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December 22, 2017

Dear Members,

**Re: President's End of Year Message**

As the new year closes in on us, it's a good time to look forward to what the future holds for us.

But first, a quick glimpse back - 2017 was a year of change and success for our Union. Implementation of Universal Hourly Rate (UHR) finally put an end to 'factoring', while providing a significant pay increase for on-call members. Following one of the largest new-funding announcements in BCAS history, we're now starting to see new resources being contemplated and added around the province. Convention saw the announcement by Minister of Health, Hon. Adrian Dix of a separate stand-alone bargaining unit for BC Paramedics and Dispatchers. Much hard work was contributed behind the scenes in the lead up to the announcement, the foundations are now set and work will continue to prepare for the next round of bargaining. On the labour relations front, we've seen major progress on the grievance backlog. Through several arbitrations, mediations and discussions with the Employer, almost all grievances prior to 2014 have been resolved.

The last year was not without loss, we had several members pass away - from our own union and the first responders community at large - we continue to deal with these losses. Our job is not easy and dealing with loss on an ongoing basis is also difficult. The holiday season can be particularly difficult for some. Please talk to your colleagues, and be sure to ask for help and resources when you need it. Let's end the stigma and ensure we all go home feeling strong - mentally and physically.

There is more change on the horizon for us in 2018. We'll see a 1.9% general wage increase for all, as well as, the final implementation of UHR in April. This means a service pay increase for most full-time members and another significant wage increase for on-call members. Several significant arbitrations are booked, so your labour relations team will be busy. Bargaining preparation will start early in the year, so please watch for your opportunity to share your thoughts on your bargaining priorities.

Last, but not least, a special thank-you to all the members working over the holidays. I understand that it's not an easy time to be away from your personal life, and the shifts over the new year period can be some of the most challenging. Thank you for what you do for patients and for our profession, each and every day of the year.

On behalf of our Provincial Executive Board, we sincerely wish you and your families a safe and happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

Cameron Eby  
Provincial President  
Ambulance Paramedics and Emergency Dispatchers of BC  
CUPE Local 873