

BILL C-495: Anti-Assault law

On Dec. 12 2007, MP Mario Silva introduced a private member's bill, Bill C-495. If made into law, this bill will make it an Indictable Criminal Offence to assault a paramedic who is on duty. This was the first reading of the bill, and due to a number of parliamentary rules, the only way Bill C-495 will become law is if there is the unanimous consent of all Members of Parliament. So, contact your MP to ensure they understand the need for this kind of legislated protection. Make that call or send that email today! Convey your strong support for the bill. Make sure to explain why it is in the public interest that this bill becomes law, and ask them to support it when it is voted on in the House of Commons.



Needlestick Regulations: REGULATION 474/07 OHS

As a result of lobbying by SEIU and others, the Ontario government adopted Regulation 474/07 under the Occupational Health and Safety Act in August 2007. The regulation mandates the use of safety engineered needles and needleless systems to replace conventional hollow bore needles in hospitals, effective September 2008. Although EMS will not be covered under similar mandatory regulations until 2010, most services have been proactive by reducing their use of dangerous sharps. Plus, as hospitals convert to safety needles, more pressure will be on EMS to go to safety sharps. In the meantime, keep the pressure on through our JHSCs and Section 25 (2) (h) to protect the lives of our workers.



NRA 60 Campaign

In 2005, the federal government expanded the definition of "public safety occupations" (PSO) to include paramedics, as defined under the Income Tax Act (ITA).

In recognition of the dangerous work performed by workers in public safety occupations, the ITA allows for an earlier retirement date. It also provides for a higher maximum pension accrual rate, from 2.0 per cent to 2.33 per cent.

SEIU members are part of either the OMERS or HOOP pension plans and must negotiate these benefits.

The OMERS Act (2006) made the OMERS Sponsors Corporation (SC) responsible for amendments to the primary plan and any future amendments to the PSO supplemental plan. The OMERS SC therefore determines whether to extend the right to "negotiate" a normal retirement age

of 60 (NRA 60) to paramedics.

In Nov. 2007, the SC voted on this issue. The vote was split between the employer representatives and the union/plan member representatives.

Currently, a multi-union campaign is attempting to convince enough employer representatives on the OMERS SC (who meet in May or June) to vote in favour of extending the right to paramedics and their

employers to negotiate a NRA 60.

Paramedics should have the same rights to a NRA 60, under the primary plan, as Police and Fire.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- ▷ Call your Mayor and Councillor
- ▷ Write your local newspaper
- ▷ Participate in upcoming rallies (April and May)
- ▷ Deliver a presentation to your local council
- ▷ Inform families and friends
- ▷ Stay informed

Currently, the SEIU Paramedic Committee is in discussions with HOOP to express our members goal of attaining the same right to NRA 60 as Police and Fire.

We say paramedics have also earned the right!

"If we don't protect ourselves. We can't help others."

The Paramedic Committee is a strong health and safety advocate. As members of PEMS HSAC committee members share information on best practice, ergonomics, crash investigation data, Ministry of Labour orders, and so on. The committee is advocating for an EMS Sub-Section 21 committee with the Ministry of

Labour to focus specifically on paramedic industry concerns.

Use your PPE, your high visibility vests, eyewear and helmets. Use your seatbelts! **When you see an unsafe situation or have a concern speak up.** Tell your supervisor and your steward. Get informed.

Visit www.paramedicsafety.org

SEIU members welcome vote challenge in Essex County

Essex paramedics assess SEIU's track record and superior contract favorably

SEIU paramedics have been urging Essex County to merge its paramedic service under municipal authority for more than 2 years.

On Mar. 14, the County informed SEIU paramedics that it is formalizing amalgamation of paramedic services within the county system.

The municipality will take over four separate services to create a single service for the entire country.

A union representation vote is expected as early as this spring.

Employees of the four affected unions (see below) will vote on who they want to represent them.

"SEIU's superior contract and impressive track record in the County is causing county paramedics to take a favourable look at what SEIU has to offer," says Essex paramedic and SEIU Committee member Shawn Arrand.

EMS Union Representation
Sun Parlour – SEIU
Windsor – CUPE
Amherstburg - OPSEU
Harrow – Staff Association

Letter from the Chair



On Mar. 31, Scott Campbell from the MOL advised me the Section 21 Sub Committee will have its first meeting in May.

I would like also like to congratulate Wendy Manzie for her recent award from Sarnia District Labour Council for outstanding union activism in her community. Plus, congratulations to Andrew Snowdon, Ched Zivic and Robin Mole on their

awards from the MOHLTC.

These SEIU members are examples of how very hard paramedics work in their respective communities, while routinely saving lives and putting their own lives on the line.

SEIU is committed to its paramedics and thank you for a job well done.

Ian Nash, Chair, Provincial Paramedics Committee



Focus on YOU Dufferin County EMS

- Is a hospital based service funded by the County of Dufferin.
- Is an urban/rural service that covers the communities of Orangeville, Shelburne, and Grand Valley. Our main hospital is Headwaters Health Care Centre in Orangeville.
- There is a new headquarters located in Orangeville with a new base in Grand Valley and an older base in Shelburne, staffed 24/7.
- There are 50 F/T and 20 P/T paramedics. There is one manager and one supervisor. There is about a 50/50 ACP/PCP mix.
- There are five units on days and three units on nights that travel approximately 310,000 kms per year.
- The service responds to a mix of about 10,000 calls per year.
- Cambridge CACC is the dispatch centre.
- the Waterloo region-Wellington-Dufferin Base Hospital Program provides the medical control.
- The annual budget is approximately \$4,500,000.

SEIU Local 1 Canada - Provincial Paramedic Committee

Committee Goals and Accomplishments

The SEIU Local 1 Canada Provincial Paramedic Committee was formed in May 2005 to represent the needs of over 500 paramedics. The goals of the committee are: to have at least one individual from each of the EMS units represented on the committee; to standardize and implement common language for collective agreement; become informed on our rights under all legislation affecting paramedics; and work collaboratively with other unionized paramedics in the province to change legislation and implement standards where necessary.

The Paramedic Committee met with the Ministry of Labour to discuss the right to meal breaks. There had been an attempt to exclude paramedics from this section of the Employment Standards Act. As a result of our input the government recognized the rights of paramedics and implemented regulations to deal with this important issue.

The committee actively participates on the Provincial EMS Health and Safety Committee (PEMS HSAC) since its founding in 2006.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Paramedics on the SEIU Local 1 Canada Executive Board are automatically members of the committee.

Ian Nash - Chair Sun Parlour Emergency Service	Robert Keating Sensenbrenner EMS	Tom Moore Lambton EMS	Wendy Manzie Lambton EMS
Shawn Arrand Sun Parlour Emergency Service	David Kennedy Dufferin County EMS	Andrew Snowdon Kirkland Lake EMS	Ched Zivic Haldimand EMS



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