders are taken care of.

Thanks for bringing this up. Communication with Pressing operators is important to ensure we are as efficient as possible. Please let us know if you see anything like this happening again that you think we could improve on.

#### **Drivers/Sales People and Masks:**

**Works Council-** We still have visitors coming into the facility without masks on.

**Management** – We’ve been working on this with George Winsor, he’s been contacting his customers to alert their drivers to our policy and reiterate that they are to use the port o potty outside and not come into the plant. Nelson will be talking to the person who delivers our water and we’ll continue to address each occurrence as they come up.

#### **Positive Covid 19 Test:**

**Works Council-** Will we be notified if someone in the plant tests positive?

**Management** – As written in our policies and procedures, yes. But some questions have come up around whether or not we should be notifying employees when someone goes for a test. At this time, when someone is going for a test, we’re doing a deep clean just to be on the safe side, but we haven’t been declaring that someone has gone for testing.

At the JHSC meeting tomorrow we’re going to discuss this and ask for some direction. We’re thinking about a generic posting that basically says something like “someone in the engineering office has gone for COVID-19 testing” but we don’t want to go ahead with something like this without discussing it with the JHSC first.

Anyone who has any concerns can self-refer for a test at all local hospitals. We understand that Grand River Hospital in Kitchener has begun drive through testing. Cambridge hospital requires an appointment as does St. Mary's.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 AM  
Next Works Council meeting July 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:30am

**The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) continues to be available to all Arriscraft Employees. Their website is [www.homewoodhealth.com](http://www.homewoodhealth.com) or you may call 1-800-265-8310.**



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Works Council Representative



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Management Representative