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Republic of Ireland Head Office

Mr Paul O'Brien
Organisational Development Manager
Bord na Móna
Main Street
Newbridge
Co. Kildare

Dublin, October 25th 2018

Dear Paul,

On foot of the significant adverse feedback from our members, I am writing to you to formally set out our initial response to the announcement to the board meeting yesterday.

1. Following a full year of engagement with the Workplace Relations Commission in 2015, supported by a recommendation from the Labour Court, a three year agreement was signed between the Group of Unions and Bord na Mona management in early 2016. This agreement remains in place. Accordingly we view yesterday's announcement as a proposal from Bord na Mona management, rather than a final position.
2. The 2017 agreement provided for a significant cost cutting agenda during the 3 year life of that agreement. Our members have fully honoured this agreement to date and will continue to do so.
3. As a consequences of the 2016 agreement, significantly reduced staff numbers have been managing an increased workload despite an effective reduction in earnings. These concessions were agreed on the basis of a commitment from Bord na Mona management that peat production would continue until 2030 and that recourse to redundancy would be minimised. The announcement by Bord na Mona management yesterday dishonours the management's commitment.
4. In the course of our engagements with the Group of Unions, we will be seeking to address the issues referred to above. We will also be seeking as a matter of priority an early agreement that includes:
 - (a) A concrete commitment that will prevent compulsory redundancy in any circumstance. For the avoidance of doubt, you should be clear that any member of this trade union will only depart on voluntary terms and will be provided with the opportunity to remain in employment in all circumstances.
 - (b) That a significantly enhanced voluntary redundancy and early retirement agreement is put in place to achieve the objectives in (a) above.

In the event that issues (a) and (b) are not progressed at an acceptable pace, we will be calling on the Group of Unions to immediately commence a ballot for industrial action.

We remain committed to engaging with you through the Group of Unions in the coming weeks. However, it is essential that you are fully apprised of the formal position of Unite trade union on behalf of our members before this process commences.

Please feel free to contact me for further information or clarification.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colm Quinlan'.

Colm Quinlan
Regional Officer
087 6299651