

Ambulance Paramedics

of British Columbia - CUPE 873



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Attention: All Members
CUPE Local 873

Dear Members:

I write today to share with you a letter recently sent from our CUPE National President, Mark Hancock, to the President of the Canadian labour Congress, Hassan Yussuff. This letter is in response to the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) ongoing attempts to encroach on our paramedic profession, particularly in the province of Ontario.

You can review the letter here: <https://goo.gl/Q1utgn>

The Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association (OPFFA) have been making strong public statements which advocate for their fire department first responder's advancement into paramedic service delivery, like this video: <https://goo.gl/9ADtEC>

While the OPFFA have taken a more aggressive stance than the British Columbia Professional Fire Fighters Association (BCPFFA) on this issue, we have certainly seen advancements on this agenda here in BC. The same medical protocols being advocated for firefighters in Ontario, have been raised here in BC. This led to us jointly launching the www.sendaparamedic.ca website in 2015. This also coincided with the City of Delta's decision to train and authorize their fire fighters to the level of Emergency Medical Responder (EMR).

We've continued to lobby at the municipal and provincial level against the advancements of fire departments into prehospital medical response. Our position is that an enhanced role for fire departments in this regard is a downloading of cost, liability and responsibility from the province to the municipality, and does not deliver the best patient care to patients in BC. Fire first responders (FR) play an important role on a small number of pre-hospital medical responses, as shown by the medical evidence released by BCEHS and others. What patients need in a pre-hospital medical emergency is the pre-hospital experts, who deliver definitive care- BCEHS Paramedics.

Most recently, I have discussed these issues with senior leadership of BCEHS. Our positions are united on the matter. I have previously and continue to advocate for changes to the Resource Allocation Plan (RAP), to ensure BCEHS is sending Fire FR's to only the medical calls which the evidence supports their response to such events.

./2

I've also recently met with the BCPFFA President, to discuss a range of topics, including the advancement of Fire FR's into prehospital medical response. I've made our position very clear and while we disagree on some aspects, the meeting was productive.

We'll continue our advocacy on this issue, including if a similar letter with a focus on the situation in BC is warranted.

Sincerely,



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

CE/sd/MoveUp

