

THE CONVERSATION



FOR OPERATORS BY OPERATORS

SPRING 2020



Covid-19?



What Happened behind the scenes?

We had the opportunity to sit down with both Balbir Mann, President Local 111 and Mike Smith, President Local 2200. We asked questions about the challenges and the impact they experienced facing this unprecedented pandemic, that is sweeping the globe. As frontline workers we do not always get to see what is happening behind the scenes. So we asked...

The Conversation: When the company told you that there would be no layoffs did you believe that they were telling you the truth at that time? Do you feel you were blindsided when the layoffs came about?



Balbir Mann: Yes, we were definitely blindsided. On Friday we received a memorandum saying let's negotiate. They talked to us on Friday a little bit where they mentioned in our CBA there is a 3 week notice if they are going to lay off. They said we will give you a full week more layoff notice, so you guys don't go to The Labor Board, etc. We did our meeting on the following Saturday amongst myself, Gavin, Ben and Mike Smith. We got on to the phone and we read line by line. We agreed that they are playing with us. We set up a meeting with CMBC about the layoffs and that they are going to happen. They said we don't know how many yet. They did not share any numbers with us up until Saturday. We told them on Saturday if you guys don't tell us now or what the numbers are, where the cut off is we will make this hard for you. We will not work with you. We said we will work against you to stop this lay off. They asked for 24 hours and explained that they are waiting for funding from the government. Sunday at

5:00 pm was the 24 hour notice deadline. At 18:57 we received a text from Labor Relations saying the layoffs are going to happen. Also still no numbers on Sunday, just a simple text saying layoffs are happening. At 18:57 on Sunday when we got the text message, we put out a bulletin right away, within 20 minutes it was released. There was no delay. We all got on a conference call and at 19:20 the memo was released. On Monday morning we got an email informing us about the number layoffs for local 111 and local 2200.

TC: How often did you speak to the company in regards to the lay offs?

BM: Once a week. I have, myself, spoken with Mike McDaniel a couple of times in the month of March, he even mentioned that there will be no layoffs. That is why we put out a video. He assured no layoffs.

TC: Did the company offer you any other options prior to announcing the layoffs?

BM: They offered us 4 weeks notice instead of 3 weeks and that's the only thing they offered. However, in exchange they requested us to not go to the Labor board if you give up that right then they would give us a bus pass for all the members being laid off. During the time period of the layoffs the buses are free during that time anyways. There were no other offers.

TC: What was your biggest challenge during these lay off negotiations?

BM: Safety of our members and the public. Social distancing: we wanted to make sure our members are safe. There are lots of obstacles such as barriers. The first big challenge was the rear door loading, as the members wanted rear door loading. We got that done. Second obstacle was wheelchairs, some of the older buses you have to get out of your seat to buckle them up and we got rid of that too. This was our priority.

TC: What do you want the membership to know about the final deal with the rescinding of the layoffs?

BM: We did the online rally and that was a huge success. There was a lot of discussion when we filed at the labor board. Due to social distancing we couldn't do any public rallies. Our case at the Labor board basically put the company on notice and then they took 3 days to respond back to the initial complaint. After that we had 3 days for our response to question them. I was put on the hot seat about putting out videos and messages on social media. On the last submission it was a very long meeting with our lawyers back east.

TC: The company had an issue with you posting videos on social media?

BM: Yes, the company's lawyers had issues with the videos. I had a notebook with me throughout this time and wrote down all the times, meetings and other details. I took notes about each and every discussion. That really helped when they asked questions and asked for clarification.

TC: Just to clarify when you post anything on social media the company lawyers are watching that very closely. So is that one of the reasons why you are not on social media regularly?

BM: Yes, that is correct.

TC: Why was there only the four of you, Mike, Gavin and Ben involved in the meetings with CMBC?

BM: It is a limited amount of people involved. Company side had the Vice president, director of Labor relations and VP of maintenance. So that's why presidents of local 111, local 2200, Gavin and Ben were in the meeting.

TC: Where was the majority of your time spent? What were you working on that was of the utmost important at this time?

BM: Main focus is on the members safety. A lot of meetings with CMBC executives and amongst ourselves. Labor board case took almost 2.5 weeks of time as our lawyers are back east.

TC: Can you tell us more about the submissions for section 54? How much paperwork was there on section 54?

BM: When we submitted our final submission, we did feel very positive. We answered all of their questions. I told our whole local 111 table officer team right away. There was a lot of paperwork. That Monday morning, I had a message from Jerry Dias that there was no decision from the Labor Board yet, but government meetings had already happened. They told us to watch for 10:30am news. I had a gut feeling they were going to rescind all the layoff notices. I advised as many members as I could to let them know about the 10:30 news. After the news came at 10:30 I received a phone call from Michael McDaniel to confirm that they are rescinding all of the layoffs.

TC: What else do you want to add when it comes to the layoffs or Covid-19?

BM: We did 4 covid19 updates and we were informing the members as we went. Just a reminder that I am not always on social media and there are meetings that are happening not only with CMBC. There are a lot of other people involved. We have a great team and we are all working really hard to get information out as much as we can. A few times we were asked why there's no information being put out, if we don't have anything than we can't put anything out. We need to have solid facts before we send out information. That is why.

TC: what issues are most pressing for you right now for the future?

BM: CMBC is now looking into opening front doors on June 1st so they are putting Covid barriers over the farebox. We participated and the Safety rep and Property rep made their recommendations. I was there for support however it was not my decision. It is their recommendations. There were height restrictions that obstruct the view due to the plexiglass. All the recommendations were given by Property reps and Safety reps from each depot.

TC: To clarify Burnaby made decisions about the Nova?

BM: Yes, the Novas and New flyers.

TC: This was all done at the Property level? Were the executives involved?

BM: Yes, the decision was made at the property level with PR and Safety Rep involved. Mike McMillan, Raj Purewal, Jessie Rana and myself were there during the barrier meetings.

TC: Can you clarify the second barrier is for the fare box?

BM: If passengers have a compass card they are no where near the driver, however if they pay cash the barrier is high enough to protect the driver. It is an extra protection layer. There is a little bit of a gap. The company is going to provide 2 reusable masks to every member by June 1st. Also all buses will have barriers in by then.

TC: Can you define barriers as I drove a 9400 Nova and it had plastic cover. Is that temporary or is there something

better coming in?

BM: No, for the older fleet they are going to replace those buses anyways. So they won't be putting a hard barrier in, however the material is thick and sturdy.

TC: Is this the best option for us?

BM: For the older fleet, yes as they are going to scratch those out as soon as they get the new buses. These barriers are to stop spit, coughing or sneezes. We made sure our members will have face masks and we are lobbying with the company that they should put a message out to the public that anyone who rides the buses should cover their mouth. They should wear masks. We are asking the company to get that message out to please cover mouth with mask before getting on.

TC: Do you have anything else you would like to share with the members?

BM: We went through a lot together and this isn't going away yet. We don't need to panic. Have faith in us that we are making sure that your safety is our priority. We are working very hard to make sure the safety of our members is not jeopardized at any cost.

The Conversation: When did you first realize Covid-19 may have a serious impact on our day to day jobs and health?

Mike Smith: On and around April 5th, the employer approached myself in regards to operators in training classes. Company was considering laying off Operators, in training. Me, Balbir and Mike McMillian took it upon ourselves to place these Operators in Local 2200 jurisdiction and put them to work to do specific cleaning in the drivers area. That is when we realized things were going to change.

TC: When did you realize COVID-19 was different than any other virus we faced before?

MS: We thought it was no different than SARS in 2013. Ultimately it was just another virus. No one knew how serious it was, as people started to die, quite frankly it started to hit home, especially when it hit North Vancouver.

TC: What chemicals were used to fumigate buses?

MS: We were using Decon-7 in the beginning until it ran out. The chemical was no longer available and CMBC could not access it.

TC: Can you tell us more on the second product you are currently using today?

MS: This new product has unlimited available quantities. This spray is safe at all times including at time of spraying. My guys prefer to be suited up in a hazmat suit, face shield, etc. as they are spraying large quantities for their entire shift. Although the WCB deems that previous and current chemicals as completely safe, the hazmat suits are only for peace of mind to my guys.

TC: When did you first learn the lay offs are coming? Were there any prior indications?

MS: There was no indication whatsoever of lay offs. Ben Williams, Unifor National Rep, received a document, which he then passed on to Balbir Mann on Saturday. This document took away our right to access the Labor Board. Balbir, Gavin, Ben and myself were ALL in full agreement that we should not sign this document. Then at 7:00 pm Sunday night, CMBC sent the lay off notice. We had no idea when, how many, or which departments were going to be affected.

TC: What was the outcome of the Section 54 Grievance?

MS: The Section 54 Grievance allowed members to appeal the 14 day lay off no-



I've noticed a distinct increase in my anxiety, and I am definitely not engaging my passengers like before. I

tend to face away when they board, and am suspicious of every cough, sneeze and snuffle. It's not conducive to a pleasant working environment, and it isn't comfortable.

Krista (RTC)

tice, extend to 60 days lay off notice, regardless of CBA language. Other unions have successfully appealed on these grounds in past years. We presented the case, but ultimately it became irrelevant because they rescinded the lay offs.

TC: According to Translink, they were losing 75 to 90 Million Dollars per month in revenue due to a combination of lost fuel pump tax revenue, 82% decreased ridership and no fare box revenue. Translink announced further service cuts and lay offs, effective May 18th. Did the union play a role in reversing the service cuts and lay offs?

MS: Ben, Gavin, Balbir and myself, our Unifor Leadership group, successfully lobbied the public, through the media and the provincial and federal government leaders to stop the lay offs by getting the provincial government to guarantee the transit funding shortfall of \$100 Million.

TC: What issues have your members experienced during this Covid-19 issue?

MS: Basically there was a lack of communication from CMBC. The biggest issue was fear, fear of the unknown regarding the Covid-19 virus and the question to CMBC what were they doing to protect the employee? There was very little information available coming from CMBC, until the union raised chaos and then CMBC started to communicate a lot better. It's not perfect, but it is a lot better than it was.

TC: What has been the biggest impact of this pandemic on your members?

MS: Ultimately the social distancing aspect has been the biggest impact for us. Where we have created and done things that are outside the box. We created new shifts, for example the afternoon shift, which we have never had before. We had to make greater social distancing, where there is a reduction in the number of day shift employees, to alleviate the space issue.

TC: Do you have any final words that you want to share with the membership?

MS: I think the biggest thing that everybody needs to remember, and I know that we have talked about it amongst the Leadership group, is the fact that we are ALL working together here. Between the two locals, it is very important to make sure that we make sure to keep our composure and calm with each other. The bottom line is that we are working together and we will get through this together. Ultimately, it is important to realize, yes, that the frustrations are high out there, but we are not and we should not target each other. I think that is the biggest message that we keep calm and we will get through this. In the thirty years of being involved in my local union, with regards to bargaining and other issues, we have never had the solidarity that we have seen between the two locals. We have never talked together or worked together on issues, as much as now. It is extraordinary, quite frankly, it's been awesome!



As an operator I'm anxious of when front door boarding resumes. Questions arise about the

level of protection with the shields. Some of us think twice before turning on the A/C systems fearing airborne spread of Covid-19. When someone sneezes or coughs, anxiety levels go up. I'm always thinking about what if I take it home to my kid and loved ones, especially having loved ones that are high risk. Their safety is my number one priority. I take my uniform off in the garage, wash it after every shift, not stepping into the house with my work bags are just some of the many precautions I take. Having minimal contact with co workers, who are like family to me, is becoming sad to see. For someone who loves to work hard and do overtime now I am doing my index and heading home. The smiles from each other are becoming faint. I am wishing for a back to normal feeling. Definitely feeling like a robot working while living in uncertain times. Trying to stay positive myself and keeping the morale up and lively for the membership is at times a struggle. I'm sure this time will pass. Let's have faith in each other and keep up the good work on the frontlines, we are all in this together that's for sure !!

Robbie (STC)

Mike Smith brought up mental health and emphasized that the union has constantly pushed the fact that mental health in the workplace is a huge issue during these pandemic times. This is a huge issue in both Local 2200 and Local 111.



2019 – Year in Review

2019 audit was performed by Bruce & Associates Ltd. – As of December 31, 2019, we have a positive balance of \$55,588.00.

Major Expenses for 2019 were:

General Election, Elections Committee Election, Collective Agreement Bargaining, Strike Action (leafletting, buttons, etc.), Ratification Vote, Soccerfest, Big Splash BBQ and Retirement Party (50 Retirees were honored on Dec 8, 2019 at Anvil Centre).

2020 so far...

For the first 3 months of 2020, we were busy supporting members on strike at Local 594, sending our members to picket CO-OPs in Regina, Prince George and Locally. Invoices have been sent to National. We are waiting for reimbursement. Big Thank you to our support staff, Vanessa and Jennifer, for all your help in sending book offs, booking flights, hotels, car rentals, organizing receipts and

paperwork for reimbursement.

I would like to thank the Elections Committee (Dil Aulakh, Brenda Lail-Sangha and Kulvinder Sandhu) for all your hard work in preparing and organizing the BTC Chief Job Steward’s Mid-Term election. I would also like to give a special thanks to Dave Dhillon for all the behind the scenes correspondence with me and Unifor National and turning the electronic voting into fruition.

New contract was negotiated with Rogers for union cell phones. We have reduced our monthly cost by approximately \$100.00 per month. New Cell phone devices will be provided to the Property Reps later this year.

Due to Covid-19 Soccerfest and Big Splash BBQ have been cancelled for this year.

In Solidarity
Raj Purewal

Unifor WAGE SCHEDULE				
	April 1, 2019	December 5, 2019	April 1, 2020	April 1, 2021
OPERATIONS				
Transit Operator				
Trainees - 70%	23.28	23.51	24.22	24.95
Next 8 months - 75%	24.95	25.19	25.95	26.73
Next 8 months - 80%	26.61	26.87	27.68	28.51
Next 8 months - 90%	29.93	30.23	31.14	32.08
Thereafter - 100%	33.26	33.59	34.60	35.64

Unifor WAGE SCHEDULE				
	April 1, 2019	December 5, 2019	April 1, 2020	April 1, 2021
COMMUNITY SHUTTLE – OPERATIONS				
Community Transit Operator				
Trainees	20.01	20.21	20.82	21.44
First 8 months - 80%	21.41	21.67	22.48	23.31
Next 8 months - 90%	24.08	24.38	25.29	26.23
Thereafter - 100% (Equivalent to \$6.50 below the "Thereafter - 100%" step in the Conventional Transit Operator wage schedule)	26.61	27.09	28.10	29.14
In the case of Reduced Time Employees and Casual Employees, the above periods of time will be prorated to reflect the Employee's straight time hours worked.				

**UNIFOR LOCAL 111
Statement of Operations
Year Ended December 31, 2019**

	General Fund	Death Benefit Fund	Gift & Retirement Fund	Union in Politics Fund	Total	
					2019	2018
Income						
Dues	\$ 3,864,661	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,864,661	\$ 3,682,854
Officers' dues	6,586	-	-	-	6,586	6,652
Interest	2,299	11,392	2,484	1,033	17,208	9,943
National & others	341,108	-	7,241	-	348,349	108,042
	<u>4,214,654</u>	<u>11,392</u>	<u>9,725</u>	<u>1,033</u>	<u>4,236,804</u>	<u>3,807,491</u>
Expenses						
Bank charges	660	-	-	-	660	673
Bargaining	26,423	-	-	19,040	45,463	131
Bursaries	5,000	-	-	-	5,000	5,000
Capital - office	198	-	-	-	198	-
Computer expenses	31,854	-	-	-	31,854	31,773
Conferences	75,147	-	-	12,787	87,934	50,525
Death benefits paid out	-	92,600	-	-	92,600	24,000
Donations / charity events	200	-	-	4,000	4,200	5,100
Education	1,540	-	-	-	1,540	2,406
Election	6,941	-	-	-	6,941	305
Gift and retirement expenses	-	-	112,403	-	112,403	97,426
Labour fees: Other	-	-	-	3,200	3,200	6,366
Labour fees: National per capita	1,473,408	-	-	-	1,473,408	1,413,309
Legal and arbitration	26,801	-	-	-	26,801	135
Office and miscellaneous	54,334	-	-	3,061	57,395	58,061
Pride committee	-	-	-	-	-	1,025
Professional fees	10,290	-	-	-	10,290	8,821
Promotion	2,493	-	-	-	2,493	264
Rent	51,050	-	-	-	51,050	46,257
Telephone - cell	11,571	-	-	-	11,571	17,368
Telephone - landline	10,566	-	-	-	10,566	12,207
Transit soccer tournament	7,771	-	-	-	7,771	4,801
Travel	43,529	-	-	-	43,529	10,229
Union in politics committee	-	-	-	17,614	17,614	16,207
Wages and benefits (Note 5)	2,045,923	-	-	-	2,045,923	1,480,532
Womens committee	8,683	-	-	-	8,683	3,819
Youth committee	252	-	-	-	252	-
	<u>3,894,634</u>	<u>92,600</u>	<u>112,403</u>	<u>59,702</u>	<u>4,159,339</u>	<u>3,296,740</u>
Excess/(deficiency) of revenues over expenses before other items	320,020	(81,208)	(102,678)	(58,669)	77,465	510,751
Bad debt	21,877	-	-	-	21,877	-
Excess/(deficiency) of revenues over expenses	\$ 298,143	\$ (81,208)	\$ (102,678)	\$ (58,669)	\$ 55,588	\$ 510,751

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

growing Your Financial Success





With a looming deadline to submit this article to the Committee, I found myself conflicted between writing it several days in advance, or waiting until the last possible minute! With all of us facing rapidly changing situations over the last couple of months....I decided to go with the latter. Submitting early would have resulted in a more somber article, highlighting the upcoming layoffs and drastically reduced transit service. I think all of us were relieved to hear the announcement on May 8th that layoffs were rescinded and planned service cuts were cancelled. Going through the “Sign up that never happened” was truly a different experience. With the layoffs, Community Shuttle sign up was reduced to 4 days instead of 5. Members signing on the last day were struggling with the prospect of having to move to an unfamiliar depot. Those who received layoff notice would walk by the sign up areas not knowing when they will be able to sign again. As all of you in shuttle now know, the answer to the “When” is June 8th! We’re back to a full 5 day sign up with ALL of our CTS Brothers and Sisters. The new sheets will be available shortly.

The implementation of Travel Time for Community Shuttle has faced some challenges. We started hearing from members that their travel time paid was different than what their roster pay indicated. We have since learned that there was a coding issue with the OPS system that was misreading the wrong travel time values. We are told that the correct values will be in place for the June sheet, but corrections are still being addressed for the current April sheet. We have been assured that any missed travel time will be paid to our members retro to April 6th.

Finally, a big thank you to all of you, our Brothers and Sisters, for your continued dedication and patience during these uncertain times. To say that these last few months have been an emotional roller coaster is an understatement! As we begin to look ahead to the “new normal”, I know that the number one concern for the team of Officers is the safety of our members. Never hesitate to reach out to one of us. We are here for you.... we are all in this together.

In solidarity!

Ray Beattie



#inthistgether

What's Happening in your Depot

HTC

After the news of the rescinded layoffs, it has been a huge relief for all our Sisters and Brothers at HTC. It was nice to see smiling faces again as the dark cloud was lifted. We came so close to losing 145 members at HTC and having an unimaginable sign up that would have left a lot of us signing in other depots. Thankfully that is over, only to be reminded we still have this virus to deal with on a daily basis. I know that we are trying to keep safe as possible and with continued efforts from all of us we can beat this thing. I am super elated that our Sisters and Brothers will be sticking around for the long haul. Please stay safe and look after one another.

PCTC

The day the news broke that the layoffs were being rescinded there was a lot of jubilation from everyone at Poco. From the shop side (Unifor Local 2200), blaring horns could be heard. From the bullpen (Unifor Local 111), there was cheering. There was a collective sigh of relief as well. Poco was about to be hit hardest with layoffs especially within our shuttle family. We were on the verge of losing more than half of our shuttle sisters and brothers. Thankfully the layoffs were rescinded. Sign-up, which would have displaced more than a hundred of our members to other properties was also cancelled. Again a sigh of relief was felt by our members. For many, the layoffs presented uncertainty during these unprecedented times. Many of our members approached various reps for guidance, as some are sole breadwinners in the family. While others approached, to vent about the current state of affairs. Anxiety was heightened for many yet hope was never lost, as we waited for information on funding. Poco is not merely a property or a garage. Poco is a family. Our

family within a family stood together.

RTC

At RTC like other Depot's things hasn't been normal since beginning of March this year we have had some real tough times during this period of time we had our brothers and sisters stranded in different countries and could not get back to work all due to restriction which COVID-19 brought upon us. Many of our operators at RTC at some point or other during this time they did show some symptoms which did caused him anxiety and they were forced to go into isolation due to that fortunately for them and everybody it all worked out and nobody so far tested positive at our Depot and at this point all our stranded brothers and sisters are back to work and they are safe and sound saying that we are dealing with some issues were kind of a life is not honoring payments for the 14 days isolation to some of those operators even though they were instructed by 811 to into isolation we are Trying to deal with the company and kind of the life to resolve those issues in fact some of those operators are only being paid three days sick leave instead of 14 days isolation . If the fear and anxiety due to COVID-19 wasn't enough for some of us then we got the news about layoffs and we started seeing emotions run high among our junior brothers and sisters which they were in the line of being laid off which forced us to go through consolidated sign up what do you everyone's good luck layoffs and consolidated Sign Up was called off on the last minute all these issues has affected everyone in all the Depot's but we are resilient we will work through it and we will come out triumph. White all these Mayhem we're going on we mobilize our members at RTC and ask them to look around for charity organizations who are willing to help us to stay safe to

What's Happening in your Depot

serve the public and we would like to say we were successful because we found out there are organizations out there which they were willing to help us to be safe by donating us facemasks and as a Property Rep at RTC I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our members who helped us to find these organizations and my sincere gratitude and thanks to those organizations including Rotary club of Richmond which donated us these masks . And we did do our best to share these masks with our brothers and sisters in other Depot and hope that they will be safe too . I would like to say thank you to our president and all table officers in the union hall for being out there looking out for us and trying to make this hard times easier for us .

STC

The world we live in, has changed a great deal in the past few weeks for us all , no matter where you are it is not the same and it is likely to change even more the rest of the year . We as a Union will make every effort and try to ensure that the changes are in the right direction. We will come out of this , the dust will settle and remember we are all in this together, every single one of us. My hope is the political polarization stops along with Covid and we all move forward towards greater solidarity not just locally but nationally as well.

I would like to thank all the Richmond Operators for their donation of masks to the STC Operators. We appreciate it and can not thank them enough for their generosity. I want to thank the entire executive team for their efforts and I know they will continue to put forth an exceptional effort for us all. I will personally never forget when I got the news that the layoffs were halted, and the rejoicing that took place in Surrey, immediately after we got the official news.

Newton Exchange has officially expanded as of May 18 /2020. A bay has been created on 72ave ,right beside Coast Capital Savings. Route 335 & 341 will be departing from there. This bay is long enough to accommodate both routes, first bus arriving please pull ahead as far as you can to accommodate the next bus arriving. I wish you all the best of health and do everything you can to keep everyone safe. Please continue to practice social distancing at every loop not just in the depots.

VTC

The month of March was busy dealing with a variety of issues from Red Light Tickets to pedestrian and cyclist contact. Also, two more serious incidents that resulted in three day suspensions. The union is grieving both suspensions. Both of these involved pedestrians walked into the side of the bus. Red Light infractions are down and set structure for discipline is in place, although, there's been an increase in one day suspensions arising out of customer complaints.

Many of the other customer complaints are from leaving handicapped passengers behind and drivers called in for skip stopping as per training. Most of the customer complaints are Labor Relations questions. The union has filed several first stage grievances for a variety of disciplines The outcome are pending. An Operator was terminated for breach because he was not at his post doing utility work. It's important to call in, keep a record before an Op leaves their utility post for a washroom, lunch break. Approximately 30 AMP call ins for March and approximately 25 preventable call ins.



Official Unifor Local 111 page

The Communications Committee has embarked on a new campaign recently to bring operators together. During these trying times it's nice to be able to come together for a picture. Thanks to Heather McGown of PCTC for the inspiration of this project. If you see us out and about in depots and loops asking for pictures, this is why.

Feel free to approach us if you would like to take part. Thanks!



#inthis Together



With my 7 year old daughter having a weakened immune system, I take all the proper precautions to do my job

safely and to keep her as safe as possible. Covid 19 has shown me to be strong and to get all the frontline workers to their jobs so they can keep families like mine safe.

Brad (BTC)



Since the covid-19 outbreak and associated quarantine orders began, I've been reminded how crucial our job is as transit operators.

It's not just a simple duty of driving people from point A to B, it's getting essential workers to their workplaces and home again. It's also taking people to grocery stores and other places they need to be during this tumultuous and uncertain time.

I'm more meticulous (than usual) in ensuring the driver's area is clean and sanitized for myself and for my peers when I leave the coach for them.

The pandemic stricken world we live in now has reminded me on how precious good health is, for me, my family and friends, co-workers and of course our passengers!

We are all in this together! - the absolute best sentiment we should live by at all times!

Burt (HTC)



Recently I rode some buses through the downtown eastside to see how the operators there were

faring. With my seniority I've been spared the worst effects of the crisis. But the fortitude and coping skills of those operators, and the professionalism and dignity those facing layoff maintained even with the prospect of lost livelihoods hanging over their heads, fills me with a sense of pride and optimism.

Dave (RTC)



This virus has not impacted me directly behind the wheel personally as I'm on an unpaid leave to care for my elderly

father whom is recovering from major surgery. However this virus has affected me in which I am constantly worried for the safety of my transit family. I have feelings of anxiety that I've never experienced when going out in public. I pray everyday for the Frontline Workers. If this virus is still here in 3 months when I'm due back to work I feel I will have much more increase stress or worry & anxiety

Michele (STC)



Even though I am not driving right now I will be back soon, hopefully. Covid19 has impacted me many ways. It has impacted me and my family as the

kids have been home since all of this has started and I for one can say I can not wait till school start. I am saddened to the point that I am sick of the media and this disease that it has made people go crazy, acting out in the streets or acting out in stores is ridiculous. The best part out of this whole experience is even though my brothers and sisters are scared, they are still waking up everyday, putting their Uniform on and their lives on the line to do their jobs. I talk to ops everyday. Shuttle or Conventional, on Facebook, text or the phone and I tell them all to keep their heads up and be safe. Anyone who knows me knows I am a very nice and funny guy. My colorful collection of runners are the biggest effect because the border and malls are closed so I can't go shoe shopping!!

Virgil (STC)



Covid 19 has made me more cautious about my surroundings. Keep calm and carry on. Not taking anything for

granted, even job. Anything can happen with blink of an eye and you are history.

Sukhi (VTC)



Official Unifor Local 111 page



Driving a City Bus in Vancouver during this pandemic had worried me at first as we come across many people every day. I am

thankful for our Union and those who have submitted Safety Reports it is nice when we all come together to voice our concerns, find solutions and implement them. I am glad there were no layoffs. As a Union we stood together to put pressure on our employer and government stating that it was unacceptable during these times when we are trying to respect social distancing to cut service and unacceptable at anytime to layoff any of our Brothers and Sisters. I feel confident that we will get through this and that we are on the right path Be thankful for each day we have on this Earth. Solidarity!

Trevor (VTC)



Covid19 has impacted me in ways I never thought anything could. Everyday my anxiety level is high which is not normal for

me. I worry if I've washed my hands enough, used hand sanitizer enough, is the virus floating around my bus, how are my brothers and sisters doing, am I going to bring this thing home to my family. Everyday feels like a battle and my family worries more than they normally would. But everyday we make it through this gives me the strength to keep going. Stay safe brother's and sister's!

Brandon (RTC)



It has made me hyper aware of just how much close contact I have with the public on a daily basis and how vulnerable not only I am, but also my family

is as a result. I have had to isolate myself from my family in my own home and take extra precautions in my daily routine in order to lessen the chances of bringing it home to my elderly father. It's been very stressful and I constantly worry that I'm not doing enough. It's also impacted my interactions with my passengers. I do this job because I love people. Having little to no contact with passengers that I have come to know quite well, is challenging and upsetting. I miss having the daily interactions with the people on my route. I enjoy that so much. It has been a huge learning curve for all of us...sometimes scary, sometimes frustrating, but I am proud to serve my community. I am proud of all my brothers and sisters for showing up and getting the job done. This too will pass and I think we are all stronger for the experience.

Andrea (BTC)



The largest effect that I have seen behind the wheel is stress. Starting from the initial outbreak of

Covid19 to the rear door boarding, fare removal, limited seating to the layoffs of our fellow ops. This is a very stressful time for all of us. Remember to make use of our new mental health advocates at each depot.

Kole (RTC)



Even though I was off on AV and then took more time off to social distance myself due to having copd, I found I was still treat-

ed by family and friends like I was already carrying, and was a possible danger to them.

One friend said to me, "You're a bus driver, I can't be anywhere near you."

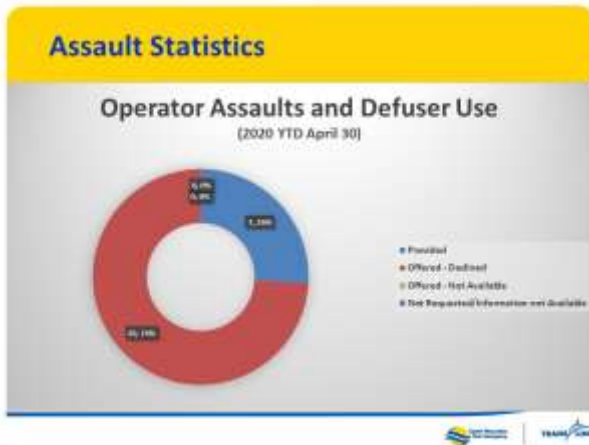
I understood when my two close friends, who both suffer badly with lung conditions, asked me not to visit, or come any where near them, but then my family requested I not even think of seeing them until the virus is over. I felt like an outcast. The feeling didn't last long really, for as we all know, as bus drivers, we are more than thrilled not to see anyone after a week of passengers, traffic and noise. So peaceful weekends is what I have to look forward to...no more request for rides to the grocery store etc. I will no longer be the designated driver for every one....I have to look at the positive side of this; this is not isolation; it's a break. Do I miss the questions and Joe blow leaning over my shoulder wanting to chat? I say not! Now if this goes on too long I will eventually miss my family and friends but for now, on the positive side, I'm enjoying the freedom...

Sandra (HTC)



Official Unifor Local 111 page

#inthistgether



As the chair of VIW (violence in the workplace) committee I have noticed the change in our passengers. The stress that this pandemic has caused amongst the public is effecting our members. Our positions are challenging at times & incidents will arise where we may be put into uncomfortable or dangerous situations. During the incident we feel that we do not need a defuser or need to talk to anyone however as time elapses and our



shock starts kicking in we realize we need that support. As a committee we want our members to utilize the defuser services at those times. This program is designed to provide basic emotional support & guidance for the member during the moment of confusion & vulnerability. The defuser is there to help reduce the stress & shock levels that the incident may have caused. Our defusers do not take notes or report back to the company they are strictly there for us. Attached is a diagram that shows the percentage of defusers being used. We are in this together and the safety of our members is the top priority of our committee.

In Solidarity!

Jessie Rana



FRONTLINE HERO!

On January 16th at 06:34 doing 354 White Rock Centre to Bridgeport Stn. RTC Op, Anil Pathak turned off Centre Street onto Columbia Ave where he saw a man lying down in a pile of snow. It was early morning and still dark. Stopped his bus to check on him. Saw he was not breathing and called 911 for an ambulance. The 911 Operator asked our Op to perform CPR and administered which Anil did for 7 to 8 minutes. Luckily Anil level 1 Certified CPR training. He found him with his face down in a pile of snow. Which he then was moved from top of the stairs where his legs were dangling over the stairs and moved him to a flat surface. The emergency paramedics arrived and took over and moved patient into the bus where for assist with urgent medical attention for 45 minutes. No passengers on the bus at that time. Paramedics administered drugs, 6 AED electric shock treatments. He survived but subsequently passed away later, giving his family enough time to say good bye.



My name is Chris Albright and I am a transit operator for CMBC, out of HTC and this is how I have spent my 2020 AV.

My family wife and 3 kids, thought it would be a nice spring break 3 week vacation for all of us to go to see family in the Philippines over spring break. We booked this in late fall 2019 before anyone knew of corona or covid-19.

On March 08, we left YVR all smiles and looked so forward to hot sun and good family times in the Philippines. When we arrived here things were fun and normal until March 15.

On this day the government lockdown the country due to covid -19 much like back home in Canada. Here was more serious, if you left your house without a mask and “travel pass” you had the risk of going to jail or even worse getting shot by police.

We were schedule to depart Manila on March 30, but that was cancelled by the airline as all travel within the country was halted. We are staying in San Mateo Isablea, a rural town 8 hours north of Manila.

Philippine Airlines has rebooked us many times since March 30, but has cancelled due to the government not opening up domestic air travel and lifting the lockdown.

We have reached out to the Canadian embassy in Manila for help and all they did was arrange “emergency flights” back to Canada. These flights were full by the time we got through to the airline which was 3.5 hours on hold. Not only were these flights full, the airline wanted 2250 per person for this flight, so you do the math with 5 tickets. At that point we made the decision to wait for all this to pass and use our original tickets to come home on.

We are all safe and staying with family here still as of May 18 and waiting this ordeal out. The country is easing restrictions now so we are confident we will get out June 03.

My operations supervisor Jen Rioux has been a big help during this ordeal and very understanding. In addition Bryan De Leon my union contact has been a tremendous help during this time.

For now all we do is wait this out and hopefully be back in Canada very soon.





EXECUTIVE BOARD CONTACT INFORMATION:

- Balbir Mann**, (President) 604.374.5900 President@Unifor111.com
- Mike McMillan**, (VP1) 778.980.0132 VP1@Unifor111.com
- Lee Stebner**, (VP2) 604.499.1150 VP2@Unifor111.com
- Raj Purewal**, (Financial Secretary) 604.790.1464 Finance@Unifor111.com
- Jessie Rana**, (Recording Secretary) 778.980.0489 RecSec@Unifor111.com
- Ray Beattie**, (CTSEO) 778.980.0136 CTSEO@Unifor111.com
- Kirk Rockwell**, (PR BTC) 778.980.0139 btcp@Unifor111.com
- Kevin Renaud**, (PR HTC) 604.726.1620 htcp@Unifor111.com
- Sam Hajizadeh**, (PR PCTC) 778.980.0133 ptcp@Unifor111.com
- Abbas Mohajer**, (PR RTC) 778.239.6559 rtcpr@Unifor111.com
- Sat Athwal**, (PR STC) 604.716.5686 stcp@Unifor111.com
- Jamie Renwick**, (PR VTC) 604.992.5805 vtcp@Unifor111.com
- Jas Thind**, (CJS VTC) 778.980.0131 vtccjs@Unifor111.com



RTC Thank you
All our brothers & sisters thank RTC operators. A generous donor stepped up and anonymously donated

face masks for our operators. Slowly RTC has provided all depots except VTC with work face masks. The work continues and hope to provide enough for all VTC operators. We thank our donors for their generosity, thinking about our Ops and their safety!



You can find us on Unifor Local 111's official Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/UniforLocal111/>

