



## NEWS LOCAL

## Public Service Alliance of Canada members protest against Phoenix pay system



By Ian McInroy, Barrie Examiner  
Tuesday, February 21, 2017 7:20:26 EST PM



Members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada held a demonstration outside Canadian Forces Base Borden in Angus on Tuesday to protest the federal public service pay system known as Phoenix. Union officials say union members continue to face pay problems

ESSA TWP. – No pay, less pay and problems with tax receipts are plaguing members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), according to union representatives.

Members of the alliance held a demonstration at the north gates of Canadian Forces Base Borden on Tuesday over what they say is the continued problem-plagued, federal public service pay system known as Phoenix.

Members continue to face pay problems, with some not being paid at all and others being paid tens of thousands of dollars more than they should, according to PSAC Ontario regional executive vice-president Sharon DeSousa.

She added the federal government has stated problems will continue for months to come, with no end date in sight.

“This situation is completely unacceptable and has caused tremendous anxiety and hardship within the entire federal public service,” she said. “No other employer would have been allowed to get away with a situation as detrimental as this without serious repercussions.”

DeSousa said “a couple of hundred civilian workers” at the local military base are directly impacted by problems with the Phoenix pay system.

Barrie-Innisfil MP John Brassard said he is listening to concerns and that the Conservative caucus is raising the issue in the House of Commons.

“We’ve been getting phone calls and trying to facilitate some of the issues and trying to guide (those affected) through the process,” Brassard said from Ottawa.

“The current government knew there were problems with the Phoenix pay system even before they rolled it out,” he said. “They should stop putting the blame on the previous government and start accepting responsibility. At the end of the day, what these federal employees want is for their issues to be resolved.”

"They don't want to see the government playing the blame game. People want what is owed to them based on the work they have done."

DeSousa said local PSAC members work in a variety of positions, and not just at Base Borden.

"They are support workers for the Department of National Defence, administrative support workers, firefighters, food service workers," she said, adding there also issues with employees of Service Canada, Parks Canada and Canada Revenue Agency, the same agency responsible for sending out T-4 slips this time of year.

"Tax season is coming up," DeSousa said. "The Phoenix pay system has not been fixed (in almost a year). It's been a year and these are people's lives."

"When you're not getting paid, your T-4s are going to be screwed up. We need to make sure the T-4s are accurate and we need to make sure our members are not hindered twice by not receiving a cheque, or just a partial payment and not being taxed on money they haven't actually received."

She said PSAC members are worried.

"They are trying to file their taxes. They don't know what their T-4s are going to look like."

With more than 170,000 alliance members across Canada, DeSousa said families are hurting, and confused.

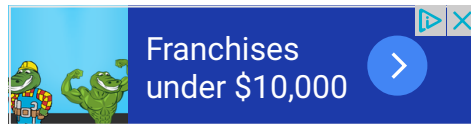
"Our members have been without pay cheques, they have received late payments," she said. "They are afraid to take vacation or sick leave because of the Phoenix pay system because they don't know if they're going to get paid."

"For some of the members, they feel like it's lottery system," DeSousa added. "Every pay day, they don't know if they're going to be able to pay their bills. Our members are sick of it. They can't live their lives this way."

DeSousa said Tuesday's demonstration was intended to let the community know what's happening.

"We want local MPs to take notice and go to parliament and demand that local resources be put towards fixing the Phoenix pay system," she said.

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