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June 12, 2020

Dear Members;

Re: Ambulance Paramedics and Emergency Dispatchers of BC Statement on World Events

As the world continues to battle COVID-19, a pandemic of unprecedented proportions, recent events in the United States have reminded us that the world continues to struggle with another issue: racism.

As frontline public safety and health care professionals and Emergency Dispatchers we are deeply saddened and disturbed by the tragic events unfolding. We want to see those involved held accountable for their actions. We also want peace, justice, and healing for everyone who has been hurt and impacted by this. Racism is painful, inexcusable, and has no place in society. At its core, discrimination is divisive and threatens the very existence of humanity.

We as a profession, service and country are not immune to racism. We live in a great country but as great as it is, racism continues as a reality in our communities today. We are listening to the voices of Black, Indigenous and other members of our community as they peacefully rally and demonstrate across our country. This powerful moment we are experiencing has culminated after more than a century of systemic racism in Canada and the world. It is time for change in all aspects of society. Tackling racism requires a response from the entire community, including all of us.

Many people are hurt and angry right now however we need to remember that those in the forefront of this conversation have developed many strong relationships in our communities over the years, this is a time for us to listen closely and learn. Please know that our partners in public safety are your brothers, sisters, neighbours, coaches, volunteers, sons and daughters, who serve proudly on the frontlines under very challenging circumstances to keep our communities safe. We all want a better Canada without racism.

The Ambulance Paramedics and Emergency Dispatchers of BC (APBC/EDBC) have a long-standing history of promoting equality with a commitment to providing members and those that we serve a safe environment free of discrimination. However, we recognize that discrimination, including but not limited to racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia etc., exists systemically within society and no organization is free from the effects of injustice and intolerance. As such, APBC and EDBC is committed to reviewing our practices and bylaws to ensure that as an organization we not only condemn such prejudice but actively pursue the eradication of discrimination organizationally, professionally and systemically.

As a local of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), we have long upheld the principles encompassed in our [Equality Statement](#):

“As unionists, mutual respect, cooperation and understanding are our goals. We should neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Discriminatory speech or conduct which is racist, sexist, transphobic or homophobic hurts and thereby divides us. So too, does discrimination on the basis of ability, age, class, religion, language and ethnic origin.”

We are proud of the work CUPE has done to address systemic racism and discrimination, both [provincially](#) and [nationally](#). Our committees, including [Workers of Colour Committee](#), [Indigenous Workers Committee](#), [Pink Triangle Committee](#) and the [Persons with Disabilities Committee](#), continue to raise awareness and promote equality and inclusion. While the work of these committees is absolutely vital, we must recognize that we all play a role in the fight against racism and discrimination.

If you have experienced racism or discrimination you are not alone. Please know there are resources available to you: Peer CISM Team - 1-855-969-4321 and Homewood Human Solutions -1-800-663-1142.

If you have witnessed racism or discrimination, you may wonder what to do or how to respond. You can connect with the [Resilience BC](#) anti-racism network, which provides support to victims of racism. If you experience racism in your workplace, speak to your supervisor or manager and your RVP as soon as possible.

Be safe and kind please,

On behalf of the Provincial Executive Committee



Troy Clifford
Provincial President
Ambulance Paramedics & Emergency Dispatchers of BC
CUPE Local 873

TC/sd/MoveUp

