



The Professional Institute
of the Public Service of Canada
Office of the President

L'Institut professionnel
de la fonction publique du Canada
Bureau de la Présidente

September 22, 2014

Deputy Minister Robert Hamilton
Natural Resources Canada
Sir William Logan Building
580 Booth Street, 21st Floor
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0E4

Dear Deputy Minister Hamilton,

The following letter is submitted with the objective of assisting the federal government in its efforts to transition to a Government-owned Contractor-operated (GoCo) management model for Atomic Energy Canada Ltd. (AECL) laboratories at Chalk River, Ontario and to avoid the likelihood of strike action by our members.

The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC) and its affiliate the Chalk River Professional Employees Group (CRPEG) represent approximately 750 nuclear scientists and engineers employed by AECL laboratories at Chalk River. They account for nearly one-quarter of AECL's workforce, and include its most educated and highly specialized employees.

Ensuring that the transition to a Government-owned Contractor-operated (GoCo) management model works means ensuring that AECL can continue to retain and attract the best and brightest nuclear scientists and engineers in order to maintain Canada's status as a "Tier 1 Nuclear Nation"¹ and meet the federal government's long-term obligations to public safety and scientific innovation both nationally and internationally.

Retaining existing employee pensions and benefits is a fundamental demand of CRPEG members and is vital to ensuring AECL continues to attract the best and brightest. CRPEG members have voted overwhelmingly in favour of strike action in the event agreement on maintaining existing pensions and benefits cannot be reached. Needless to say, a strike would be costly not only to our members but to the federal government's efforts to ensure GoCo's success.

While the government has recognized the importance of pensions to employees and to ensuring employees have continuous pension participation, it has issued no assurance of our members' continued participation under the Public Service Superannuation Act (PSSA) and has not empowered AECL to negotiate pensions.

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¹ "Science and Technology Enabling Canada's Tier 1 Nuclear Sector", Dr. Robert Walker, President and CEO, AECL, *AECL Nuclear Review, Canada's Nuclear Science and Technology Journal*, Volume 1, Number 1, June 2012.

The principle of pension equivalency already exists among Treasury Board groups, and inclusion of pension equivalency language in our members' collective agreement is both fair and reasonable. No legal barrier exists to maintaining our members' participation under the PSSA and it will involve no increase in costs from existing arrangements.

As you know, our members will be in a strike position by October 20, 2014. In order to ensure that GoCo works for both the government and management, PIPSC requests that the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources Canada, which is responsible for AECL, pursue two avenues to prevent a strike: 1) secure from Treasury Board a commitment to retain CRPEG members' participation in the PSSA, and 2) empower AECL management to negotiate equivalent language with the union.

Respectfully submitted,



Debi Daviau
President
The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC)



Jonathan Fitzpatrick
President
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