Report of the Education Committee

June 2015 – May 2016

To all Officers and Delegates attending the 19th Annual Convention of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association in Collingwood, June 12th to June 15th, 2016, on behalf of the Committee, I am submitting the following report.

Dear Brothers / Sisters,

Last year’s Dr. Eric G. Taylor Fall Labour Education Seminar was held from October 4th to October 8th, 2015, at the Marriott Gateway Hotel in Niagara Falls with 186 participants. All participants were in the General Session for the Monday and Thursday, at which time they heard from a number of speakers, who covered a wide variety of topics. They also were able to choose one of five courses available for our sessions on both Tuesday and Wednesday.

Courses

➢ General Session

➢ Brother Barry Quinn Basic Bargaining Course
  Chris Francescone, Secretary Treasurer, OPFFA
  Mike Pauze, District 3 VP, OPFFA

➢ WSIB – Return to Work
  Chris Wheeler-WSIB Committee Chair, OPFFA

➢ Union Stewardship & the OPFFA
  Warren Scott-District 5 V/P, OPFFA
  Eric Nordlund, District 7 V/P, OPFFA

➢ Advanced Grievance
  Ernie Thorne, Executive V/P, OPFFA
  Neil McKinnon, Toronto Fire

➢ General Session Issues – Which consisted of
  • EMS Committee Update
  • Update on London Arbitration
    John Hassan, London Fire
  • Fight Back Campaigns
    Pat Burke
  • In-Depth Presentation on the New Tax Laws for Ontario Labour Unions
    Colin Green, Associate – Gowlings Law Firm
• Fred LeBlanc  
   IAFF 13th District VP

• Open Session – Town Hall Meeting  
   Carmen Santoro, President  
   Ernie Thorne, Executive Vice President  
   Josh Bizjak, Director of Outreach and Development

• Building & Maintaining Public Relations  
   Marcel Wieder, President & CEO, Aurora Strategy Group Inc.

• Benefits Committee  
   Kevin McCarthy, Chair  
   Dave Jarrett, Member  
   Mike Palachik, Member

• OPFFA Advocates – Bargaining Trends  
   Jeff Nester  
   Mike Doyle  
   Bob McCutcheon  
   Rob Hyndman  
   Rob Greve

• Ontario Health Study  
   Kelly McDonald, Program Manager

• Occupational Disease Claims Update  
   Gavin Jacklyn & Andrew Lee, OCC Disease Co-Chairs

• Federal Election Update  
   Scott Marks, IAFF Assistant to the General President, Canadian Operations

• Update on Relative Legal Issues  
   Howard Goldblatt

• Harassment in the Workplace  
   Cynthia Peterson, Goldblatt Partners  
   Mandy Wojcik, Goldblatt Partners

• Media Training – Radio, Newspaper & Television Interviews  
   Laura Farcassi, Sussex Strategy  
   Jeff Silverstein, Sussex Strategy

• Dealing with Municipal Council and Managing Deputations Effectively  
   Laura Farcassi, Sussex Strategy  
   Jeff Silverstein, Sussex Strategy

• Camp Bucko  
   Steve Heidinga, Pickering  
   Andrew Niven, Camp Bucko

• Update on Bargainng Issues
Jeffrey Sack, Jeffrey Sack Law

This year’s Dr. Eric G. Taylor Spring Labour Education Seminar was held April 3rd to 7th, 2016 at the Marriott Gateway Hotel in Niagara Falls, with 211 participants. The General Session was on Monday and Thursday for all participants. The participants were also to choose one of the five courses from the following selection for Tuesday and Wednesday.

Courses:

- **General Session**
- **Advanced WSIB Topics**
  
  Chris Wheeler, WSIB Committee Chair, OPFFA
- **Grievance – Level I**
  
  Ernie Thorne, Secretary/Treasurer OPFFA
  Neil McKinnon, Toronto PFFA
- **Union Stewardship & the OPFFA**
  
  Warren Scott, District 5 Vice President, OPFFA
  Eric Nordlund, District 7 Vice President, OPFFA
  Sean Beer, London PFFA
- **Brother Barry Quinn Advanced Bargaining Course**
  
  Chris Francescone, Secretary Treasurer, OPFFA
  Mike Pauze, District 3, V/P, OPFFA
  Bob McCutcheon, Clarington PFFA
- **General Issues**
  - which consisted of:
    - **Government Relations 101**
      
      Steve Peters, Former Speaker of the House
      Adam McDonald, OPFFA Research & Communications Director
    - **Panel – Bill 109 & Two Hatters**
      
      Howard Goldblatt, Goldblatt Partners
      Fred LeBlanc, IAFF District 13 VP
      Carmen Santoro, OPFFA President
    - **OMERS Presentation**
      
      Frank Ramagnano, OMERS SC
      Bill Aziz, OMERS AC
      George Cooke, OMERS Chair
• IAFF Update
  Scott Marks, Assistant to the General President, IAFF

• Challenging Gender in Emergency Services
  Jona Olsson, Director – Cultural Bridges to Justice

• Benefits Committee Presentation
  Kevin McCarthy, Benefits Committee Chair
  Holly Murphy & Bill Harford, MROO

• PTSD Presentation
  Chris Dawson, Edgewood Health Network

• President's Address
  Carmen Santoro, OPFFA President

• London Issues
  Steve Barrett, LPP, Goldblatt Partners

• Advocates Panel
  Chris Varcoe, Moderator
  Bob McCutcheon, IAFF Advocate
  Rob Hyndman, IAFF Advocate
  Jeff Nester, IAFF Advocate

• Interest Arbitration – Changes Across Canada
  Sean McManus, LPP, McManus & Hubler

• IAFF Media – Fighting Back
  Mark Treglio, Director of Strategic Campaigns & Media Relations, IAFF

• MD Canada Presentation
  Pam Musgrave, Senior Regional Manager, MD Canada
  Carrie Gibson, MD Canada
  Owen McGonigal, MD Canada

• IAFF Secretary/Treasurer Candidate
  Edward A. Kelly, Boston Fire Fighters Local 718

• Bargaining Trends Across the Province
  Jeffery Sack, LPP – Jeffery Sack Law
The format for our Labour Education Seminars has been widely accepted by the participants after reviewing the Assessment Forms. The upcoming Fall Seminar is scheduled for October 2nd to the 6th, 2016, and once again at the Marriott Gateway Hotel in Niagara Falls. At this seminar we will have the General Session only on Monday and Thursday, at which time there will be a variety of speakers and topics covered. The information on topics, guest speakers and courses being offered at this upcoming seminar will be communicated to all members in the near future.

The Education Committee consists of Mark Train, Greg Horton and I, Ed Kennedy as the Chair. We are assisted by the OPFFA President Carmen Santoro, OPFFA District #3 Vice President Mike Pauze, OPFFA District #5 Vice President Warren Scott and our Events Co-ordinator Julie Chambers.

Last year the Education Committee sent a survey out to the Locals asking various questions pertaining to our overall seminar program. Overall the results were very favourable on our format, courses offered, location, costs, etc., but we will still be reviewing input from the Locals and the Committee and/or the Executive Board will make the appropriate changes or adjustments to the seminar program so that it can continually improve to look after the needs of our members.

We will continue to work in providing courses and topics which are pertinent to our members, and we also take into consideration comments and suggestions from the Seminar Assessment Forms when preparing our next seminar.

In closing, my committee would like to thank OPFFA President Carmen Santoro, the OPFFA Executive Board, and in particular, Julie Chambers, our Events Co-ordinator for their hard work and support along with their assistance in preparing materials and information for these seminars.

Fraternally,

Ed Kennedy
Chair- OPFFA Education Committee
Report of the EMS Committee

June 2015 – May 2016

To all Officers and Delegates attending the 19th Annual Convention of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association at Blue Mountain Resort, June 12th to 15th 2016. On behalf of the Committee, I am submitting the following report:

Dear Brothers & Sisters;

President Santoro activated the 2014/15 EMS Committee on July 8th, 2014. Initially, there were four members appointed. They include, Jamie Kallio from Niagara Falls, Rob Brandon, Whitby and Brian Edwards of Cambridge and John Sobey, Ottawa. District Vice President (1) Brent Heppell served as the executive liaison. Each had served previously on the committee and whose experience and education as former paramedics have and remain to be invaluable to the work before the committee. On July 10th, President Santoro announced a new member to the committee. Brother Ken Webb (L3888) accepted the committee position. Ken, like the other committee members, comes with an extensive paramedic/EMS background. He currently chairs Local 3888’s EMS Committee.

Since its adoption in 2012, the EMS Committee continues to work to improve the emergency medical service capabilities of professional fire fighters. This past year, the committee’s efforts were to support the OPFFA executive to develop a legislative strategy for a provincial wide trial to permit fire fighters with a paramedic training and certification to apply those skills under local base hospital and medical director’s direction and control through their respective municipal fire service.

In accordance with the terms of reference, the EMS Committee promotes standards for training for professional fire fighters providing emergency medical response as well as work in concert with the OPFFA Legislative Committee on any matters requiring legislative attention and assist the President and executive of the OPFFA on related issues they may refer to this committee including relations with stakeholder agencies and associations.

This report highlights the EMS Committee’s work through July of 2015 to May 2016. While committee met at the times noted in this report, it should be duly noted that countless hours were spent individually researching and reporting to the OPFFA executive not to mention the numerous email discussions. Included are just some of the meetings, events and activities the committee engaged in.

On August 19th the committee met with OPFFA principle executive officers in Burlington. Discussions addressed the strategy regarding Fire Medic and Symptom Relief proposal introduced in 2014.

August 25th – 28th, the EMS committee chair attended the IAFF EMS Conference and participated in several Canadian and U.S. fire/ EMS related presentations, best practices with latest trauma equipment and techniques as well as meeting and discussing fire/ems programs and issues with other IAFF delegates. President Santoro and the chair met with IAFF communications staff, 13th District Vice President, Fred Leblanc and Canadian Assistant to the General President, Scott Marks to discuss possible media strategies.
Brothers Kallio, Edwards and Brandon attended the Paramedic Chiefs' conference in June 2015, in Niagara Falls, on behalf of the Committee and for Chief Lane’s presentation on the Winnipeg Fire/EMS model. While there, they met with several members of the paramedic community.

In October, the committee attended and made presentation to the delegation on EMS efforts and strategy during the OPFFA Fall Labour Education Seminar.

To assist the OPFFA executive, the committee collected, shared and reviewed several reports and position papers such as:

- The Toronto Fire and EMS service and organization study.
- Evidence based optimizing urban fire fighters as first responders to EMS events by Alan M. Craig, MScPl, P. Richard Verbeek, MD, and Brian Schwartz, MD.
- Responses to the Ontario government (MOHLTC and MCSCS) from CUPE, Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, Ontario Base Hospital Physicians Group.
- The Health Professional Regulatory Advisory Council for Paramedic and Emergency Medical Responder Attendants Regulations on the Fire Medic and Symptom Relief roles by fire fighters.
- Review of the Drummond Report on “Optimizing Human Resources Capacity” when providing health care to Ontarians and Minister Hoskins remarks regarding “Innovation” at the Health Achieve conference.
- The committee assisted the legislative committee with a fact sheet on “Enhancing Medical Response through the Fire Service”, an issue promoting the use of fire fighters who are qualified as paramedics.
- The committee further prepared a Myth and Fact page for OPFFA members as well as a discussion paper on the on emergency medical response with the use of fire fighter/paramedics.
- Provided an INTREPID article on the role of the EMS committee since its inception as an ad hoc group formed in 2012.
- Review the 2016 Canadian Consensus Guidelines on First Aid and CPR.
- Assessed best training and certification option for fire fighters who do not hold Emergency Medical care Attendant, Primary or Advanced Care Paramedic certification.

The chair wishes to take this time to commend the efforts of brothers Webb, Kallio, Edwards, Brandon and DVP Heppell for providing insight through their knowledge and experience in EMS.

In conclusion, I would be remiss if I did not extend my thanks to the members of the OPFFA Executive Board for their continued assistance and guidance. A most sincere thank you to Julie, Kelly & Adam at the Provincial office whose invaluable assistance is truly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

John Sobey
Chair, EMS Committee
Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association
Report of the Finance Committee

June 2015 – May 2016

To all Officers and Delegates attending the 19th Annual Convention of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association at Blue Mountain Resort, June 12th to 15th 2016. On behalf of the Committee, I am submitting the following report:

Dear Brothers & Sisters;

The Finance Committee for the 2015-2016 budget year consisted of the following members:

Paul Evans, OakvillePFFA, Chair
Greg Silvester, BellevillePFFA, Member
Scott Ellis, BarriePFFA, Member
Shay Currie, WindsorPFFA, Member

The Finance Committee follows a Terms of Reference as follows:

- To examine the expenditures of The Association in order to ensure accountability and accuracy
- To monitor the accounts of and budget to date of The Association periodically throughout the budget year
- To assist the Secretary Treasurer and Principal Officers with the preparation of the proposed budget
- To educate and/or assist Locals with any and all enquiries regarding Local finances
- To assist The President of the OPFFA with any and all matters pertaining to the operation of the OPFFA

The Finance Committee met on December 10, 2015 at the OPFFA office with all members present with the exception of Scott Ellis who sent regrets as he was unable to attend. At the outset of this meeting new committee member Shay Currie was welcomed aboard and after introductions was given an orientation as to the operation and responsibilities of the Finance Committee. The committee randomly reviewed the expense reports of one half of Principal and Executive Officers as well as OPFFA Committees and credit card statements. A number of small issues were identified and immediately explained by Kelly King to the satisfaction of the committee. It was determined by the committee that everything reviewed appeared reasonable and appropriate and in compliance with OPFFA guidelines. We put forth several suggestions thru the Secretary Treasury of items for possible inclusion in new OPFFA governance document, of added detail on expense forms and some proposed language cleanup.

Budget

The overall budget appears to be in a good state at this point in time and we are optimistically anticipating another fairly significant budget surplus thanks to sound fiscal policies and controls as applied by the Principal and Executive Officers.
The budget year to date figures were examined by the committee and with only a few exceptions accounts are in surplus or heading towards surplus by year’s end. The few deficits noted were easily explained by Secretary Treasurer Chris Francescone and Financial Coordinator Kelly King to the committee’s satisfaction.

The committee has a second meeting scheduled for May 13 at which time review of Officers expenses will continue as well as Review of the Auditor’s Report and proposed 2016/2017 OPFFA budget.

In conclusion, I would be remiss if I did not extend my thanks to the members of the OPFFA Executive Board for their continued assistance and guidance. A most sincere thank you to Julie, Kelly & Adam at the Provincial office whose invaluable assistance is truly appreciated.

Respectively submitted,

Paul Evans
OPFFA Finance Committee Chair
Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association
Report of the Health and Safety Committee

June 2015 – May 2016

To all Officers and Delegates attending the 19th Annual Convention of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association at Blue Mountain Resort, June 12th to 15th 2016. On behalf of the Committee, I am submitting the following report:

Dear Brothers & Sisters;

I would like to start by thanking the members of the committee for all the work and time they have spent helping locals on health and safety issues and work at the Section 21 table over the last year. Members Warren McGillivray from Guelph, Jeff Topliffe from Windsor and the newest member Dan Worrall from Clarington have spent numerous hours working on behalf of the OPFFA. I also have to thank our board liaison DVP Osterberg and the entire OPFFA board for the continued support and backing on several issues the committee has been involved with. Also on behalf of the committee I would personally like to thank the Provincial office staff who are top notch and help keep this committee running smoothly. Thank you Julie, Kelly and Adam for all you do for this committee and the entire OPFFA membership it doesn’t go unnoticed.

It has been another busy year for the committee at the Provincial and at the Section 21 table. The resolution from the Sault Ste. Marie Convention in June of 2013 that was discussed within the last convention report has finally been published as Guidance Note #1-8 Considerations for New Fire Apparatus and became part of the manual in September of 2015. It took the committee two years to get this approved but that time was needed to do the research and to lobby the other members of the committee to make sure it was completed properly. Thanks again to Brother McGillivray for all the work on this file.

We have had a difficult time over the last couple years at the Section 21 table as several guidance notes went missing after they were approved to be sent to the MOL for consultation. After questioning the MOL and doing an investigation on what was missing, action was finally taken by the MOL. It has taken the committee a year to almost complete everything and to get back on track. With the delays things slowed down on the approval process but all the notes that were in the approval process have been approved and the changes have taken place other than one note. More notes are still in the approval stages but should be out shortly on the new information submitted. The Fire Services Section 21 Committee is the most advanced and has more notes then all the other committees combined. Due to our relationship on both sides of the table we are able to put safety first and work to making the Province of Ontario one of the safest. The committee is going through a transitional change over the next couple months with some members leaving from the management side and an overall change in administrative duties changing hands. Currently the MOL takes care of the committee but the last couple months myself along with the management co-chair and the MOL have started to make the change to have PSHSA take over these duties. Some concerns have been shared regarding this change but we have been assured that the MOL will still be in control of the guidance notes and material and will be relying on PSHSA for the administrative duties to help relieve the MOL of some of the work load. The OPFFA board is aware of this change and I will continue to keep the board and membership informed of the changes as they take place. One positive note is we are going to try and post all the
guidance notes on the PSHSA website which will give everyone better and faster access to notes on the internet once completed.

On the OPFFA issues it has been a very busy year. We are dealing with attacks on man power, personal protective equipment and an overall change in the way we are exposed to hazards during and after a fire or emergency scene. The following are some of the major issues we have been dealing with and what the committee has been involved with over the last year:

- A consultation paper was sent to the MOL regarding the new Ontario Hearing Standard and having the standard apply to all sectors within the H&S Act. We are in favour of this change but wanted the Ministry to understand that within certain aspects of firefighting hearing protection may hinder our response or put us in danger.

- The new Working at Heights consultation is still moving forward and to be proactive the Section 21 is creating a guidance note to address this issue. During emergency scenes we do not fall within this regulation but during inspections on construction sites members may encounter areas where they would have to be signed off on this new clause. We still all have to be reminded that when working at heights we must take extra caution and follow all guidance notes and any department policy.

- The current firefighter OHSA 714 regulation is outdated and needs changing. The OPFFA membership worked on proposed changes to this section and presented this to the OPFFA board and to the Section 21 Committee. This document was presented to the policy working group and the individual representing this group was very impressed with what we presented but we were told this is a long process and she wasn’t sure what will move forward and get approved. We will keep everyone informed on any information and if changes are coming.

- The brothers in Sault Ste. Marie have taken a 25% reduction in staffing and the MOL was called in to seek help on the current operating guidelines the city has in place. The city cut back staff but didn’t change the way they operate so action had to be taken. Unfortunately the MOL hasn’t acted on this issue of not having OG/OP’s matching guidance notes and an appeal has been filed at the Ontario Labour Relations Board for the lack of action the MOL has provided. Although this appeal won’t get the manpower back it will and should force city administration to write proper operating procedures on how to respond to emergencies with the staffing they have which is well below a properly staffed department.

- The decontamination issue that has been moving around the Niagara area has been another hot topic. The MOL are called into investigate occupational disease claims as warranted under the OHSA Section 52.2. When the MOL went into investigate St. Catharines and then Niagara Falls orders were issued to make changes to decontamination on scene and at the station and other issues. I commend the committees of both locals for the work they have put towards these issues and the positive changes they have made for their departments. I attended a meeting in that area with members of all local departments and administrative members with the MOL. The OAFC members were trying to change the mind of the MOL on the orders issued but after a lengthy discussion nothing is changing but more guidance was requested and is coming. We all need to do better to decontaminate after a fire scene from the time you exit the building to the time you put the truck back into service and everything in between. At no time should dirty bunker gear, breathing apparatus or any other type of equipment that is dirty be placed back
into a fire apparatus. This dirt is slowly killing the membership on the ride back to the station. The Section 21 Committee is currently working on guidance note to address this issue but that takes time so please contact the committee or the departments that have made improvements and ask what needs to be done. This isn’t just a Niagara area issue as they are going throughout the province when a claim is processed so please educate yourself, ask questions and make sure you have proper OG/OP’s in place.

- The committee has also been in contact with the Ontario Fire College over two issues. One issue was the possible cancelation of the High Rise Firefighting course they put on which is a direct result out of the 2 Forest Lane Fire inquest where six occupants perished in the fire. The Fire College was hoping to cancel this course but with push back it looks like it will be updated and will continue to be offered. This is an excellent course but needs to be supported by departments by sending members to it or it will end up on the chopping block. The other issue is the changes to the NFPA 1407 standard on RIT. Currently the program is in abeyance and the college is going to be making changes to the current program they are offering. The changes coming are to implement the NFPA 1407 standard to coincide with all the other NFPA course they currently offer. With this change the current fire ground survival section will be dropped and the new course will be taking its place which will instruct individuals on how to teach the RIT program and have better control over who the instructors will be. We have concerns with this process as the fire ground survival program is the building blocks of the RIT program. Without this training firefighters will not get the specific training that could get them out of trouble before they get in so deep they can’t help themselves and need to be rescued. By removing the basics and going with the NFPA standard this section is part of the firefighter level one and is part of that course. For members that have been grandfathered a possible upgrade course will be created. We are taking part in the process and will keep the membership informed of the direction this course will be moving towards.

- The Patrick J. DeFazio Health and Safety Seminar was once again held this past February in Toronto. It was a week of education and instruction on several H&S issues. The new hotel and location had some issues throughout the week but the seminar content went on as planned. This year we also hosted the IAFF Peer Fitness Instructors Course and filled the room which was good to see several locals taking part in this event. The OPffa actually owns the fitness equipment now so next time we put on a course it will be easier and cheaper to run. We also had a level one and level two H&S certification courses. The members taking these courses needed this to be certified members and put them within the old system of certification before the changes took place later that month. Next year’s seminar is already in the planning stages as it looks like next year will be the 20th year the OPFFA has held a standalone H&S seminar.

- We have also had several emails, phone calls and discussions throughout the year on several other issues. The committee is always available to answer any questions or concerns and are here to help local committees find answers to their issues.

- Our twitter account @OPFFAHealth is growing and currently sits around 730 followers. We continually post health and safety tips and information so all the followers can read the information and educate themselves.

Once again I would like to thank the board for giving me the privilege of chairing this committee and working on behalf of the OPFFA Membership. I also need to thank the members of my own Local of
Timmins IAFF 535 for covering my shifts when I’m away representing the Province and last but not least my family for putting up with my time away and time spent on working on behalf of the members of this great organization. At times they think I have another family down south which I say I don’t which really isn’t true as we are a family of 11,000 strong. Stay safe and remember to always adapt and overcome whatever faces you!

Respectively submitted,

John Mavrinac

John Mavrinac
Health and Safety Chair
Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association
Report of the Human Relations Committee

As Chair of the Human Relations Committee, I respectfully submit the following report in accordance with the Constitution and By-laws of the OPFFA.

This Committee is comprised of Shawn Mifflin (Chatham-Kent), Cassandra Greer (Ottawa) and Hugh Doherty (Toronto), and Executive Board representative Ann Bryan.

This year has been a busy and informative one as we continue to strive to educate and assist our Locals with human rights issues whether they be code or non-code based. Additionally the Committee has seen a dramatic increase in requests regarding behavioural health and additional mental health concerns for our members.

The Committee has had a number of inquiries on the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace a number of municipalities have begun discussions on implementing various recommendations associated with the standard. The Provincial government has begun consultations on amendments to the OH&SA. The OPFFA Committee was represented at an information session on the development of a Code of Conduct for employers and employees in the workplace. The Committee anticipates that increasing more locals will have opportunities to implement many of the recommendation in their workplaces. The Committee continues to see a dramatic number of calls from locals requesting information on dealing with mental health and accommodation issues within in the workplace.

In preparation for these changes to the OH&SA the Committee has attended lectures and many educational seminars. In conjunction with the Health and Safety Committee and the WSIB Committee collectively we strive to ensure all current information is available to our Locals to serve the members of the OPFFA.

We continue to assist Locals in various ways to ensure they have the most up to date information to address concerns ranging from grievance awards, to settlements or rulings from the Human Rights Tribunal.

We follow our mission statement which identifies the areas where we can assist every local.

- Improve relationships and promote understanding among all brother and sister firefighters
- Encourage acceptance of our differences without bias or indifference
- Encourage greater utilization of the IAFF Human Relations Committee
- Develop educational guidelines and provide current educational material/seminars to OPFFA members
- Encourage professional development and continuing education and continuing education of committee members

We continue to update the OPFFA database with current and relevant articles, arbitration awards, and/or rulings from the Ontario Human Rights Commission. We will continue to provide updates on the best practices to address complaints and how to best represent our members as complainants and respondents.
The Committee looks forward to providing additional information and responding to your requests for information. While addressing human rights and non-code issues may be very complex, with various methods of resolutions (grievance, tribunals, mediation), timely responses are critical for a positive outcome for those involved we urge all Locals to continue your education regarding human rights.

In closing, on behalf of the Human Relations Committee I would like to thank Warren Scott for his past assistance on the Committee. To President Santoro and the entire Executive Board thank you for your strong support. Finally, thank you to the members for your trust in us to provide you with information on dealing with your concerns regarding human relations and workplace issues.

A most sincere thank you to Julie, Kelly & Adam at the OPFFA office whose invaluable assistance is truly appreciated.

It has been a pleasure to serve the members of the OPFFA.

Fraternally

Hugh Doherty, Chair
On behalf of the Human Relations Committee
2016 Report of the Legislative Committee  
Ernie Thorne, EVP

The OPFFA Legislative Committee, as mandated by our Constitution and By-Laws, is comprised of all members of the Executive Committee and is chaired by Executive Vice-President Ernie Thorne.

Highlights of the year consist of various government relations and political action initiatives to advance our legislative agenda. Some of those activities are listed below.

The Federal Election occurred in the Fall of 2015 which resulted in the election of a majority Liberal Government with Justin Trudeau as their leader. Working with the IAFF, a number of Locals were involved in the Federal political campaigns to strengthen our ties with candidates, many of whom were elected. In April 2016, at the IAFF Legislative Conference held in Ottawa, our Locals reported that their meetings with their elected representatives were easier to arrange this year and the MPPs and their staff were engaged in discussions relating to our political “asks”. In addition, for the first time in the 23 year history of the IAFF Legislative Conference, the delegates were addressed by a sitting Prime Minister.

Following the June 2015 Ontario Election, Premier Wynne made the following Cabinet appointments (where the OPFFA has the most interaction): Charles Sousa, Minister of Finance; Kevin Flynn, Minister of Labour; Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health & Long Term Care; Yasir Naqvi, Minister of Community Safety & Correctional Services; Ted McMeekin, Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing; and, Madeleine Meilleur, Attorney General. While we have a good working relationship with these Ministers, we found ourselves working on the relationships over the next few months with a number of new staff for all MPPs, including Cabinet Ministers and the Premier. These staff positions include their Chief of Staff, Senior Policy Advisor, and Director of Stakeholder Relations. Just as relationships were getting established with these new staff members, as a result of the Liberal majority Government at the Federal level in the Fall of 2015, a majority of them moved to Ottawa to accept positions. We have since spent the last few months once again working with new staff to establish good working relationships.

In February of 2016, a Provincial by-election was held in the riding of Whitby-Oshawa. The Whitby Local backed Liberal candidate Elizabeth Roy to become the area MPP. The Local’s decision to support Ms. Roy, a Whitby Municipal Councillor, was based on sound reasoning, “We support those that support public safety”. As a City Councillor, Councillor Roy’s record of support for public safety was consistent. Gold & Black T-Shirts were prevalent at Campaign Headquarters with Whitby member Bob Brandon taking a leadership role with the Local’s efforts. Unfortunately, Ms. Roy was not successful in her bid to become the area MPP. Notwithstanding the outcome, the Local’s efforts were not only appreciated, they were also recognized for their significant contribution by the political pundits.

As a result of Convention action in 2015, the agenda for our 2015 Annual Legislative Conference in November was established: to expand presumptive legislation to include coverage for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) for our members; to have the Ontario Fire Marshal conduct a review of the Integrated Risk Management (IRM) tool; and, to expand our role in the delivery of emergency medical services in municipalities in Ontario through a Fire based Emergency Medical Services – Primary Care Paramedic (EMS-PCP) model.
On April 5th, the third reading of the presumptive legislation to include Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) received unanimous support in the Ontario Legislature and it received Royal Accent on April 6, 2016. Once again, the work of our Locals in the area of political action has provided a positive result. We continue to meet with MPPs and their staff to have the Ontario Fire Marshal (OFM) conduct a review of the Integrated Risk Management (IRM) tool. In addition, we have attended meetings with the Fire Marshal to articulate the frustration with what we believe to be inaction by the OFM in those municipalities that are unilaterally reducing fire services without first conducting a comprehensive risk assessment.

We have had a number of meetings this past years as we continue to educate MPPs and their staff on the value that Fire Fighters provide at emergency medical incidents and how using paramedic trained Fire Fighters would enhance that delivery. We have also meet with Cabinet Ministers and their staff to explain how Ontario’s Professional Fire Fighters can make a difference to Ontarians in their time of need.

We also continue to educate MPPs on the benefits of the rapid response that the Fire Service can provide when it comes to emergency medical incidents. We remind them that by using simultaneously notification capabilities, Fire Fighters can be dispatched more quickly with EMS to life threatening medical emergencies - Ontario’s Fire Service can make a difference to Ontarians in their time of need. We continue to advocate for the Government to continue funding technological changes to provide for the simultaneous notification of Ontario’s Fire Services to medical emergencies.

The Ontario Paramedic Association (OPA) continues to seek regulation through the Minister of Health and Long Term Care. Since 2013, the OPFFA has corresponded and met on a number of occasions with the Minister of Health & Long Term Care expressing our opposition to this initiative of the OPA.

**Other Government Relations Activity**

Over the past few months, we have met with Minister Flynn to discuss the Arbitration System. As you are aware, the Association of Municipalities (AMO) continues to take their complaints with Arbitration to the media in an attempt to distort the truth to tilt the system in their favour. As a result of AMO’s tactics, we continue to meet with the appropriate representatives to advocate our position to maintain the fair and impartial system currently in place.

In December 2015, BILL 109 passed into law which made a number of changes to legislation, including but not limited to 3 areas that directly affects Fire Fighters: to amend the FPPA to now include expedited Arbitration for our members in areas of labour relations; to allow for disputes to be heard by the Ontario Labour Relations Board and not in the courts, like other labour relations groups (an example would be 2 hatter issues); and, to make changes in the way that survivor benefits are paid as a result of a deceased worker’s occupation at the time of the worker’s injury or diagnosis instead of statutory minimums. All of these changes were advocated for by the OPFFA.

Throughout the year we also attended a number of political events in an effort to build, enhance and maintain relationships with elected officials and their staff. We strive to achieve this with all three political parties.
The work by our Local leaders does not go unnoticed. We are continually told of the good work that is going on back home by Fire Fighters in the communities of the MPPs we see at Queen’s Park. Thank you for being that positive presence that makes a difference as we all work to improve the lives and working conditions of our members.

Respectfully submitted,

Ernie Thorne
Chair, Legislative Committee
OPFFA
Report of the Occupational Disease Committee

June 2015 – May 2016

To all Officers and Delegates attending the 19th Annual Convention of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association at Blue Mountain Resort, June 12th to 15th 2016. On behalf of the Committee, I am submitting the following report:

Dear Brothers & Sisters;

This past year has seen a lot of change to the Occupational Disease Committee. Andrew and I were appointed to chairs of the committee, with the important task of fulfilling the duties for our active and retired members dealing with occupational diseases and illnesses. There were a number of challenges and obstacles early on, but as time went on we have begun to find the comfort level that is needed to accomplish our tasks. We would like to thank President Santoro and 13th District VP Fred Leblanc for their assistance and guidance over the past year. As you can imagine it was very challenging and overwhelming going from committee members to Co-Chairs within such a short time frame.

In early December the committee had the two vacant positions filled with Rob Shaunnesy from Sault Ste Marie and Moira White from Orillia. We have been slowly introducing them to their new roles and are beginning to do claim work on their own. They are both becoming familiar with the WSIB Repository and Database. Educating the committee is still a top priority and we are constantly taking part and searching for new opportunities. Please don’t hesitate to contact them if you need any assistance especially if your Local is in the north.

Over the past year we have tried to get the Database and WSIB Repository updated. It has taken many hours, but we are getting much more accurate data and claims information uploaded. In the fall, we put a lot of time as did others in having the legislation changes made to uphold the proper payment of spousal benefits. These changes allow for our past, current and future spouses to maintain financial stability after their spouse have passed away from LODD. During the last 12 months have been very busy with claim work dealing with the allowance of prostate and lung cancers. We have seen an influx of both cancers and dealing with the previously denied claims and having them rejudicated and benefits being paid. The committee is gearing up for the skin cancer claims which will be adjudicated beginning January 1, 2017. We are currently contacting locals trying to update files and contacting families who have lost spouses to skin cancer.

In early May the committee will be travelling to Timmins to assist a number of agencies and Unions with a large intake for many miners and their families who have suffered occupational diseases over the years while working in the mines. This is a large time frame from the 1940’s through to the 1970’s. This is going to be a great educational session for Rob and Moira, but it is a great opportunity for our organization to assist injured workers and their families. The other Agencies and Unions are ecstatic that our organization is assisting them.

We would just like to say thanks for allowing us to assist your locals and their families over the past year. It has been a very rewarding experience and we look forward to assisting in the future. The committee’s mandate hasn’t changed at all as well as the services provided. You can contact us at
anytime and we will have contact with you as quick as possible from one of the committee members. We are always available if you need assistance with intakes or claim work.

In conclusion, I would be remiss if I did not extend my thanks to the members of the OPFFA Executive Board for their continued assistance and guidance. A most sincere thank you to Julie, Kelly & Adam at the Provincial office whose invaluable assistance is truly appreciated.

Respectively submitted,

Gavin Jacklyn
Co – Chair Occupational Disease Committee
Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association
Report of the Pension Committee

June 2015 – May 2016

To all Officers and Delegates attending the 19th Annual Convention of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association at Blue Mountain Resort, June 12th to 15th 2016. On behalf of the Committee, I am submitting the following report:

Dear Brothers & Sisters;

The 2015-2016 Pension Committee consisted of myself, Erik Leicht, Ottawa as Chair and committee member Dave McComb from Ajax. The Executive Board liaison to the committee has been DVP Chris Varcoe. Frank Ramagnano (Toronto) was elected Co-Chair of the OMERS Sponsor Corporation during this term.

The role of the Pension committee is to attend OMERS Stakeholder meetings and any other required meetings, and to address any pension questions and concerns from the Executive Board, OPFFA Local Executives and OPFFA members.

The following are the highlights of 2015-2016 term:

**Contribution Stabilization**

Contributions rates adjusted in in January 2015, have remained unchanged for 2016 and through 2017.

| Contribution rates: |  |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Normal retirement age 60 members | On earnings up to CPP earnings limit* | 9.2% |
|                       | On earnings over CPP earnings limit* | 15.8% |
| Normal retirement age 65 members | On earnings up to CPP earnings limit* | 9.0% |
|                       | On earnings over CPP earnings limit* | 14.6% |

*2016 YMPE $54,900

**OMERS – Strong**

In 2015, OMERS net assets rose above $77 Billion. This increase was due to a 6.7% net return, exceeding its long term funding requirement of 6.5%.

The funding ratio increased from 90.8% to 91.5%.

In 2015, OMERS saw 18000 new members and 8000 new retirees.

Strong OMERS investments are very important as the ratio of workers to retirees in 2015 was 2:1.

**OMERS AVC**
OMERS has over 13,000 members participating in the Additional Voluntary Contributions with over 500 million dollars invested. In 2015, members received the same 6.7% return on their AVC as the OMERS Plan did. AVC are offered on a cost recovery basis, presently a nominal $35 annual administration fee is applied. AVCs can be used, similarly to RRSP, to purchase eligible past service. OMERS continues to work on enabling members to maintain their money in the AVC after age 71. After age 71 the AVC would start paying members a percentage of their AVC monthly or yearly, similar to Registered Retirement Income Fund (RRIF).

**OMERS 2020 Strategy**

OMERS continued goal is to remain a leading model for Defined Benefit Pension Sustainability.

The strategy for 2020 is to have; an inclusive Sponsors Corporation and Administration Corporation, a target of growth and innovation, and a strong balance between pensions and investments.

By 2020 OMERS expects to be 98% funded, with 90% satisfaction of members, employers and pensioners, and to maintain stable costs of the plan.

OMERS constantly must work through external themes affecting the plan. The changing demographics of fewer workers to pensioners, low return investment environment, and a changing pension landscape with proposed changes to the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and creation of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP), is always a focus of OMERS

**Pensioners Increase**

January 1, 2016, OMERS Pensioners received a 1.16% increase to their pensions. The increase is determined by Statistics Canada information based on the Canadian Consumer Price Index (CPI).

**Stakeholder Meetings**

OMERS held an online webinar Fall Stakeholder meeting on October 20, 2015, and the Spring Stakeholder meeting on April 4, 2016. The committee was represented at both meetings. The meetings have a very transparent way about them as all questions by both in-person and on-line attendees are answered by the OMERS management team. The meetings can be viewed at [www.omers.com](http://www.omers.com)

Thank you to the Executive Board, Julie, Kelly and Adam for their continued support and assistance throughout the 2015-2016 term. The committee would like to sincerely thank all departing executive members for their time and dedication towards constantly improving Professional Firefighting. The committee looks forward to continuing to server the OPFFA membership and working with a new executive board.

Respectively submitted on behalf of the Committee,

Erik Leicht, Chair  
Pension Committee  
Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association
Report of the Retiree Committee

June 2015 – May 2016

To all Officers and Delegates attending the 19th Annual Convention of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association at Blue Mountain Resort, June 12th to 15th 2016. On behalf of the Committee, I am submitting the following report:

Dear Brothers & Sisters;

As per the resolution passed at last year’s convention, President Santoro struck a retiree committee in November, consisting of two retired members and two active members. The committee members consisted of retired members Alan Thomas, formerly of the Toronto local, and Randy Richards, formerly of the Sault Ste Marie local. Active members included Kris Volpel, of the Sudbury local, and myself, as Chair. Executive Vice President Ernie Thorne served as our executive liaison.

As per the terms of reference, the committee’s task was to investigate what role, if any, OPFFA retirees can play in using their political knowledge and education to further the needs of the OPFFA in the political arena. The committee members exchanged multiple emails, and several telephone conferences were held. The committee issued a survey to the locals to gather information on the interest of having retirees involved with the OPFFA. Approximately 75% of the locals responded that there could be a use for retired members in some capacity within the political arena, and that they would be accepting of this.

The committee investigated different options for the use of retirees along with gathering information on the use of retirees across Canada by IAFF locals. The committee also investigated the IAFF’s active-retiree member program. One of the committees concerns with the use of retirees in any form is that the retirees need to have the same agenda and goals as the OPFFA. The committee feels that the use of retiree members would require a strict set of guidelines for the retirees. Based on the information gathered by the committee, the committee, as per the term of reference, drafted a resolution and submitted it to the board for consideration.

In conclusion, I would be remiss if I did not extend my thanks to the committee members, IAFF 13th District Vice President Fred LeBlanc, and members of the OPFFA Executive Board for their continued assistance and guidance. A most sincere thank you to Julie, Kelly & Adam at the Provincial office whose invaluable assistance is truly appreciated.

Respectively submitted,

Neil DeLory, Chair
Retiree Committee
Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association
Report of the OPFFA WSIB Committee

June 2015 – May 2016

To all Officers and Delegates attending the 19th Annual Convention of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association at Blue Mountain Resort, June 12th to 15th 2016. On behalf of the Committee, I am submitting the following report:

Dear Brothers & Sisters;

This past year that the committee has dealt with many PTSD claims and the ongoing problems at WSIB. The change in attitude at WSIB to reduce the unfunded liability has created a large workload with complex claims. The result is significant appeals both oral and written and extending on into the WSIAT. I am encouraged by the WSIB return to work program that was produces with the help of the OPFFA WSIB committee. The continued support from the OPFFA Board is a testament to the board support of the ongoing hard work the committee continues to do. My thanks to Daryl Smith and Mike Roy, Gavin Jacklyn and Andrew Lee for there support, encouragement. This past year has brought many complex issues to the committee and without there support and dedication the outcome has been successful. The Executive board of the OPFFA continues to support and encourage education of the committee. This report would not be complete without thanking Julie, Kelly and Adam at the Provincial Office whose guidance and assistance in so many helps this committee work a lot easier.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>May 2015</th>
<th>G8 Meeting, Hamilton LAC meeting</th>
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<tr>
<td>June 2015</td>
<td>G8 meeting, Minister of Labour, Written submission course Mississauga, OHCOW board meeting, WSIB accommodation working group</td>
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<td>July 2015</td>
<td>G8 meeting at ONA, Instruct Occ. Disease Brock University, meeting with Occ. Disease committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 2015</td>
<td>G8 meeting, LAC Hamilton OHCOW, OHCOW board meeting, WSIB accommodation working group</td>
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<td>Oct 2015</td>
<td>Fall educational seminar (Return to work), WSIB policy training, WSIB accommodation steering committee, OHCOW MSD prevention training, Lancaster Housetraining</td>
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<td>Nov 2015</td>
<td>Instruct written submissions</td>
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<td>Dec 2015</td>
<td>Rate framework consultation, Advocates workshop, WorkSafe consultation.</td>
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<td>Jan 2016</td>
<td>Accommodation working group</td>
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<td>Feb 2016</td>
<td>OPFFA Health and Safety Seminar, instruct level 1 and 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2016</td>
<td>WSIB rate framework consultation, WSIB accommodation steering group</td>
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<td>April 2016</td>
<td>Spring OPFFA Educational Seminar</td>
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Respectfully submitted,

Chris Wheeler, Chair
WSIB Committee
Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association