

Negotiating Bulletin

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What You Can Do

The DFA negotiating team held three meetings (one on each Dalhousie campus) to discuss the salary proposal we plan to present to the Board of Governors' team.

The meetings also enabled our chief negotiator, Kevin Grundy, and our president, Anthony Stewart, to address questions about the pension plan and how it has dominated this round of collective bargaining. The main point to be reiterated here is that our team has—at no point—ruled out the prospect of cooperating with the administration to address the solvency shortfall. This includes the option of increased contribution rates. We have received a lot of positive feedback about the presentations, saying that our salary proposals and our position regarding the pension plan are reasonable and fair. If you were not able to attend the meetings, the details of the salary proposal and a video recording of the presentation will soon be available on the DFA website (dfa.ns.ca).

We have reviewed the draft regulations of the *Pension Benefits Act*, which were released December 7. The draft regulations indicate the government's willingness to entertain at least partial solvency exemptions. However, for the moment, such exemptions are tied to the jointly sponsored pension plan governance structure only. There is no reason that a solvency exemption cannot be applied to defined benefit pension plans, like the Dalhousie University Pension Plan.

At this stage, the government is seeking public input on the draft regulations. We will continue to lobby the government in our effort to get full solvency exemption for qualified universities. For this lobbying effort, your help is crucial. We will be emailing a letter for you to sign and forward to your MLA, emphasizing the importance of solvency exemption for our pension plan.

DFA Negotiating Team

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