

LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
(the "Employer")

AND:

CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES, LOCAL 391
(the "Union")

RE: RFID and Vacancy Management

The Employer and the Union recognize that the implementation of RFID will reduce the number of staff needed to perform materials-handling tasks such as check-out, check-in and, where there is automated sorting equipment, rough-sorting.

The mutual goal of the parties is the avoidance of layoffs. In order to avoid layoffs when RFID is fully implemented in the fall of 2012, it is important that the Library begin to hold regular full-time vacancies and fill them on a temporary basis in order that these vacancies are available for redeployment and reassignment of staff impacted by position reductions.

This Agreement does not preclude the Employer from reducing service or positions due to mandated budget reductions or to implementing a hiring freeze for any library positions as a result of a budget reduction.

Effective the date of signing of this agreement:

1. The Employer will undertake to establish appropriate benchmarks to measure the work no longer required due to the implementation of RFID, which will include evaluating staffing levels required to support circulation services in an RFID environment. The benchmarking process is described in the Appendix to this Letter;
2. The Employer will ensure that new practices and processes proposed for implementation in an RFID environment are functionally effective and adequately address circulation requirements of the library before any staffing changes are undertaken;
3. The requirement in clause 8.4.1 of the Collective Agreement to post a regular full-time vacancy within four (4) weeks of the vacancy will be waived for circulation-related positions during the period of this agreement and no later than December 31, 2012;
4. Positions identified to be held vacant will be filled on a temporary basis and posted in

accordance with the provisions of the Collective Agreement;

5. Positions filled on a temporary basis will be examined when the term of the temporary position is ending to determine whether the requirements for circulation activities have been adequately met by the new technology. Employees remaining in circulation positions, affected by RFID changes, including those in temporary positions, will receive training as required and if work functions change, positions will be reviewed to ensure appropriate compensation;
6. Regular part-time (RPT) employees who fill positions on a temporary basis in accordance with clause 4 of this agreement would maintain their RPT status. In the event an RPT employee is currently on benefits, benefits would continue during the temporary assignment. In the event an RPT is not currently on benefits and the temporary assignment results in a work week equal to or greater than 20 hours per week, the employee would be eligible for benefits during the temporary assignment period if the temporary assignment is 3 months or greater;

Auxiliary and/or temporary employees who fill positions on a temporary basis in accordance with clause 4 of this agreement are not eligible for benefits with the exception of employees eligible in accordance with 14.2.2: Benefits for Temporary Employees with One Year of Continuous Work in a Full-Time Capacity;

7. Once staffing levels required to support circulation functions in an RFID environment have been determined, management will reassign funds associated with vacant positions. Prior to the reassignment of funds, the Employer will notify the Union in writing that the staffing levels have been determined and will provide the Union with written notification on positions being eliminated, created and employees transferred or appointed. The funds will be used to create positions that will help advance other Library services and priorities and support for the ongoing maintenance of the RFID technology. This does not preclude the Employer from reducing service or positions due to mandated budget reductions;
8. In order that the Union has regular opportunities to provide input and comment, RFID will be a regular discussion topic of the monthly Union/Management Committee. An updated list of affected vacancies will be provided to the Committee each month as well as an update on any RFID related matters, including discussions at the Technological Change Committee and the Classification Committee;
9. As a result of the reallocation of work and/or a shift in Library services and priorities, if new types of positions are identified and created that require classification review, this information will be brought to the Classification Committee for discussion prior to implementation;
10. The Technological Change Committee will discuss and recommend training for employees; in particular, training related to new types of positions referenced in #8 in order that employees are qualified to compete as positions become available, provided that employees meet the educational requirements of the positions for which they apply. The Committee will continue to review training needs and recommend changes as necessary;

11. The parties agree to extend the *Letter of Understanding Re: Reallocation of Reduced Regular Part-Time Hours* signed on February 23, 2011 to the termination date of this agreement;
12. In the event that any item(s) in the Appendix are thought by either Party to contradict any clause of the Agreement, the language of the Agreement shall prevail over the language of the Appendix;
13. Both Parties enter into this Agreement without prejudice to any position either Party may take on any other issue related or unrelated to the subject matter(s) of this Agreement.

This Letter of Understanding will terminate as of December 31, 2012.

Signed on _____, 2011

For the Union:

For the Employer:

APPENDIX

BENCHMARKING PROCESS

BACKGROUND

Circulation activities include:

- new member registration
- library account support, including fines collection
- check-out of library materials
- check-in of library materials
- rough and fine sorting of materials
- shelving and pulling of materials
- shelf-reading

Different staff classifications engage in this work. Circulation staff across VPL's branches may also engage in other assigned activities that are not necessarily circulation activities, but are handled by them, such as paperback processing and mends.

The implementation of RFID and self-service across the system will reduce the number of staff required to conduct the following activities:

- check-out of library materials, including fines collection
- check-in of library materials
- rough sorting

PROCESS TO ESTABLISH APPROPRIATE STAFFING LEVELS

The process to determine the level of staffing required to support circulation activities in an RFID environment will include research into other library's practices and benchmarking VPL staffing levels with other appropriate comparator libraries, as well as consideration of any unique characteristics of VPL's implementation.

Benchmarking is a process of comparing one's business processes and performance metrics to industry best practices or best practices from other industries, as appropriate. Metrics considered often include quantity, time, and cost. As part of benchmarking, VPL management identifies the most appropriate libraries to form the library's comparator group, or identifies organizations in another industry where similar processes exist, and compares the results and processes of those organizations studied to VPL's results and processes. This then allows VPL to develop plans on how to make improvements or adapt specific best practices.

For the purposes of benchmarking the level of staff required to perform circulation services in an RFID/self-serve environment, VPL comparator libraries will include libraries of roughly the same size as VPL, with similar branch characteristics, and who have fully implemented RFID. Initial libraries for comparison are Hamilton, Edmonton, and Seattle. Other large urban comparator libraries will be identified during the planning process.

The type of performance metrics considered during benchmarking will include check-outs, check-ins, member registrations, items on hold, as well as staffing levels per activity. Other metrics will be identified during the benchmarking planning process.

Industry benchmark data will be supplemented by consideration of the unique characteristics of VPL's technology implementation, as well as feedback from VPL circulation staff who will have gained experience with RFID workflow throughout the implementation period. For this reason, most staff adjustments will wait until RFID has been fully implemented across the system. However, during the implementation period, if the level of staff required to perform circulation activities with RFID implemented is notably less than the level of staff assigned to the task based on the previous technology and processes, staff occupying existing positions may be assigned alternative duties appropriate to their classification to ensure they are occupied in engaging work or vacant positions may be moved earlier.

SAMPLE RATIO ANALYSIS

The chart below presents sample data that will be collected and analysed when benchmarking activity levels and staffing levels required to support circulation services in an RFID self-service environment are known. This table should be viewed as an example, recognizing that extensive data will be collected and analyzed.

	Vancouver	Seattle	Edmonton	Hamilton	etc.
STATISTICS					
Total circulation	a	a	a	a	a
Staff renewals	b	b	b	b	b
Self-renewals	c	c	c	c	c
Staff check-outs	d	d	d	d	d
Staff check-ins	x	x	x	x	x
Self-service check-outs	e	e	e	e	e
Requests/Holds for items on shelf	f	f	f	f	f
Items handled by staff	g	g	g	g	g
Shelving	h	h	h	h	h
New member registrations	i	i	i	i	i
FTE Circulation staff	j	j	j	j	j
RATIOS					
Circulation/FTE	a/j	a/j	a/j	a/j	a/j
cko (less self renewal)/FTE	(d+e)/j	(d+e)/j	(d+e)/j	(d+e)/j	(d+e)/j
cki/FTE	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.
Shelf pulls/FTE	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.
Shelving/FTE	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.
Registrations/FTE	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.
sscko machine/FTE	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.
FTE staff/branch open hour	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.