



# PENSION ADMINISTRATION *BULLETIN*

Reference No. 2009 - 09

Date: October 29, 2009

TO: All Pension Administration Contact Persons at  
Contributing Member Organizations

RE: NSAHO Pension Plan Amendments – Base Year Upgrade

We wish to inform you that the Pension Plan Trustees' recommendation for a Base Year upgrade was approved by the NSAHO Board of Directors at their meeting on October 29, 2009. Therefore effective January 1, 2010, the NSAHO Pension Plan's Base Year will be upgraded from 2007 to 2008.

### Some quick facts about Base Year

- The Plan's Base Year affects the way a Member's career earnings are taken into account when calculating their pension benefits.
- When the Base Year is upgraded, it means that a Member's previous annualized pensionable earnings for years before the new Base Year are "upgraded" to the same level as their annualized pensionable earnings in the new Base Year.
- When a Member's annualized pensionable earnings in the new Base Year are higher than those in the previous Base Year, it results in a higher pension benefit than would have occurred if the previous Base Year had not been changed.
- As always, in those cases where using an earlier Base Year than the current one results in a higher pension for the Member, that Base Year will be used in that Member's pension calculation instead.
- Note: When a Base Year upgrade is granted in our Plan, it does not normally result in a recalculation of benefits for those former members who have terminated their membership in the Plan. Pension benefit calculations reflect the Base Year that is applicable to the Member at the date of the event (termination of employment, retirement, or death).

### Action Required:

The Nova Scotia Pension Benefits Act regulations require that all employees who are Plan Members be notified of these Plan amendments. The Plan needs your timely assistance to meet these information and compliance requirements promptly since some Plan Members may be considering retirement, or terminating their employment. The change in the Base Year will be effective for retirements and terminations of employment on and after January 1, 2010. Therefore, such ***Plan members may wish to postpone their departure until January.***

Whether it is feasible and financially advantageous to postpone retirement or termination to January will depend on each member's specific circumstances. For example, there will be very little (if any) advantage for members who did not have an increase in earnings in 2008. Similarly, this will tend to be less important for members who have a relatively short period of service. You should discuss this with your employees if they are considering retiring or terminating their employment since a Base Year improvement may affect the timing of their departure.

We have prepared the attached Notice that you can use in announcing the Plan amendments to your employee members. We recommend that you copy and circulate this notice to the appropriate employees via your internal mail system, your internal E- mail, as an insert in pay stub envelopes, and/or post it on bulletin boards throughout your facility. If you anticipate any logistical difficulties related to distributing this information on a timely basis, please let us know right away and we will attempt to assist you. We appreciate your cooperation in helping the Plan to meet its legal compliance requirements in this matter.

Please call us if you have any questions about this Bulletin.

NSAHO Pension Plan  
October 29, 2009

Attachment – Notice for employees who are Plan Members



## Notice to all active Members Regarding Base Year Improvement

### **1. Base Year Upgrade:**

**Effective January 1, 2010**, the Plan has been amended to upgrade the Base Year from **2007 to 2008**.

### **Some quick facts about Base Year**

- If you are thinking about retiring or terminating your employment in the near future, you should take note of the following information. This change in the Base Year will only apply to retirements and terminations of employment on and after January 1, 2010. Therefore, you may wish to postpone your departure until January. Whether you are better off to wait will depend on your specific situation. For example, did you have an increase in your annualized earnings in 2008 compared to 2007?
- The Plan's Base Year determines the earnings that we use when calculating your pension benefits.
- When the Base Year is upgraded, it means that your previous annualized pensionable earnings for years *before* the new Base Year are improved to the same level as your *new* Base Year annualized earnings.
- When your annualized earnings in the new Base Year are higher, you will receive a higher pension benefit.
- The current Base Year is used unless a prior Base Year provides a higher pension benefit for you.

If you have any questions or comments about these changes, please contact us at:

- Write: NSAHO Pension Plan, 2 Dartmouth Road, Bedford, NS, B4A 2K7
- Telephone: (902) 832-8500 for local calls; 1-866-400-4400 for long distance toll free
- Fax: (902) 832-8506
- E-mail: [pensionplan@nsaho.ns.ca](mailto:pensionplan@nsaho.ns.ca)

### **NSAHO Pension Plan**

October 29, 2009

(Reference Facility Bulletin No. 2009 - 09)