



PRESIDENT'S WEEK IN REVIEW

April 22 – April 28, 2019

Hello all,

Last week was shortened for me by the Easter Monday – I hope you and your family had an enjoyable long weekend, particularly those who worked a very long and busy Good Friday.

Most of the week was taken up by the Provincial Executive meeting and pre-meeting, where the issue of passengers abusing members was hotly discussed. At this meeting, there was specific discussion about the “Easter Weekend debacle,” with the Executive venting frustrations about BC Ferries reservation policy choices and how that led to chaos inside and outside the terminal. In response to this, they have asked me to pen a commentary letter to several media outlets...we’ll see if it gets picked up. More generally on the issue of passenger abuse of workers was a call with Point Blank Media regarding creative materials for our upcoming ad campaign. It seems this is moving along nicely, and everyone is excited to see some of the creative product, which will be presented next week.

On Friday, SOC President Kimmerly and I had a conference call with Transport Canada Pacific Region Assistant Director John Wilson about BC Ferries proposal to sail the Queen of Surrey with the aft door open in order to skirt the no passengers on enclosed deck regulation (CFTR 152). It turns out Transport Canada and Lloyds have already approved the plan even though the risk assessment between the Union and the Company hasn’t even started – a bulletin was released, April 30th, from SOC President Kimmerly on this matter.

Finally, Sunday was the International Day of Mourning for Injured and Killed Workers. I had the privilege of attending and speaking at the Day of Mourning Ceremony in Nanaimo, and was happy to see Ferry Workers Katie Techen and Jenn MacPherson there. In my remarks, I noted that too much emphasis is put on workers being safe at work, instead of employers providing a safe work environment. To bolster this assertion, I pointed out that even when fault is found in cases of fatal accidents, employers usually only face paltry fines with no criminal prosecution (the lowest fine in a fatality where employer fault was found in 2017 was ~\$2500).

Next week: Writing an op-ed; working with the SOC President on a bulletin; meeting with Point Blank Media; a friend’s wedding in the USA.

Thanks for reading and I hope to see you soon!

In Solidarity,
BC FERRY & MARINE WORKERS' UNION

Brother Graeme Johnston
Provincial President