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cc
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Subject AMO Policy Update - Upcoming Discussions on Interest Arbitration

TO THE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION OF THE CLERK AND COUNCIL

November 5, 2013

Upcoming Discussions on Interest Arbitration

At the request of Ontario's Ministry of Labour, the Association is participating in facilitated discussions of the interest arbitration system with fire and police union association representatives.

Balanced interest arbitration is of the utmost importance to AMO. It is an issue that our members have spoken about repeatedly over the last number of years because the current arbitration system is creating problems that will only get worse without action. All Ontario communities should have access to emergency services that they can afford.

The planned discussions will be successful if all the participants and government are open to considering ideas on how to make the system actually work as intended. Employers and employees should both fear it as a last resort that should be avoided.

The two days of discussions (November 13 and 14) will be facilitated by Former Justice, Mr. George Adams. The discussions will include the full range of issues identified by the parties. Participants will also identify the criteria that will be used to assess the acceptability of any proposed solution, identify possible ideas to respond to identified issues and whether consensus is possible on any of them. The discussions are to proceed in a 'without prejudice' manner.

As an early sign of the challenge, union associations have asked that Ministry of Labour representatives not be permitted to participate or be observers, and this request has been met. AMO did not see a difficulty with their attendance. AMO is committed to this process. The process is part of the government's Throne Speech commitment and we expect that we will be sitting down again in the future with the Minister, particularly as relates to the economic realities of communities across Ontario.

"As your government moves forward, Ontario's labour force will be treated fairly and with respect. It will sit down with its partners across all sectors to build a

sustainable model for wage negotiation, respectful of both collective bargaining and a fair and transparent interest arbitration process, so that the brightness of our shared future is not clouded by the indisputable economic realities of our time."
(Extract from 2013 Provincial Throne Speech)

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