

Federated Co-operatives Limited

P.O. Box 1050 T 306-244-3311
401 – 22nd Street East F 306-244-3403
Saskatoon SK Inquiries@fcl.crs
S7K 3M9 Canada www.fcl.crs



January 16, 2020

VIA: christine.tell@gov.sk.ca

Honourable Christine Tell, Minister, Correction and Policing
Room 345 Legislative Building
2405 Legislative Drive
Regina SK S4S 0B3

Dear Minister Tell:

I am writing to you today to express our significant concerns about the 'escalating action' Unifor National has planned for the City of Regina and surrounding communities for a period commencing January 20th. Our concern is significant given the status of the response we have received from law enforcement and emergency services to date during the strike action.

As you are likely aware, we are in the midst of a labour disruption at the Consumer Co-operatives Refinery Limited (CCRL) in the City of Regina. The CCRL is a wholly owned subsidiary of Federated Co-operatives Limited (FCL). In turn, FCL is owned by 170 retail co-ops that serve nearly 600 communities across Western Canada.

We understand that labour unions have the right to picket with the objective of communicating their message to gain support for their cause and, in turn, business has the right to run their business. The courts intervene when either party has overstepped their rights and issue court orders to provide instructions in an effort to maintain each party's rights. This was the case when CCRL filed for an injunction against the Unifor local 594 and received a court order on December 23rd, 2019, which replaced the interim order received December 18th, 2019. We continue to be in contact with the Regina Police Service (RPS) to encourage enforcement of the court order including contact with Chief Bray and Deputy Chief Rae. To date, the court order continues to be constantly contravened.

In addition to the continued violations of the court order, other unlawful picketing activity that is underway at CCRL to date includes; using fences, vehicles, garden sheds, pylons

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or people to fully blockade locations; creating significant disruptions to traffic that have the potential to and have caused collisions; vandalism, threats, intimidation and harassment; showing up at our employee's houses and observing or following them. These events have all been reported to the RPS with unsatisfactory responses.

Unifor's national office has put out a "Call to Action" (see attached) for the period from January 20th – February 2nd, 2020. This will entail escalating picketing activity at CCRL in Regina and statements from Jerry Dias, Unifor's national president, illustrate clearly that they are planning to put pressure on retail co-ops as a way of forcing FCL to concede to their demands.

In addition to the illegal activity CCRL is experiencing, actions at secondary sites in Regina on January 10th & January 16th and in Weyburn on January 13th indicate that they are determined to conduct illegal activities to disrupt operations at retail co-ops. The lack of response from law enforcement and emergency services is concerning.

On Friday, January 10th, 2020, at 5:30 a.m. Unifor set up barricades blocking access to FCL facilities in Regina along Turvey Road and Fleet Street, including the Regina Zone Office, a FCL Cardlock and propane office. The fences surrounded the facilities blocking all entrances/exits. These illegal actions by Unifor were reported to RPS and we were advised that RPS will not intervene in these unlawful acts.

Fire services attended the locations and Unifor members were eventually compelled to remove fencing to provide adequate access for emergency response/safety services, however, customers/members were not permitted by Unifor members to enter the facility for the entire day. Unifor removed all fencing at 8 p.m. Removal of the fencing was not in response to the request of any authority but was done on the predetermined schedule developed by Unifor for this demonstration. The only support RPS provided was to escort the departure of the thirteen fuel tankers trapped in the facility.

On Monday, January 13th, 2020, at 5:00 a.m., Unifor set up a barricade around a site in Weyburn, SK, at a local retail co-op gas bar, cardlock and bulk plant along with an independently owned third-party restaurant. Unifor barricaded all entry points with fences and vehicles. We endeavoured to work with police and fire services to address the situation to impress upon them the nature of our fuel business and necessity to ensure safe access for emergency response/safety services, however, the Weyburn Fire Department indicated they did not have any concerns with all entrances/exits being blockaded and allowed them to remain. Unifor removed all fencing at 2:20 p.m. Removal of the fencing was not in response to the action of any authority but was done on what we believe was the predetermined schedule developed by Unifor for this demonstrating again, these illegal actions were discussed with local Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers, who advised that they will not intervene in these unlawful acts.

In anticipation of the events that could unfold, retail co-ops are contacting their local law enforcement and fire departments to flag the possibility of action. Through this outreach we have been notified that the RCMP have been directed not to intervene in any unlawful picketing under any circumstances because this is considered a labour dispute. Retail co-ops will be left vulnerable to Unifor's unlawful tactics that will have negative consequences to their business and jeopardize the safety of the communities in which they operate.

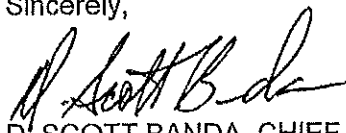
A positive development is that Chris Holden, the City of Regina Manager, established a committee consisting of representatives from the City Administration, Regina Police Services, Regina Fire and Protective Services, Traffic and Bylaw Enforcement, and Emergency Planning. This committee met for the first time on Wednesday, January 15, 2020, with the objective of developing an action-plan to respond to incidents at CCRL and secondary retail co-op sites. We understand the intention is to conclude the plan before January 20, 2020. We are fully supportive of this direction and would appreciate it if you would encourage this exercise through to conclusion and subsequent communication to other jurisdictions in the province.

Your Ministry has encouraged us to continue our efforts to work with the RPS and we understand that Corrections and Policing will engage if confidence in the policing is in question. If the aforementioned action plan is not implemented and the incidents continue to be handled in the fashion we are currently experiencing, we are concerned about the impact on public safety and the deterioration in police confidence that will occur when the potential hundreds of Unifor representatives descend on the City of Regina next week.

In closing we repeat our urgent request that you take action to voice support for the development of the action plan stressing the importance that the plan be concluded and implemented before January 20, 2020. Secondly that your Ministry take action to support the subsequent communication to the RCMP and other police services in the Province of Saskatchewan to adopt and implement the same action plan.

We are available to meet with you on short notice to answer any questions you may have. If you have any immediate questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (306) 244-3226.

Sincerely,



D. SCOTT BANDA, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

SB:kt

Enclosure

cc: Mayor Michael Fougere, Mayor of Regina