
BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL OF FILM UNIONS

IATSE 891

TEAMSTERS 155

ICG 669

www.bccfu.com



contactus@bccfu.com

December 17, 2021

Dear Members of IATSE Local 891, Teamsters Local 155, and ICG Local 669:

The past year of bargaining for improved conditions and wages for all members has come to a standstill.

The BC Council of Film Unions – representing IATSE Local 891, Teamsters Local 155, and ICG Local 669 – have been working hard to secure a new collective agreement for members. This new collective agreement would provide updated rates, terms, and conditions for members, and tackle important issues members face in the industry.

Despite the drawn-out negotiations, the film industry employers – the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) and the Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA) – refuse to offer an agreement that's acceptable for our members. Bargaining has now reached an impasse.

The BCCFU has gone through formal mediation through the Labour Relations Board to try to reach an agreement, but the employer not only refuses to budge but is pushing an agenda that represents significant rollbacks for our members' wages and conditions.

There are three main issues still on the table with no resolution:

Wages

- Through most of bargaining, the employer has been offering wage increases of 1-2% over each of the next three years – lower than the 3% annual increases in the previous agreement and below what has been negotiated in all other similar agreements.
- Currently, the employer is not offering any retroactivity for wage increases, despite agreeing to full retroactivity with all other contracts which have gone past their expiry date in the past 18 months.
- In addition, the employer proposes to delay future wage increases until months after they would normally occur. This would mean that we wouldn't see a rate increase in April of every contract year – the rate increase wouldn't happen until significantly later.

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Wages (continued)

- While the employer did offer limited retroactivity three months ago, in exchange we would've had to accept other changes that would drive down wages and conditions for film workers in other ways – including paying some new workers half of what other entry-level positions are currently paid. This was unacceptable to our member-led bargaining teams.

Consent

- Every production in BC is given a tier based on budget, scale, and distribution. This determines wage rates and conditions for each job on set.
- When a producer misrepresents the type of production being made in order to try and access cheaper rates (which has happened in the past), we have been able to refuse to allow that producer access to the BCCFU agreement. As part of these negotiations, the employer is attempting to change that, so we'd be unable to defend our members' rights to fair wages and conditions based on the scale of the production.
- In addition, when an AMPTP production comes to BC, they want us to guarantee that our members will be available for their productions – while not guaranteeing in writing that they will always use BCCFU members for all their productions.

Diversity

- Your unions and the employer are genuinely committed to increasing diversity and inclusion on productions across BC. Removing barriers and bringing underrepresented workers into our industry will improve our ability to produce compelling stories for diverse audiences, while better reflecting the incredibly diverse people who live in BC.
- Both parties have agreed that a new training program with a specific focus on increasing diversity is the best way to achieve this, including partnering on its development with the BC Human Rights Commissioner. While the details of this program will be determined after bargaining, the employer is already keen to limit wages for people in this program in our contract.

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Diversity (continued)

- The employer has proposed that trainees who participate in this program will be paid BC's minimum wage of \$15.20. This is about half of what entry-level film workers are paid in similar roles right now.¹ To us, the employer is deliberately reducing the wages of people who come from the very communities we are trying to attract to work in our industry. This is exploitative of these underrepresented communities and is tantamount to discrimination.
- In addition to the wage issue, the employer has proposed changes to the way that potential members join our unions in an attempt to exert more control over who the employer can hire. This represents a direct attack on our ability to determine our own membership processes that we will not stand for. We are committed to ensuring that entry into our unions is equitable, but the determination of membership status must be decided by each union and not by our employers.

In solidarity,

Keith Woods
President
IATSE Local 891

Lorrie Ward
Secretary-Treasurer
Teamsters Local 155

Amanda Trimble
President
ICG Local 669

Paul Klassen
Executive Director
BC Council of Film Unions

¹ Current rates:

- 2020-2021 Tier 1 Grip Rate = \$31.33/hour; 2020-2021 Tier 1 Truck Driver Rate (Over 1 Ton) = \$31.73/hour; 2020-2021 Second Assistant (Camera) rate = \$35.87.