



# IATSE LOCAL 891

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States, its Territories and Canada • British Columbia and the Yukon

October 13, 2023

## BC Building Trades FAQ

### 1. **How did this pilot project come about?**

This pilot project is one piece of a larger strategy within the Office of the Business Representative to invest in workforce development in B.C. and strengthen our working relationships with other Labour Unions in B.C.

We have heard from many of you how challenging the last year has been, as the global production slowdown and the protracted labour actions in the US have brought our foreign service work to a halt. We have been working with stakeholders on how to creatively support 891 members, conversations focused on how to improve industry mobility for workers so they might be able to gain more access to positions across industries in a range of unionized workplaces.

Knowing the cyclical nature of motion picture work prior to 2017, and the persistent reality of our industry's busy to quiet times, we started talking to other unions who represent gig/seasonal workers in other similarly cyclical industries. Our hope was to find partners willing to work with us to help improve access to work while protecting union benefits like health benefits and RRSP payments.

### 2. **Why the BC Building Trades?**

The BC Building Trades is an umbrella association that covers 14 different union locals (<https://bcbuildingtrades.org/about/affiliate-unions/>). These locals represent workers in a large variety of different unionized work sites in B.C. and provide a wide range of potential unionized job opportunities for qualified 891 members to be dispatched to. With the increase in Provincially funded development projects across B.C. that fall under Union contracts, these Unions are finding there are not enough workers for the work at hand.

### 3. **Doesn't this pilot only help members in the Trades?**

No pilot project is perfect, and it is true that working with BC Building Trades will have the first immediate impact on members who have experience, qualifications, ability, or interest to work in Red Seal Trades.



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However, many of the 14 affiliate unions also have labourer and skilled labourer positions that many 891 members are qualified for, using tickets they already have like Skid Steer, Forklift, OFA 1 and others.

#### **4. Why didn't you try and find options for other non-trades work?**

The BC Building Trades have experience with negotiating reciprocal agreements that make this kind of cross union dispatch possible. We are benefiting from their years of experience in getting this pilot off the ground. The more we learn here, the better equipped we will be to try other similar pilots in the future.

Construction and Trades work traditionally encompasses the workplaces most likely to be unionized and utilizing a dispatch work model. This allows us to give access to work without our members having to navigate an Employer led hiring process.

#### **5. What's a reciprocal agreement?**

A reciprocal agreement is a contract negotiated between IATSE 891 and another local, to determine the parameters under which one local can dispatch members of another local to a job site operating under a collective agreement, without negatively impacting the members already working.

This is usually done to mutually benefit both locals, one who is unable to fulfil calls for workers and one with workers unable to access work. It also outlines how representation, dispatch, and flows of benefits will be handled for the affiliate unions.

#### **6. But this isn't film work and I'm a film worker? Why should I participate?**

We know that 891 members are skilled, qualified artists and technicians who have a lot to offer in any job setting. No one is required to participate in this pilot program; but knowing that many of our membership are facing serious financial hardship at this time, we wanted to provide whatever avenues we could to job opportunities in unionized environments.

We have also heard from many members that it is hard to find other work during downtimes like this as regular employers tend to be hesitant to hire motion picture workers, knowing they are likely to leave as soon as our work picks up again. This pilot program was negotiated with the understanding that this is a temporary solution to help our members who are suffering and help the BC Building Trades with extra skilled labour.

#### **7. Why are you doing this instead of concentrating on getting us film work?**



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We're doing both! We are working on many fronts to improve the standing of hardworking 891 members like you.

Within our local BC industries, we continue to share and promote any valuable job opportunities that have come our way, but we acknowledge there have not been enough to support our 10,000 strong membership.

In community, we have worked with municipalities and Work BC to support a temporary work job fair in Maple Ridge, and hope to see other opportunities in the near future with other Work BC branches.

In lobbying, your Business Rep has met with multiple government leaders to urge them to reassess the Federal funding for domestic production to open up for local content production and make us less dependent on foreign service dollars. In tandem with our Organizing team, we are also working to bring more non-union shows under contract, opening more domestic production to IATSE labour.

## **8. Will this help me with my Health Bank Hours?**

If you are successfully dispatched to a position via this pilot project, the agreement we have negotiated will result in a percentage being transferred on your behalf from the Employer to the IATSE Health Benefits Trust. The intention is for this to help members who are running out of hours in their health bank replenish some of those hours.

## **9. Are you telling us to leave film work?**

Not at all! However, we recognize that for about 50% of our members this is the first significant work slow down they are experiencing. We want to do what we can to help address the concerns of those members who may be considering the long-term impacts of cyclical work and we want to help provide some possible solutions.

## **10. I left the construction world to join the film industry, why should I go back?**

There is no requirement on the membership to participate in the BC Building Trades survey or pilot program. It is simply an option for interested and qualified members to identify themselves for potential dispatch during this time.

## **11. Why are you collecting my personal data?**



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For you to be dispatched by one of our partner unions in the pilot program, we need to gather the information needed for their dispatch requirements to make sure you are eligible and qualified for work under their agreements. We will only share the information you choose to disclose in the survey.

12. **How will I be represented under Section 12?**

Any worker dispatched will be represented by the Union they are dispatched by, under the terms of the collective agreement for the job site in question.