## Cathy Domanico

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**Sent:** December 12, 2024 11:51 AM
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**Cc:** Cathy Domanico
**Subject:** Bulletin #26-24 Gordon 2025 Messaging Update
**Attachments:** Gordon Plan Update V3.docx

Good morning.

Attached is the Gordon update dated November 29, 2024 from our December 3rd Council meeting package.

Please share this update with your contractor members.

Thank you.

**Wayne Peterson**
**Executive Director**
**Construction Employers Coordinating Council of Ontario**

CECCO

# CECCO
Construction Employers Coordinating Council of Ontario

## Bulletin #26-24

## CECCO 2025 Bargaining Messaging Update to Members
**November 29, 2024**

**Dear CECCO Members –**

For many of you, collective bargaining is underway or about to start. I wanted to take this opportunity to provide you with some thoughts and updates.

### ECAO
As you have now heard, the ECAO/IBEW have reached a tentative Joint Proposal agreement. This still needs to be ratified. Potentially good news.

### COMMUNICATIONS
We have a communications plan in place and are working through its roll-out. The website is up and running with our bargaining page and backgrounder and our "Union Proud" messaging and content, and we will continue to populate it as new information and updates on negotiations becomes available. There was a brief story in the Daily Commercial News, and we expect there to be more stories to come. Next week we will be launching CECCO's social media, and we will begin planning for some proactive media relations and direct to bargaining unit member communications.

The goal of the plan is two-fold: to get the sector story out in terms of the real competition being non-union contractors and workers, and to provide our members with specific help for their bargaining. If you require any assistance or have questions, please reach out to me directly.

Karen Gordon from Gordon Strategy will attend our meeting on January 17th, 2025, to discuss the plan, progress to date and next steps.

### RATIFICATION PLANNING
As we have previously discussed as a group, a concern for the entire sector is the ratification of recommended tentative agreements. This is an issue of great concern not only to our EBAs, but also, as I understand it, to the PBT.

In a recent call with the Negotiating Messaging Committee, the issue came up again, so I wanted to take this opportunity to remind you that as part of your bargaining planning, you should include a plan for ratification. Ideally, that plan would be done in conjunction with the union's bargaining committee, however, I realize that for some EBAs, that may not be realistic.

### INFLATION TOOL
I expect the issue of inflation is one that has and will come up at all bargaining tables. One of our members pointed out that their union has been relying on the CUPE Inflation Calculator for current information on inflation. This is a good tool that can be found here.

### UPDATED MESSAGING
As we continue with our communications planning, we are updating our key messages package. Below you will find some key messages you can use around issues that seem to be coming up for some EBAs in this round of collective bargaining. These will also be added to the website in the EBA Resource Library in the Members Only section.

*CATCH-UP*

- "Catch-up" refers to wage and/or benefit increases in collective bargaining that reflect when a collective bargaining agreement is negotiated and ratified prior to a burst of inflation and higher cost of living. That inflation, and the higher costs associated with it, are not factored into the settlement.
- Within CECCO bargaining units, there is discussion around catch-up for those unions and workers who ratified collective agreements five years ago (prior to the record-setting inflation of the last four years).
- Catch-up is often reflected in a flat-fee hourly increase, which is negotiated prior to the across-the-board wage increases of the CBA.

**Questions regarding Catch-Up:**

**Who is eligible for catch-up?**

- Within the ICI sector, all collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) are three-year terms. The CBAs that were negotiated prior to the record-setting inflation, and therefore may include catch-up. Those CBAs that negotiated later in the cycle will already reflect both inflation and the higher cost of living.

**Why is catch-up an issue?**

- Catch-up is an issue for those EBAs who have three-year CBAs where inflation and higher cost of living, was reflected in the last settlement.

*FLAT FEE WAGE INCREASES*

- While catch-up wage increases are often flat-fee hourly increases, collective bargaining in general continues to be focused on an across-the-board percentage increase for bargaining unit members.
- In some recent rounds of bargaining (for example, CUPE in the municipal sector), there has been a push to introduce flat-fee hourly wage increases. The issue with this type of increase is that it disadvantages those workers with more seniority and higher wages.

*COMPARABLES/PUBLIC SECTOR*

- Over the last few years, there has been increased public discussion on collective bargaining, across all sectors. This has served to draw attention to the improvements made to some collective agreements, as well as the tactics being undertaken by some bargaining units to achieve those agreements.
- Historically, the term "comparables" refers to workers who have the same or similar jobs in the same or similar sectors. Comparables are often referenced in bargaining, as both parties work on an agreement.
- What is currently taking place in bargaining, is that workers are comparing themselves to other workers, in dissimilar jobs and dissimilar sectors. High profile negotiations like the Air Canada pilots with large settlements (42% over three years) have prompted implausible comparisons from workers in different and unrelated sectors.
- In particular, large public sector settlements, with wage increases over 4% per year, improvements to benefits and catch-up are prompting comparisons from other sectors.

*COMPETITION*

- CECCO and the unionized employers/contractors in the ICI sector are proud of their relationship with their bargaining units. We have worked hard and achieved many things together.
- The biggest issue for both the employers and the union in the ICI sector is the non-union contractors. We need to up our game, and realize if we are complacent, non-unionized workers will continue to fill the void and continue to get the jobs we should have. They are taking every job we are not taking – jobs that we are pricing ourselves out of.
- In order to meet CECCO's strategic objective of advancing unionizing construction by fostering industry collaboration, we need to work with the provincial building trades.