Senior Engineer with Kiln Experience Is Qualified for Kiln Position



A fifth-class power engineer on layoff asked to be ‘bumped’ into a less senior kiln attendant position at a sawmill. Even though the engineer had experience working in the kiln, the employer said no because he hadn’t worked in the kiln for several years. The labour board upheld the union’s grievance, agreeing that the engineer qualified for the kiln position and that denying it to him violated the collective agreement. Sure, he was a bit rusty; but he didn’t need the kind of extensive training the employer claimed, only a brief ‘familiarization’ period. The employer appealed and the case made it all the way up to the BC Court of Appeal, the highest in the province, which found the board’s ruling reasonable and refused to overturn it [*West Fraser Mills Ltd. v. United Steelworkers, Local 1-2017,* 2021 BCCA 266 (CanLII), June 25, 2021].