

LIVEWIRE

CBC PNA ONTARIO REGION

DEMAND FROM OSFI FURTHER DELAYS CBC PENSION SURPLUS CHEQUES

BY TALIN VARTANIAN

CBC employees and pensioners expected to have their share of the pension surplus in hand by now, but the cheques are not yet in the mail.

The latest delay is due to a requirement by the agency that regulates Canadian pension plans. The Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI) is demanding that the CBC conduct a broad consultation with all pensioners before it is permitted to share the pension surplus.

The Corporation has mailed a fat envelope of information to about 20,000 people, and 8,000 of those are current employees. The other 12,000 are pensioners, including members of the PNA, pensioners who have not joined the PNA, and about 2,000 people who have deferred collecting their pensions. The envelopes for all pensioners include a ballot. They are being asked whether they will allow the CBC to withdraw surplus assets from the pension plan and distribute that money to employees and pensioners. The deadline to return these ballots is December 8th.

The current surplus amount to be shared is more than \$115 million, plus about \$14 million in interest. It constitutes less than 1.5 per cent of the total assets of the pension plan.



Graphic by Scott Galley

Continued...

About 15 years ago, employees and retirees ratified a surplus-sharing agreement signed by the CBC, its unions and the PNA. While OSFI agrees the unions represent CBC employees, it does not grant similar recognition to the PNA. Just over half of all CBC pensioners are PNA members, and OSFI expects two-thirds of pensioners to agree before it grants approval to the CBC to share the pension surplus. Livewire asked for an interview with an OSFI official to ask, for example, why a simple majority would not suffice. The regulator declined our request.

"In order to accomplish this improvement in benefits, the employer has to remove money from the plan," explains Dan Oldfield, the PNA's representative on the Consultative Committee on Staff Benefits. "Obviously, we don't want the pension plan used as some sort of cash drawer. You want regulation. So that's what also drives the whole consultation and consent process."

The last time the CBC shared a pension surplus was in 2000, and OSFI did not make the same demand. Oldfield says the interpretation of the regulations has changed: "I think there's a heightened awareness of what consultation means, and it obviously puts greater demands on the process."

Continued...

Livewire is the Ontario Region newsletter of the PNA



**The CBC Pensioners
National Association**

Preserving our Future, Sharing our Past

**L'Association nationale
des retraités de la SRC**

Assurer notre avenir, partager notre passé

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Feedback and ideas are welcome.

Please write to pnalivewire@gmail.com.

OSFI's demand for agreement by two-thirds of pensioners sheds light on the importance of the PNA. If significantly more CBC pensioners were PNA members, it's possible OSFI would not have required this time-consuming, expensive consultation.

The PNA has invested countless hours of volunteer labour and thousands of dollars in legal fees to advocate on behalf of all CBC pensioners, whether they've joined the Association or not. The CBC pensioners who have not joined have been dubbed by some as "free riders."

"Someone who benefits from the work of the organization, knows about the work of the organization, and still chooses not to contribute in any way? I don't think that's too harsh," says Oldfield. "I don't want to insult people, but come on folks! No one is asking you to run as president or join one of multiple committees, just chip in and join."

Oldfield led the team that negotiated a Memorandum of Agreement with the CBC, to achieve a pension-surplus-sharing deal. He also led the PNA strategy during the

formal arbitration process. In that arbitration, Justice Dennis O'Connor ruled the CBC was compelled to honour its surplus-sharing agreement.

It did not help matters that in its initial communication with OSFI, the CBC failed to even mention the PNA. Marco Dubé, the CBC's executive vice-president of People and Culture also declined our request for an interview.

"Since the arbitration, the CBC has been very cooperative. It's accepted the decision. It didn't appeal the decision or

If more CBC pensioners were PNA members, it's possible OSFI would not have required this time-consuming, expensive consultation.

Continued...

DEMAND FROM OSFI, CONTINUED...

or take it anywhere else. It's been cooperative in terms of sharing information as it became available, maybe not fast enough for my liking," says Oldfield. . "We seem to have common cause now, and this could focus around getting the consent forms in.

At our urging, they did find a way to make it an online process, which is a huge step. We know we have lots of Snowbirds who take off, and we have people living out of the country."

The PNA represents about 5,200 pensioners. Even if every one of them submits a "yes" ballot, another 3,000 people will need to sign on to achieve the two-thirds threshold that OSFI requires.



"The biggest challenge we face is with deferred pensioners, and those who aren't represented by the PNA," says Oldfield. "We don't have addresses or contact information for them, so outreach is a challenge."

The CBC's Pension Administration Centre will not share information with the PNA, citing privacy concerns.

"Anyone you're talking to who you believe is receiving a CBC pension, encourage them to sign the ballot," Oldfield adds. "'Have you sent in your consent form?' should be a constant refrain from PNA members to others who may not know about this."

Continued...

Questions remain about whether the current consultation with CBC pensioners will apply to the distribution of future surpluses in the pension plan, surpluses that Oldfield expects to see.

"I think it's a slam-dunk for 2023, and a high likelihood for 2024," he says.

Of course, one of the best possible ways to avoid a repeat of the current scenario is to significantly increase membership in the PNA. More voices mean greater credibility. (See the message from CBC President Gail Carducci, on page 7.)

BEST-CASE SCENARIO FOR GETTING OUR SURPLUS CHEQUES



December 8th

The required two-thirds of all CBC pensioners submit a "Yes" vote by OSFI's deadline. The CBC writes to OSFI for permission to withdraw funds from the pension plan and share the pension surplus.

Late December or early January

Following its own regulations, OSFI asks the CBC Pension Administration Centre to send another notice to members of the pension plan, allowing sufficient time (perhaps 30 days?) for anyone, who may have missed the original package of information, to raise concerns. This would be a notification, not another approval process or ballot.

End of January

The notification period lapses, and no additional concerns are expressed. OSFI grants approval for payment of the pension surplus and, according to its rules, it imposes a 40-day hold on the funds before permitting the CBC to issue cheques.

Continued...

BEST-CASE SCENARIO, CONTINUED...

Late March or early April

The earliest possible date that pensioners receive their money.

In the process...

PNA members actively recruit enough colleagues to join the Association to convince OSFI there is no need to repeat this process next time.

WORST-CASE SCENARIO FOR GETTING OUR SURPLUS CHEQUES

December 8th

Two-thirds of CBC pensioners do not mail their ballots, and we fail to meet OSFI's deadline. A request is made for a deadline extension.

January or February

Ballots continue to arrive, slowing to a trickle, with the hope that if more than 50 per cent respond with a "Yes" vote, OSFI might alter its requirement for two-thirds support.

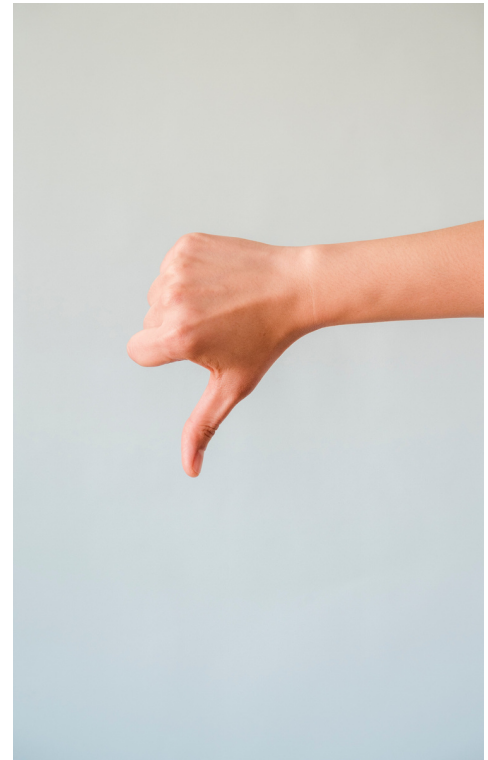
March

OSFI does not agree to accept less than a two-thirds return rate, and refuses to permit the distribution of the pension surplus. The parties

(PNA, CBC and the unions) seek arbitration under the provision of the OSFI regulations.

April onwards

PNA members await the results of yet another arbitration ruling, which may or may not be in their favour. Pension surplus cheques remain in limbo.



WHY PNA RECRUITMENT AFFECTS YOUR PENSION SURPLUS CHEQUE

BY ONTARIO REGION PRESIDENT GAIL CARDUCCI



Gail Carducci

The question I've been asked most often over the past year? "Where's my money?"

We've all been waiting for our share of the pension surplus, and it seems to be taking a very long time to happen? Why? There are several reasons—a detailed consultation process and a year-long arbitration process, to name a couple. But we also believe it may be because the PNA doesn't have a loud enough voice.

The Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions wants to know that two-thirds of pensioners agree to the

payout, but our membership rate is just under 52 per cent.

We must convince the 5,000 pensioners who are not members to join the PNA.

A lot of them think membership is automatic when they leave the CBC. It is not. There's an enrolment form at the end of this newsletter that I urge you to share with all the CBC pensioners you know who are not yet members of the PNA.

People have told me, point blank, they figure they're reaping the benefits of the PNA's work, without paying the meagre amount it costs to join (about \$10-\$15 a month for most people). Is it fair or right that we are carrying their luggage? No.

Continued...

Others argue their pension is too small to bother joining us. Regardless of the size of a person's pension, the PNA gives them a voice with the CBC on the vital issues of our pensions and benefits. What matters most is membership, the number of pensioners the PNA represents, regardless of their pension income.

Some say they won't join the PNA because they had a bad experience at CBC. More the reason to join. The PNA is not the CBC. It's an independent organization that advocates for pensioners.

Sometimes two partners are pensioners, but only one has joined the PNA. They pay one fee, granting access to information and events to both. However, with just one person as a member, the PNA lacks the strength in numbers that it needs.

“We must convince the 5,000 pensioners who are not members to join the PNA.”

Without the PNA, no one would be fighting for the rights of CBC pensioners, and we would be deprived of our fair share of the pension surplus.

Think about who you know, forward them this newsletter, and ask them to do the right thing by completing the enrolment form at the end. The very least they can do is to support our efforts through membership.

Continued...



PNA recruitment table in the Front St. Lobby of the CBC Broadcasting Centre, on November 7th

Left to right: Joan Melanson, Ted Hackborn, Gail Carducci, Talin Vartanian, Lise Lareau

“If each one of us recruits just one new person to join the PNA, it’s possible we won’t be facing this hurdle the next time there is a pension surplus.”

Do we arrange events for members to get together and have fun? Yes, we do. Do we work hard to make sure our communications are timely, relevant, and entertaining? You bet. Your PNA fees pay for all of that, but our most important mission is to fight for your pension and benefits. We are here to protect your money.

If each one of us recruits just one new person to join the PNA, it’s

possible we won’t be facing this hurdle the next time there is a pension surplus. All signs are pointing toward a next time.

And consider this: If the PNA was already representing two-thirds of all CBC pensioners, we might not be asking, “Where’s my money?” It may already be in hand.

CALL TO ACTION!

If you haven’t done it already, please act on the following:

- Find the envelope of information you received from the CBC’s Pension Administration Centre.
- Pull the last page, the ballot.
- Vote, sign it, and date it.
- Scan or photograph it.
- Send it to surplus@telushealth.com or mail it in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope.

HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE OUT OF THE LOOP

BY TALIN VARTANIAN

As PNA members, we have an advantage. We've been aware of the Association's continuing efforts to ensure we receive our share of the pension surplus. We've been constantly informed about progress every step of the way. And we know the importance of completing and returning the ballot we received in the mail.

Those who haven't joined the PNA are out of the loop. For them, the package of information from the Pension Administration Centre arrived out of the blue.

Please make a point of contacting your former colleagues. Urge them to complete the pension surplus ballot and submit it. This affects us all.

HOW WILL THE PENSION-SURPLUS PAYOUT AFFECT THE CBC'S FINANCES?

It won't.

"The money doesn't come from the CBC, the money comes from an independently held pension plan," explains Dan Oldfield, the PNA representative on the Consultative Committee on Staff Benefits. "This does not cost the CBC a nickel."



CHALLENGES HITTING THE TWO-THIRDS TARGET

BY TALIN VARTANIAN

- Some find the multipage package of information too long and difficult to comprehend.
- The suggestion to seek legal advice is intimidating, and potentially expensive.
- In some cases, people signed, scanned, and emailed the ballot, but did not receive an automated reply saying it had been received. Should they send it via Canada Post, too, or will that confuse matters?
- Deferred pensioners who failed to inform the PAC they have new contact information have not received their ballots.
- People couldn't log into the Pension Administration Centre (PAC) website, the "Forgot Password," process failed, and they were unable to get help on the phone because the lines were too busy.



- Pensioners are confused by the return email address for ballots. Why does it say @telushealth? (Answer: Telus Health administers the CBC pension plan.)
 - Those with a small pension are stymied by all the paperwork, and figure, "Why bother?"
 - Family members who act as Power of Attorney for a CBC pensioner don't know how to proceed. Do they need to submit POA documents along with the ballot?
- Some pensioners have reported on social media that the package of information and their ballot didn't arrive in the mail. Others received the package after they voted online.

The National PNA is attempting to address these issues, and will provide updates when they are available.

IF THE CBC SHUTS DOWN, IS MY PENSION SAFE?

Yes.

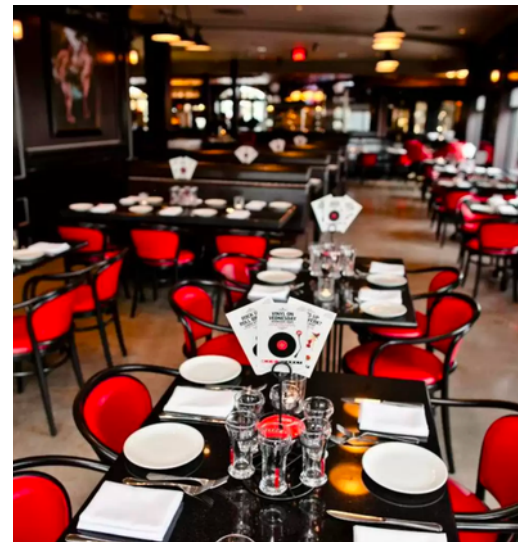
"If you assume it's an absolute shutdown, the CBC is out of business, and there's no more contributions going into the pension plan on behalf of employees, what happens at that stage is that the assets of the plan are converted to longer-term instruments, 30-year bonds, that kind of thing," says Dan Oldfield, who led the negotiating team that signed a pension-surplus-sharing deal with the CBC.

He notes that our pensions are called "the promise," and adds this: "Everything that's done with the pension, in terms of its investment strategies, is designed to honour 'the promise.' The idea is that because you have a pension for life, the actuaries work long hours to crunch numbers... and they forecast out for decades, to ensure that the people currently within the plan continue to receive their pensions."

LAST CALL FOR THE ONTARIO REGION HOLIDAY PARTY!

If you'd like to come to our holiday lunch, please etransfer \$25 (per member or guest) to PNAONTEvents@gmail.com or let us know you're coming and will pay cash at the door.

**Saturday, December 2nd at 12 noon
The Bier Markt
58 The Esplanade
(conveniently located a short walk
from Union Station)**



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Visit the Ontario page of the PNA website for information about upcoming events, and to read our bylaws, and minutes of our meetings.

<https://www.cbcpensioners.ca/regions/ontario/>



**The CBC Pensioners
National Association**

Preserving our Future, Sharing our Past

**L'Association nationale
des retraités de la SRC**

Assurer notre avenir, partager notre passé

ENROLMENT FORM – RETIREE

Clear data

Please print

Name			
Street	City	Prov.	Postal Code
Telephone	Email		

☐ ***I wish to join now*** (please fill in the remaining sections of this form).

☐ *I am uncertain about joining at this time. I understand that, with the information given above, a representative of Association may contact me and, upon request, provide assistance with the enrolment process.*

I, _____, wish to join the CBC Pensioners National Association and hereby authorize the CBC to deduct monthly membership dues from my pension cheque and remit them to the Association. I also authorize the CBC to provide the Association with such personal information relating to me as the Association may require to facilitate the administration of dues and other services related to the welfare of pensioners.

All personal information provided to the Association by you or by the CBC is held in strict confidence.

Membership dues are 0.32% of a member's gross pension payment. For every \$1,000 of monthly pension, a member would contribute \$3.20.

CBC ID (See Notification of deposit, above your name)	Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	Gender (optional)
Civil Status <input type="radio"/> Single <input type="radio"/> Married <input type="radio"/> Widow/er <input type="radio"/> Divorced <input type="radio"/> Separated <input type="radio"/> Common-Law		
Preferred language <input type="radio"/> English <input type="radio"/> French	Date of retirement (dd/mm/yyyy)	

Spousal information

Name			
Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	Gender (optional)	CBC Employee <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	CBC Retiree <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

Signature Required

Date

This form can be mailed to:
The CBC Pensioners National Association
 P.O. Box 8570
 Ottawa, ON K1G 3H9
 or press the submit button to send via
 email to info@cbcpensioners.ca

Submit