

INNOVATIVE WORKPLACE PRACTICES

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This overview of workplace innovations is based on a review of 95 collective agreement settlements negotiated during the third quarter of 2002. Of these, 44 settlements contained provisions considered to be innovative or of particular interest.

Duration

Of 95 settlements reviewed during the quarter, 45 collective agreements had a duration ranging from 30 to 36 months. Twenty-one collective agreements had terms of 24 months, while 11 had a duration of between 12 and 20 months. A further 11 settlements had a duration of between 40 and 48 months. The remaining seven had durations of over 50 months. The longest duration was of 72 months between Cambior, La Mine Doyon at Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec and the United Steelworkers of America covering 310 mine employees.

Compensation

The Canadian Standards Association, Toronto, Ontario and Canadian Union of Public Employees have introduced a "**Hot Skills**" premium whereby the parties recognize that from time to time business and economic conditions create a situation wherein existing pay rates and schedules are insufficient for attraction and retention of certain key resources. When such situations arise, the parties will define the difficulties encountered and discuss potential actions and solutions. An external compensation organization will be engaged to conduct a market survey to assess wage competitiveness and their findings recommended to the parties. The parties will then mutually agree on the amount and form of premium to be paid to identified positions.

A **goal-sharing** plan has been established with Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia, province-wide, and Compensation Employees' Union to provide employees with annual lump-sum payments equal to 2.0 per cent of annual salary if plan targets are reached. Stated criteria include operational

efficiencies created by changes in the collective agreement and improvements to service quality.

Stelco Inc., Hilton Works, Hamilton, Ontario and United Steelworkers of America have an **income-sharing** plan which is based on the employer's quarterly financial performance and measured in terms of Adjusted Gross Margin. Payments will be made when the quarterly margin exceeds 12.9 per cent.

Westin Harbour Castle in Toronto, Ontario and United Food and Commercial Workers Union have a **performance bonus** whereby, should the employer meet its financial objective for the quarter, a bonus of \$125 will be paid to each full-time employee on a quarterly basis provided specified employee performance criteria have been met. The Royal Canadian Mint in Ottawa, Ontario and Winnipeg, Manitoba and Public Service Alliance of Canada continue an **off-scale performance** award. In each of the three years of the collective agreement, 2.0 per cent of total bargaining unit payroll will be divided equally among eligible employees if profits, before income tax, are from \$1.7 million to \$3 million; 3.0 per cent if profits are from \$3 million to \$6 million; and 4.0 per cent if profits exceed \$6 million. Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Visa Centre, Toronto, Ontario and United Steelworkers of America have also introduced a **performance pay** for employees with a qualifying work performance rating of three or better. They will receive a 2.5 per cent wage adjustment in the first year of the contract and a 2.0 per cent in the second. Should this cause the wage rate to exceed the classification range maximum, the payment will be paid out as a lump-sum amount. A **performance incentive** program has been established with Bell Canada, province-wide, Quebec and Ontario, and Canadian Telecommunications Employees Association. A new payment based on individual performance will be created to reward outstanding achievement. A fund equal to 5.0 per cent of the total payroll in each category will be shared annually between the employees demonstrating above-average performance.

Serco Facilities Management Inc., Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador and Public Service

Alliance of Canada have inserted a **performance incentive fee-sharing** plan in a letter of understanding. To improve productivity and efficiency by way of cooperation and reward, Serco and the Union of National Defence Employees, Local 90125, agreed to partner in the sharing of a performance incentive fee award. The incentive fee is awarded by the Department of National Defence every four months and is based on the performance of the company and its employees as measured by DND criteria. Effective April 1, 2003, the parties have agreed to the sharing of the incentive fee with each party receiving 50 per cent. Each employee's share will be calculated at 50 per cent minus 5.0 per cent, divided by the number of entitled employees times regular hours employed divided by 2080. The 5.0 per cent deducted will be placed in a trust account towards a fund to be distributed for humanitarian and educational purposes as recommended through joint consultation.

The Liquor Control Board of Ontario, province-wide and Ontario Liquor Boards Employees' Union have included a **profit-sharing** adjustment within the first wage adjustment of their collective agreement. In the first year, the 4.0 per cent wage adjustment includes a 1.0 per cent adjustment in recognition of record profits. Hydro-Québec, province-wide and Canadian Union of Public Employees have also included a 1.0 per cent cost-savings adjustment within the 3.0 per cent first year wage adjustment. This adjustment is conditional on recurring and permanent savings which were achieved as a result of improvements to provisions of union activity leave, grievance adjudication and vacation leave. In the second year, the savings will be achieved on the basis of job-related issues and the introduction of new pay-related factors for employees on stand-by and telework overtime that does not involve travel.

A **deferred salary** leave has been negotiated with the City of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and Saskatoon City Police Association. Employees with at least five years service are eligible and can defer from 10 per cent to 30 per cent of salary per year. The leave shall not be less than six months nor greater than 12 months and the employer will continue to pay its share of premium costs for group insurance and dental plan during the leave period. The Government of Northwest Territories, territory-wide, and Public Service Alliance of Canada have added a specification to their existing deferred salary provision whereby prior to the leave to be taken, the employer will place the employee's deferred salary into a trust fund, and any returns on the trust investment, will be paid to the employee at the end of each calendar year.

Working Conditions

The Hotel-Dieu Grace Hospital, Windsor, Ontario and CAW-Canada have introduced **job sharing** whereby each arrangement must be employee initiated and voluntary, be one full-time position shared by two employees, each working 50 per cent of the position, permit the employees to self-schedule, and include a 60-day notice for discontinuing the arrangement. Holland Christian Homes Inc., Brampton, Ontario, and Christian Labour Association of Canada have a **premium within their job sharing** provision whereby if an employee must work the whole shift with no replacement, a premium of \$1.00 per hour will be paid.

A one-year pilot project for a **compressed work week** has been introduced by the Toronto Police Services Board and Toronto Police Association. The new 8-week cycle will consist of 11.5 hour shifts—four weeks work with two days on day shift, followed by two days on night shift, then four weeks off work. Both parties agree to service-wide implementation after the one-year period or employees will revert to the previous work schedules.

Bell Canada, province-wide, Quebec and Ontario, and Canadian Telecommunications Employees Association have negotiated a **workforce diversity and employment equity** program. Three hours of training will be given to employee groups who could be challenged by issues of diversity and respect for other workers. Also, the importance of reasonable accommodation and the respective responsibilities of managers and other employees will be highlighted by various training and communication initiatives. Local initiatives such as diversity days or multi-cultural days will be organized to improve awareness.

The Canadian Standards Association, Toronto, Ontario, and Canadian Union of Public Employees have established a **job evaluation** system which will include taking into account contemporary and emerging technologies as well as evolving workplace structures and workflow.

A **trial alternative dispute resolution** mechanism has been established with the City of Ottawa, Ontario and Canadian Union of Public Employees. In an effort to resolve grievances within one year of their referral to arbitration, the parties will pursue the trial processes of holding regular meetings before arbitration and mediation/arbitration. The parties will meet regularly to evaluate the success of these trial procedures.

Both the Government of Prince Edward Island, Education Negotiations Agency, province-wide, and the Nova Scotia Association of Health Organizations, province-wide, except Halifax, and Canadian Union of Public Employees have introduced the use of **sick leave for workers' compensation** purposes. In the Prince Edward Island contract, employees may draw on their sick leave bank during the three-day waiting period. An employee who subsequently receives workers' compensation benefits for the waiting period shall reimburse the days drawn from their sick leave bank. In the Nova Scotia agreement, sick leave credits may be used to "top-up" workers' compensation to full salary, including the first two days of absence.

Fortino's Supermarket Ltd., Burlington and area, Ontario, and United Food and Commercial Workers International Union now include their **part-time employees in a drug plan**. Effective January 1, 2003, the employer will provide the plan for part-time employees with five years of service and 600 hours worked in the previous year. Coverage will include generic drugs, but not lifestyle drugs and will have a 50 per cent reimbursement rate to an annual maximum of \$750. The City of Toronto, Ontario and International Association of Fire Fighters have negotiated an **alcohol and drug dependency** provision where the employer will pay for room and board plus associated costs in an accredited treatment facility.

Job Security

In the agreement with Stelco Inc., Hilton Works, Hamilton, Ontario, and United Steelworkers of America, the parties negotiated that, in the event of a **reduction of operations or decrease in workforce** in a department, the employer will assign employees throughout the plant. If an employee is unable to be retained, the employer will pay the employee \$250 per week in supplementary unemployment benefits.

In the case of **plant closure**, Flextronics in Toronto, Ontario and Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees have introduced a provision stating that the employer will set up training for affected employees and assist them in creating resumes. The time spent on training will be considered paid time worked. Cambior, La Mine Doyon, Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec and United Steelworkers of America have established a severance payment of \$300 for each year of service for affected employees.

Certifications and Training

The City of Ottawa, Ontario and Canadian Union of Public Employees have agreed that should **certification or in-service training** be required for the employer's program delivery, the employee will be paid his/her hourly rate, including any premiums, for all hours spent on training and will have tuition and attendance costs paid by the employer.

The Government of Northwest Territories, territory-wide and Public Service Alliance of Canada have introduced a provision whereby the employer will reimburse or pay on the employee's behalf the **membership, registration, licensing or certification fees** required for the performance of the employee's position duties.

Paid Leave

Serco Facilities Management Inc., Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador and Public Service Alliance of Canada have established a **bonus leave** provision. Each employee will be entitled to one additional paid week off during the life of the agreement. The leave will be scheduled at a time convenient to the employer's operations and will have no cash surrender value.

An **attendance leave** has been negotiated between Dutailier inc., St-Pie, Quebec, and Centrale des syndicats démocratiques. Employees who have worked 50 per cent of the business days in the preceding 12 months from August 5 of each year and who have not been absent for more than 56 hours, will receive one regular day off. If the leave has not been taken by the end of the year, employee will be paid for the leave.

The Winnipeg School Division No. 1, Winnipeg, Manitoba and Winnipeg Association of Non-Teaching Employees provide paid **religious leave** available through one of two options, either by substituting holy days for other general holidays or working the additional time by way of arrangements such as banking of time.

Labour-Management Committees

During this third quarter, 18 of the 44 agreements with innovative practices contained provisions for establishing committees dealing with a wide variety of concerns.

A **group benefits review** committee between Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, Cobourg and area, Ontario, and Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario will reassess all cost information related to past and present claims experience relative to consultant services, premium costs, policies, etc. for the past three years. They will also examine alternative plan design options with a view to providing the most cost effective use of funds allocated to the program and make recommendations to the parties.

A **performance pay** committee with Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, Canada-wide and Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada has been

established to discuss the issues relating to the performance management system and the possible setting up of a performance pay system.

Bell Canada, province-wide Quebec and Ontario, and Canadian Telecommunications Employees Association have initiated a **telework** committee to explore possibilities of establishing a program and to make managers and employees aware of the teleworking policy.

A number of other committees were included in agreements to discuss such items as pension plan, occupational health and safety, early retirement, northern allowances and travel, job evaluation and workplace issues.



Innovative Workplace Practices

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<http://labour.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca>