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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Negotiations Break Down  
between CUPE Local 3324 Paramedics & Island EMS -  
Union Files for Conciliation with the Minister Responsible for Labour**

**Charlottetown** – “The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 3324, (Employees of Island EMS), have filed for conciliation services with the Minister Responsible for Labour, once talks broke down after nine (9) days of collective bargaining,” says Bill McKinnon, National Representatives for CUPE.

CUPE represents all Paramedics on Prince Edward Island and they have been without a collective agreement since September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009. In the middle of the collective bargaining process in December 2010, the Ghiz Government legislated away the Paramedics right to strike through Bill 35 and replaced it with Interest Arbitration. This will be the first round of bargaining in the history of Island Paramedics to have arbitration as the final resolution in bargaining rather than strike action or a lock-out.

“While we were pleased with the progress that the parties made on non-monetary issues at the table, the Employer unfortunately made no effort to address **the reality, that Paramedics on Prince Edward Island are between 14% and 17% behind their counterparts in Nova Scotia when it comes to wages**, although they have the same classifications, qualifications, and responsibilities, and work for the same parent company Medavie EMS (of which IEMS is a part). It is the membership’s view that you cannot make ‘fish of one and fowl of the other’. It is a simple matter of equity and fairness. It is not like we are dealing with two (2) separate employers with two (2) different types of workplaces. We are comparing absolute ‘apples to apples’ in our view.

The two (2) sides will be meeting with the government appointed conciliator as soon as dates can be mutually agreed upon, and, if a settlement is not reached in conciliation, the parties will move to Interest Arbitration for a final and binding settlement, if necessary,” concluded McKinnon.

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