

IT FEELS GOOD TO BE A TEAMSTER!

LOCAL 31 ORGANIZES AND RATIFIES A FIRST AGREEMENT AT OVERLAND WEST FREIGHT LINES LTD.



On February 24, 2017 - Teamsters Local Union No. 31 filed an application for certification at the Canada Industrial Relations Board ("CIRB") for a unit of Owner Operators, Drivers of Owner Operators and Company Drivers at Overland West Freight Lines Ltd. located in Surrey, British Columbia.

Overland West Freight Lines Ltd. is a freight trucking operation with terminals in BC and Alberta.

During the organizing drive, two union supporters were terminated without notice. The Teamsters immediately filed a complaint under sections 94 and 96 pursuant to the *Canada Labour Code* stating that the union supporters were terminated because of their participation in forming a union. Shortly following the terminations, the Union ensured that the two terminated union supporters were able to appear and cast their ballot at the CIRB representation vote at the employer's terminal.

The second predicament the Union confronted was in determining whether Overland Freight Lines Ltd. was the true employer or whether the proposed bargaining unit performed work for Mission Transfer Ltd., West Arm Truck Lines Ltd., and RHS Supply Ltd. acting as several related company entities performing business as one employer.

After several weeks of submitting numerous written submissions to the CIRB, the Union was able to resolve these matters without a hearing at the Labour Board. Advanced by the Teamsters In-House Counsel, David Reynolds and Organizer, Ben Hennessy the Teamsters reached an agreement with the employer on all outstanding issues concerning the terminations and the multiple company entities.

In early April, the parties consented to the CIRB order declaring that the union supporters be reinstated to employment without loss of seniority and be paid back wages. Ultimately, one of the terminated employee's became an integral member of the Teamsters collective bargaining committee. Additionally, the consented order further specified that Overland West Freight Lines Ltd., Mission Transfer Ltd., West Arm Truck Lines Ltd., and RHS Supply Ltd. constituted a single employer within the meaning of the Code.

On April 11, 2017 the Canada Industrial Relations Board issued a certification to Teamsters Local Union No. 31.

President Stan Hennessy assigned Business Representative, Mike Hennessy to Chair collective bargaining unit. In addition, Organizer, Ben Hennessy was assigned to assist the Chair.

Straightaway, Mike Hennessy set up a proposal meeting and the drivers unanimously chose Ajai Singh, Sanjay Chand and Ron Kugler to join the Teamsters at the bargaining table. Mike Hennessy evoked, "this is a well, balanced committee as it is represented by one tractor owner-operator, one five ton / three ton owner operator and one company truck driver. Our members will be thoroughly represented as our goal will be to improve the general working conditions at Overland."

And that they did!

After several months of negotiations, a first collective agreement was ratified by 98% in favor. The bargaining committee accomplished its task and negotiated a strong Teamsters agreement that included increased rates, the Teamsters Health and Welfare Plan, the Teamsters Pension Plan, an O/O Fuel Rebate and all the Teamsters security language to keep our members protected.

Mike Hennessy stated, "I am so proud of the committee's grit and diligence throughout the entire process! Every single one of our new Brothers and Sisters deserve this victory and it feels good to be a Teamster!

The new Overland West Teamsters will enjoy four years of stability and prosperity.

Please contact the Teamsters Local Union No. 31 Organizing Department to help unionize your workplace.

Ben Hennessy

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