



Memorandum

Defence Fund Report

DATE: October 20, 2020

TO: CAUT Council

FROM: Ted Binnema, Defence Fund President

RE: Update on the CAUT Defence Fund

It is essential that every one of you pay close attention to matters related to the Defence Fund this coming year, because a major decision – requiring almost complete consensus among all members of the Fund and of the CAUT – must be made in the near future. For that reason, it is essential that all of you read very carefully the ten-page report by David Robinson included in your package.

The process that led to the CAUT Council's decision last November to instruct David Robinson to undertake his investigation began with events that had occurred previously at the Fall Annual Meeting of the CAUT DF. The details of the misunderstandings are not of great significance to you now (although you should know that they have made some trustees of the DF suspicious of the CAUT), but the results of the investigation are very significant for the Defence Fund. That is why I am urging you to read the report very carefully before the CAUT Council meeting and be sure to be ready with questions regarding anything you may not understand.

After you read the Robinson Report, you should conclude that the structure of the CAUT Defence Fund must change.

In my opinion, it will be unrealistic for the required restructuring to occur in only one phase. While some of the minor changes listed under Option 1 might be implemented as a short-term measure, I hope that there is complete consensus (and there must be complete consensus) that more fundamental change is required. However, there are, in my opinion, no further options without achieving the changes in Option 2 as soon as possible, before further changes can be considered. That is because it is unrealistic to assume that 100% consensus can be achieved on any option other than Option 2, and that Option 2 gives us the opportunity to make further required changes with only a 2/3 majority vote.

The consideration of any motion will probably require a special meeting of the member associations of the CAUT DF, but I urge every member association of the CAUT DF to be prepared to support Option 2 as soon as the paperwork can be prepared. Given the necessity of reaching consensus, should the leadership of any member association harbour any uncertainty about whether Option 2 should be approved, I urge them to contact me as soon as possible.

The pandemic has raised questions about what a faculty strike might look like in COVID-times. Fortunately, at the time of writing, none of our member associations has yet to put up pickets since March 2019, although a number have come close enough that they have had to begin pondering

and planning for the exigency. Unfortunately, a few employers have seized upon the emergency, and are demanding some significant concessions from faculty. As of now, however, faculty unions have successfully fought off the demands without having to resort to job action. Please stay alert to news from member associations in case circumstances call for you to express your support for your colleagues.

The CAUT DF now has 63 member associations. The balance of the Defence Fund has grown to over \$35 million.

This year's CAUT DF AM was held by videoconference on 17 and 24 October 2020. At those meetings, I was acclaimed as President of the CAUT Defence Fund for the next two years. I hope that, during those two years, the DF can accomplish much towards putting its governance structures in a better position.

In solidarity,

Ted Binnema
President, CAUT Defence Fund