



ALL CONVENTIONAL OPERATORS:

CALLING OUT STOPS

The Ontario Human Rights Commission, along with the Region are implementing a calling all stops program effective with the Winter Sign Up.

The Ministry of Labour recently conducted an investigation at another transit property and found the employer in contravention of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

1 TIMU OHSA 1990 25 2 h Pursuant to Section 25 (2) (h) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the employer shall take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker. This requires the employer to conduct a formal review of the worktask of "calling out all stops" to ensure the safety of the worker and therefore *safe operation of the vehicle*. The employer shall ensure that driver overload is not occurring, shall eliminate the forward leaning posture required on some buses, shall discontinue use of hand-held microphones and improve assistive aids. (Written) procedures shall be enhanced to ensure that the changed work practices are documented in a clear and detailed manner.

2 PLAN OHSA 1990 57 4 A provision of this Act is being contravened, 01 May 2008 therefore this employer shall submit to the Ministry, a compliance plan prepared in the manner and including such items *as required by the order*. The compliance plan shall specify what the employers plans to do to comply with the order and when the employer intends to achieve compliance.

This assessment has not occurred in your workplace. Health issues and driver overload have not been investigated. The Region of Waterloo is also in contravention of the Act. In addition to failure to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances, they have failed to instruct and train you on this new procedure but also failure to do mandatory training as required by *The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

As a result of the Ministries findings, all of our amplification methods have been deemed unsafe in other cities. Therefore you will be required to amplify your voice. This causes health issues such as repetitive voice and throat strain injury. Documentation clearly shows how damage to your voice can occur in the same way as it can to any other part of your body due to repetition, strain and overuse. No job hazard analysis has been performed and no training has been provided. By reducing your risk of voice and throat injuries, you cannot meet the Commissions requirements of calling stops for all to hear on the bus. Furthermore, this policy is in conflict with a number of clauses in the BUS OPERATOR POLICIES, PROCEDURES & PRACTICES, (you now have to read bus stops on your itinerary) namely:

5.15 Reading on the Bus

Any supervisor report or substantiated customer complaint generated due to reading will result in appropriate action being taken. Reading while the bus is in motion or stopped at a red light is strictly forbidden.

Barbara Hall, Chief Commissioner of the ORHC and a letter from Francois Larsen, Director, Policy and Education Branch both state that any Health and Safety risks must be assessed to determine undue hardship and ensure these risks are minimized.

We feel that the only acceptable solution to this issue is a fully automated bus stop announcement system. The Region knew for some time that the calling of stops was going to be implemented but unlike most properties, chose not to put the system in place. The region has allocated \$3.2million dollars for this project, but instead they chose to burden you with “attentional overload”. The money is there but is being withheld.

Finally, your union is advocating that you do not participate in this manual calling of stops program until all the health and safety assessments are complete. Continue as you have been, calling stops on request only. The Ministry of Labour will be contacted and the process will begin on the first day that you are required to perform this unnecessary and overburdening chore. No supervisor or anyone from the Commission will approach you for non compliance in the meantime. Should they try to talk to you, direct them to one of the numbers listed below.

If you have any questions please contact myself, Ted Dewsbury (574-8970) Harold Klooster (574-9370) Darlene Wilson (500-3553) John Livingstone (841-2425) Monica Menner (574-9270) Zeke Baker (574-9470) or any steward.



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