



CEP Media One Q & A

Q: What is CEP Media One?

Short Answer: It's the replacement for the Global Advisory Council (GAC).

Long Answer: We believe that we have taken what has worked with GAC for the past eight years and codified it so that we can continue the work we have been doing together. This in the view of the Presidents of the Locals across the country, is a way of maintaining the status quo, a way of keeping what has worked and worked well in fighting back against the concessions we know are coming from our employers.

The structure GAC has chosen to replace itself is a composite local comprised of multiple bargaining units. This structure may be a new concept to some but it is actually quite common and highly successful throughout other sectors of the CEP.

While the GAC bylaws and policies served us well in building solidarity across the Global and E! networks they were only designed as an interim measure to carry us through the process in front of the Canadian Industrial Relations Board (CIRB). Their purpose is now served, their lifespan is over. We need to change the rules governing us to reflect reality and the new challenges we face heading into bargaining. We need to merge into one local. CEP Media One.

This is not a new level of bureaucracy. It is a replacement for an organizational structure that has served us well for the past nine years. We know that working together is to our advantage. This is the embodiment of that idea.

Q: Why does GAC have to be changed?

Short Answer: GAC was designed to deal with thirteen separate bargaining units. We only have three now.

Long Answer: When GAC was formed at the turn of the century, nobody could predict the outcome to our case in front of the CIRB. We always knew that GAC was a temporary measure to get us through the process in front of the CIRB. No one thought it would last this long. We knew that when the process ended GAC as it is currently constituted would no longer be adequate. Just look at the bylaws of GAC. One delegate from each bargaining unit. Under the ruling from the Board that would be three people meeting in a room and that clearly doesn't work.

Q: Is this just something that big unions do?

Short answer: It appears to work for any size union.

Long answer: Composite locals are used in many different industries, including media. Our sisters and brothers at Pacific Press are part of a composite local (CEP Local 2000). They have 2500 members scattered throughout BC and they deal with 50-60 different bargaining units. Besides the Vancouver daily newspapers, they represent almost all the weekly community papers in BC as well as some radio stations on the Island and Purdy's Chocolates among others. Compare their situation to ours. We represent 1055 members across the country working for one employer. In television Alberta CTV (Calgary & Edmonton) have formed a composite local, Medicine Hat CHAT-TV along with the stations in Prince George and Kamloops have formed a composite local (CEP Local 1010). So besides the examples of locals in pulp and energy and telecommunications (many of which GAC looked at and researched to understand what worked for them and what did not) there are a number of examples of this concept working for both big and small locals within the media industry.

Q: Where did the idea come from?

Short Answer: It came from GAC.

Long Answer: The Global Advisory Council has worked for years to draft a set of Bylaws and Policies that will continue to allow us to fight for what is best for all our members across the country. We know from the past that certain principles work and work well to build consensus and allow every voice to be heard. One local, one vote, a two-thirds majority. We strove to maintain these principles throughout this new set of bylaws and policies.

Q. I never heard of this before. Why not? (814 specific answers follow)

Short answer: Perhaps you missed the earlier meetings where this was mentioned or maybe missed the significance of the conversation.

Long Answer: According to the minutes, this concept was first raised in Fall 2005 and Spring 2006. It was discussed in both the spring and fall of 2007 and we have talked about the work involved and given members an information update on this issue at the last five meetings. While we were informing the members here, GAC was involved in a consensus process to craft the bylaws and policies, making sure they reflected best practices and did not conflict with the National Constitution. Rather than an unfinished series of drafts, the Council wanted to present a final document to all the members across the country.

Q. What's the hurry? Why are you voting this now?

Short Answer: We need to be ready to begin bargaining.

Long Answer: With the CIRB scope hearings scheduled to wrap up in early September, once the Board makes a ruling either party can initiate bargaining within twenty days. We want to

be ready to concentrate on that important process. If the CEP Media One merger vote is successful we will be able to smoothly wrap up the affairs of GAC and begin the preparations and consultations needed to bargain a fair contract without the distraction of attempting to simultaneously organize ourselves internally. It is important that we be ready because all indications point to a very tough bargaining session. And while we do not know what will happen with the Company and its fortunes, we believe that if we are paralyzed by uncertainty, we will not be properly prepared to serve our members. We are doing our best to be ready for whatever happens in the fall. If we delay, we won't be ready. It's as simple as that.

Q. I heard that the new executive of M1 will be appointed to full time jobs. Is that true?

Short Answer: No. Article 8 in the bylaws is clear. The Executive will be elected and operate just like the current GAC Executive does.

Long Answer: Hard as we tried to keep everything the same as the GAC bylaws, this is one area where we have departed from the current practice in order to ensure democracy and be in accordance with the CEP National Constitution.

Any member in good standing is eligible to run for the executive positions of M1. The vote for the Executive will be conducted according to weighted ballot and the delegates to the Board from each location will vote their member numbers. This is how the National Union elects its officers at Convention. The same principles will apply to the election of the Executive. On every other matter, the M1 Board will operate the same way that GAC does. One unit, one vote with a two thirds majority to pass.

As well, we have added the position of Master Steward to the Executive Board to track grievances and arbitrations across the country. These changes will increase the size of the Board, helping us all spread the workload and improve participation.

Q: What will I, as a member, get out of being part of M1?

Short Answer: There is strength in numbers.

Long Answer: Check the history and the timeline. We know there is a negotiating and financial advantage with our association to a larger group. This is the philosophy of solidarity put into action.

There is also access to additional funds. Read the Strike and Lockout Policy. In the event of a dispute, the National strike pay of \$250 a week after fifteen days could be supplemented. Much of the money being set aside is for the provision of benefits while the strike or lockout continues.

But there is more than just money to this equation. The amount of co-ordination and co-operation we have built over the years allows us to quickly respond to the Company. We are able to quickly assess management statements and call them on any misinformation.

Together we have built working relationships across the country so that we can put together

information and co-ordinate strategy for submissions and appearances in front of the CRTC or the Heritage Committee Hearings.

Finally, there is no doubt that the Company strategy is divide and conquer. Carol Biesal and Chris McGinley consistently refuse to deal with BC and Alberta (calling for concessions but refusing to engage) while desperately pushing for a roll over of the Eastern agreements to lock in some of the worst contracts in the industry. This approach has been actively resisted by your Union and will continue to be. If the Company wants progress on labour relations, they must fairly engage with the Union. The bully tactics of the past will not work. Together we can deliver that message clearly.

Q: What about my dues? Will they change? And all the money we have in our local bank account? What happens to that?

Short Answer: It's the status quo. Nothing changes.

Long Answer: Your dues will not change. This initiative will have no deleterious effect on your paycheque while continuing to fund innovative programs like our EI top up and our Strike Fund. The funding formulas stay the same as they have been since Media Council in Halifax in 2002. Education of the members and bargaining co-ordination and support will allow us to fight back against the concession demands made by the Aspers or others. And the money your local has saved will stay with you. The merger agreement is clear. "The individual Units' assets at time of merger shall remain the property of the individual units. Revenue from those assets shall remain the sole property of the unit." We don't want your money, we want your support.

Q: What happens if we get sold and Global doesn't own us anymore? Doesn't it make more sense to spend our money/effort at meetings with people who share the same employer?

Short Answer: We may be sold, we may not. The company may go into CCAA, it may not. There may be new owners. Or not. All those things are out of our control. All we can do is prepare for all eventualities. M1 does just that. Pick any of the above outcomes and M1 equips us with the tools and the solidarity to meet it. Do you want to enter uncertainty alone? Or would you like some company?

Long Answer: If we are faced with a multiple owner scenario, our proposed structure is designed to compensate and allow for that. In fact there are certain advantages to that outcome. A cross-country, composite local that brings all of us together is our best defence against an employer and in fact an industry that has not been friendly to our members and doesn't appear to be getting any better. Television stations have been reduced to bureaus. Our job losses have been staggering and our members are working harder than ever to compensate for the employers' slash and cut "do more with less" business model. As one voice we will be better prepared and equipped to represent our members within a multiple bargaining unit scenario or a multiple employer scenario if that possibility presents itself to us.

The innovative Strike and Lockout Policy is designed to help each of us face up to the

concession bargaining we all know is coming, no matter who we end up bargaining with. If it's new owners, better to have help sorting through the successor rights and the bargaining rather than trying to do it alone. Better to bargain with them from a position of strength. If we have different owners, then the chances of us all being in a dispute at the same time are diminished. So dues will still come into the local from members working. It helps to make us all stronger.

The issue of ownership may just be completely irrelevant. The industry is working together, co-operating in front of the CRTC and with the CAB. They are supposedly competitors, but the reality is they act like a corporate oligarchy. In the face of these media conglomerates and their concentration of power, the regulators and government boards appear helpless. Only by banding together as workers, regardless of ownership, can we hope to gain a fair contract with proper benefits, wages and language to protect our jobs.

Q: Is this another layer of bureaucracy?

Short Answer: No.

Long Answer: We don't see it as new, or another layer of bureaucracy, we see it as a replacement of GAC.

This proposal has been created by Union Presidents from across the country. It is the result of a lot of effort and research and is an attempt to, within the CEP National Constitution, codify and legitimize what has worked so well at GAC for all these years. There are some differences in how the executive is elected but there is no difference at all in the funding formula and no difference at all in your dues.

Q: How does it benefit members? Name some tangible benefits of joining M1 other than supplementary strike pay.

Short Answer: Co-operation and co-ordination lead to an active effective union working for the members benefits.

Long Answer: The previous five pages go extensively into the real benefits of us working together. Since the turn of the century, we have built GAC into a thriving organization that has been able to initiate a campaign to save local television news, organize the first public demonstration in front of the CRTC, do the research and groundwork for submissions to the Heritage Committee and the CRTC, as well as continue the case in front of the CIRB. Union leaders across the country believe that our collective work has built something of real value here and we would like to keep it going, especially as we prepare for bargaining.

It is hard to quantify or verbalize how far ahead we are in terms of our own collective solidarity. But if the need arises, any of us can reach out instantly across the country to every location and tap into the expertise of the members there. That ability has now grown and is extended throughout the CEP. These connections are instantly available to any of us, new to the table or not, but these kinds of relationships do not spring into existence over night. They must be nurtured and grown. We have spent the past nine years building these connections.

To throw them away and retreat into isolation makes no sense.

Q: In the past we've had a local at our place of operation to deal with the day-to-day issues, and the National Union to help with the bigger and more complex stuff. What purpose does an intermediate level serve?

Short Answer: In the past, the decisions affecting the workplace were made in the building. That is gone and with it the ability of the local to deal effectively with the Company. The National is supportive but busy. M1 is not an intermediate layer, it is the best way to deal with the Company. Not only that, it gives us a dedicated cadre of members with our own interests as their sole purpose and focus.

Long Answer: M1, like GAC, has the sharing of intellect, experience, and resources. Simple questions about how many reporters or camera ops or editors work for Global are easy for us to answer because of the bonds we have built over the years. CEP National cannot answer that question, staff reps cannot answer that question. They can help but the information must ultimately come from the individual locals. If we are all separate, trying to dig that information up and apply it accurately across the network can be very difficult if we do not organize ourselves together.

A recent example of our ability to share information quickly was the AMEX cards. The Company is operating as a cohesive unit across the country. It makes sense for us to do the same.

The National Union is Dave Coles, Gaetan Menard and Peter Murdoch as elected national officials. It is the National Executive Board. It is the regional officers. Tied to these people are secretaries, staff, accountants, staff reps, clerks, etc. But all those staff people are dealing with their individual pieces of the puzzle. So dedicated to any one local in television is a staff rep and a VP Media. Everyone else is supportive but those two people are completely and utterly dedicated to a particular location and the members there. There are 125,000 members of the CEP across the country. So those two people are responsible for a number of locals. Two people. What big complex issues can those two people take on? They are only two people.

We need to educate our members to the reality of how this great Canadian Union works. It is a grassroots organization. That means that the initiatives and the work come from the grassroots. If we want to start a campaign to save local television for instance, where do our members think that came from? It came from the "so-called" intermediate level. Who did the work? Bill Nazer, Paul Saulnier, Jazz Sandhu and Mark Cameron in Vancouver, Tom Kehoe in Alberta, Doug Kelly in Montreal. Not one of those people are on the payroll of the National Union (although there is one National Executive Board member in there).

CEP Media One is the best way for us to even the playing field with the Company and deal with the decision makers. Only we can do what is necessary for our members from coast to coast. CEP National is right behind us and completely supportive but it is up to us to lead the way. Our choice right now is clear. Do we continue to go forward together or do we retreat into isolation to be picked off one by one? Does that sound too strong? Those who recoil at the previous statement, who think it is union rhetoric, should study closely the dynamics that led to the PetroCan lockout in Montreal. That dispute was finally won at Christmas and the

principles and practices that led to a successful resolution is a case study for us as well.

Q: How much money could we potentially save by NOT joining M1?

How much will being part of M1 cost per year for dues, operating costs, and travel/expenses?

Short Answer: Broadly speaking, M1 will continue the same dues structure as GAC had. Therefore, 30% of your dues rebate goes to M1 and .34% of your dues goes to the defence fund. Specific answers change from one location to the next. Only your Treasurer and your trustees can definitively answer the question.

Long Answer: Your dues will not change, the amount of money deducted by the Union will not change. Right now, dues are set at 2%. So for every \$100 we make, we pay a toonie to the CEP. Out of that toonie, the National keeps 78 cents, which it puts into the National Defence Fund and Organizing Fund and Convention Fund and pays its staff and maintains its offices and conducts its business.

When NABET merged with CEP we brought into existence a number of funds that the broadcast locals voluntarily joined. The Travel Fund, the Arbitration Fund, the Bargaining Fund, the Media Council Fund. Out of our dues, those funds deduct money at various rates per member per month.

The remaining money is left to the local. We allocate 34 cents of the two dollars to our own Defence Fund. Then 30% of the money left over will be sent to M1 to fund travel, education, conferences, meetings and any other business or initiatives we undertake.

Our EI top up scheme was funded through our general fund, as was our most recent initiative to send delegates to the Young Workers Conference in Ottawa.

So that's the detail of where the \$2 goes. But let's step back and look at this more broadly for a minute. First of all, those dues are tax deductible. There are also some questions that we must ask ourselves about that toonie we give to the Union.

What do we want from that money? What services should our organization provide? Those are the initial questions that need to be answered. Do we want an effective organization that promotes our interests, bargains strong contracts, ensures our benefits and acts for our good? Isn't that we want from our \$2? The Union is not a bank for heaven's sake. The money is allocated so that it can be used for our mutual benefit. As detailed above, some is put aside in the event of a dispute, some is spent on lawyers, we allocate other funds to various places and the rest should be put to use to benefit our members with training and participation in our union. And the money which is not spent on that is being used for...? What precisely?

Q: If we choose NOT to merge, what happens to all the money we put into GAC over the years?

Short Answer: The local will get the money from the Defence Fund back. The dues paid over the years into the general fund have been used or are already allocated for use. Choosing

not to merge has a number of repercussions beyond a refund that should be examined and questioned.

Long Answer: There is money in the bank. Much of that has been earmarked for the scope hearings in front of the CIRB and other uses, like education and training and conferences for our members, as well as the EI top up initiative. Any remaining funds are at the disposal of GAC. Obviously, if a local chooses not to merge, then at the last GAC meeting, they can make a motion regarding a possible refund. But beyond money, there could be some serious repercussions to choosing to go it alone that need to be examined.

There is a criticism that this is the right idea but the wrong time. To a certain extent we agree. There is an old saying that the best time to plant an oak tree was twenty years ago. The second best time is today. We know that in the fall once the scope hearings conclude and the Board rules that GAC will be effectively over. As detailed in previous answers, we need something to replace it. The choice not to merge means members choose to go it alone. While they will have access to the Bargaining Fund to help ameliorate some costs, and certainly will be kept on email lists and updated through their staff rep, it means a retreat to the last century in terms of organization and operation.

Now the halcyon days of yore may beckon with visions of mutually beneficial labour relations, choosing not to merge means losing the leverage of the dues paid into the collective and being solely responsible for all costs. In our experience, this leads to less participation rather than more, merely because a local simply cannot afford to send a delegate to a National Convention or other conferences and activities of the Union.

Together as M1 we can fund the activities of the local across the country. Our dream is that no location will have to forgo a National Convention, or steward training, or a Young Workers Conference, because they cannot afford it. We have a vision of a local that actively participates in the National Union; that engages our members and is relevant in their work and in their life. We believe that together, this is possible.

Isolation is not growth. Isolation doesn't fix any problems or improve any situation. It is stagnant and regressive and expensive. The price is too high and there is too much at stake for isolation to really be a viable option.

Where is the downside of the merger into CEP M1? What is the real issue? Money? Really? We tried to keep the status quo, especially at the shop floor level but also keep what has worked at the GAC level. The impact of the company's actions is on the group, standing alone does not change that. The Company and the industry are co-operating and working together. Shouldn't we?

Q: This is so frustrating! We still don't have a contract? How does this help? Won't it just get in the way of us ever settling anything with the Company?

Short Answer: We are as frustrated as you are. Maybe more so! That's why we are embarking upon the M1 initiative. Some members seem to think that we are holding up the process somehow. It is the Company that refuses to bargain fairly with us. It is the Company asking the CIRB for adjournments. Not the Union. The Company refuses to engage with us in any meaningful way concentrating instead on a divide and conquer strategy that continues to

get in the way of productive labour relations. We believe M1 will help fix that.

Long Answer: The fact that we have difficulty settling anything with this Company has more to do with what the Company wants from us. In their own words, they want to roll over seven bad agreements in the East while demanding “flexibility” in the West. These demands make no business sense when according to Leonard Asper’s testimony in front of the CRTC the only two local stations that are profitable are in Alberta and BC.

The union has a standing offer on the table for the past year and a half to roll the language over across the country with a 2% wage increase that the Company flatly refused to even discuss. Members know why we are fighting to keep the language we have and are too smart to blame the union for the intransigence of the Company.

Without the Company’s continual requests for adjournment and postponement of the CIRB process, we could be finished by now. The constant complaint from the Company that the process has dragged out for too long is one we agree with. The fact is that the company’s legal tactics are responsible for repeatedly stalling the process.

Q: What's so important as to merit a meeting of M1 delegates, other than bargaining strategies?

Short Answer: The same reason your local meets now is the why CEP M1 would need to meet. It ensures accountability and democracy.

Long Answer: The business of properly running an effective local with informed and engaged members does not happen in a vacuum. Planning, co-ordination, budgeting, education, initiatives, grievances, arbitrations, local and national issues, dissemination of information to the members, all require meeting.

Bargaining, preparing for hearings, helping with submissions to the CRTC or to Parliament, even local reports as well as Executive reports, much of the work between meetings is accomplished on the phone or by email. But even the efficient organization needs a little face time now and then. Throughout these bylaws and policies we have tried to balance the ideals of democracy with effective protocols and procedures that aid progress rather than impede it.

Some members were concerned that M1 might not meet enough. The CEP Constitution demands four local meetings a year and our intent is that those meetings take place at each location quarterly. We have tried for balance at the Board level. While Article 6.1 states “The members of M1 shall be the highest authority of M1 and the affairs of M1 shall be governed by its membership in accordance with the CEP Constitution and policies and the M1 Bylaws and policies...” Article 6.8 concludes that “The M1 Executive and all other committees of M1 are accountable to the M1 Board and the membership of M1.” Therefore, in order for democracy to work in action, we have written into Article 7 the requirement that the Board must meet a minimum of twice a year. Obviously, depending upon what is going on, there may be a need to meet more than that. We have also written into the bylaws a procedure that allows the members to call a special Board meeting so that the principle of accountability is grounded with a real process in reality. This the kind of balance between philosophy and action that we have tried to strike throughout the bylaws and policies.

There is one final balancing act you should know about. We have written the bylaws to be approved by the members and the only changes to the bylaws can come with a membership vote across the country. On the other hand, the policies of the local we have designed to be changed by the Executive Board of M1. The rationale being that we may not get everything right to begin with and in order to best serve the members interests we may need the ability to change or tweak something at the Board level. We believe that this is the best way to ensure democracy while allowing us the ability to learn from any mistakes we may have made.

Q: What is the vision for M1 five years from now?

Short Answer: Only you can really answer that question. Where do you want M1 to be five years from now?

Long Answer: Call it 2015. Say within the next twelve months we have negotiated our first contract for three years. So five years from now or so, we will be into our second contract and preparing for our third set of negotiations with those members still tied together as part of the Asper's former media empire. Your Executive has a mix of old and new members, a combination of experience and energy that reflects a diverse membership.

Perhaps CEP Media One has grown. It could have begun with the breakup of Canwest Global. New owners came in around the time of the merger for some of the stations. Other stations have since been organized. Red Deer and Regina have joined the CEP. As well, some of the independent Pattison stations have merged with the local and there are discussions with both the Rogers and the CTV group about a possible merger. If those initiatives bear fruit, then the Local will be working towards an industry pattern in bargaining, a strategy that the owners are fighting against tooth and nail. But our defence fund is strong, having only been depleted in one dispute, and the members are committed to fight for fair contract language that applies to everyone working in the broadcast industry.

In the five years since the locals merged together, more education and participation has taken place than ever before. There are regular training programs for stewards everywhere and more activists involved in the Union at the Local level. The co-ordination and communication across the country is unprecedented. Action taken by management in one ownership group is known about by all almost immediately. The leadership and the membership of the local at all levels is energized, informed and involved.

Ambitious? Certainly. Attainable? Absolutely. That's the vision. The time to make it a reality starts now.



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