



ACTRA WANTS TO COME BACK TO THE TABLE – THE ICA ONLY POUNDS ON IT

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That's what the bad advisors at the Institute of Canadian Agencies (ICA) did in their July 18th statement that is entirely devoid of facts and lacks respect for labour law in Canada.

What is the truth? Read more below...



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What is the truth?

Is the National Commercial Agreement really a “collective agreement”? ACTRA says it is – and is prepared to protect it through action at the labour board. More importantly, ACTRA performers have had their minimum conditions contained in it for over 60 years. So why is the ICA now determined to unilaterally destroy a freely negotiated system of basic minimum protections?

Both parties have long agreed not to debate whether the National Commercial Agreement is a collective agreement — and it says so explicitly in the text of the agreement.

By contesting this, the ICA's current bad advisors pontificate about “fairness” while turning their backs on the relationship they had with the advertisers and union – and most importantly the performers who made their creative come to life on screen.

And they did so while manufacturing a false issue, bargained to impasse on it, and then declared that because they had done so, the National Commercial Agreement had instantly disappeared.

Why did they do this?

They were aiming to break the contract (but advertisers and the better-advised Quebec agencies explicitly repudiated this and signed the new one).

They were aiming to break the union (but instead provoked a \$1 million counter-campaign, which is just getting started).

They were aiming to impose damaging rollbacks to the minimum pay, benefits, pension contributions and use fees of these diverse gig workers (including a 60% pay cut).

To do these things, they deliberately bargained to impasse, walked out, imposed a lockout, and are now advising agency members of the ICA to refuse to return to the table to discuss and settle the issues.

Counselling cruel, greedy and unacceptable conduct like this — while now falsely claiming you're doing the opposite — is cowardly and shameful.

This is not how collective bargaining is conducted by typical employers in Canada in 2022 — as the advertising industry and agencies in Quebec have been trying to explain, while rejecting the advice ICA members chose to take.

Advertising agencies and senior executives who choose to keep following this advice are putting their business reputations and their brands at risk.

The ICA repeats its false claims about payroll companies. These statements carry no weight, as all other stakeholders in this agreement have been trying to explain to the bad advisors at the ICA for over a year.

More than 90% of the ACTRA payroll is with fully adhered engagers. 7% is with American agencies shooting in Canada. And about 3% are companies we're trying to recruit into the agreement, working through payroll companies.

There is no material business issue — certainly nothing to justify this lockout; nothing to justify depriving agencies of access to ACTRA members; and nothing to justify the cruel and greedy demands put forward by these bad advisors, aimed at the pay and working conditions of this vulnerable and diverse group of gig workers.

ACTRA is just getting started in this dispute. It will continue, at a steadily growing level of intensity.

ICA agencies: ACTRA members want to work with you. You want to work with them. The terms for their pay, benefits, pensions and use fees are outlined in the National Commercial Agreement.

There are indeed some real business issues associated with this agreement, that we all have a common interest in addressing these issues through a modernized and streamlined agreement.

ICA agencies, you can end this dispute. ACTRA, ACA and A2C want to work with you. Reject the bad advice you've been given. End this lockout. And get back to the table.

For further information or advice, please contact Marie Kelly, ACTRA National Executive Director, 416-489-1311.



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