

INNOVATIVE WORKPLACE PRACTICES

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This overview of workplace innovations is based on a review of 80 collective agreement settlements negotiated during the first quarter of 2005. Of these, 39 settlements contained provisions considered to be innovative or of particular interest.

Duration

Of the 80 settlements reviewed during the quarter, slightly more than 54 per cent (43 collective agreements) had durations of between 34 and 39 months with the trend continuing of 36 months (36 collective agreements). Nine settlements had durations of between 20 and 24 months while 16 had durations of exactly 48 months. Six settlements had durations of 60 months. In the first quarter, there were only 3 collective agreements with a 12-month duration.

Compensation

Two settlements between Ontario Power Generation Inc., Nuclear and Non-nuclear, province-wide Ontario, both with the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers contain a **performance pay** plan. The minimum payouts of 1.0 per cent of base payrolls are based on employee skills and competencies.

Bruce Power LP, province-wide Ontario, and International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers have negotiated a **profit-sharing** plan. Payments of between 2.0 and 6.0 per cent of annual base pay for years 2007, 2008 and 2009 for Management Professional classifications 2 and 6 will be paid if the company performance meets the profit before tax bonus targets. Should the company achieve further approved targets, an additional 1.0 per cent bonus payment will be made.

A **gain sharing** plan has been initiated between Insurance Corporation of British Columbia, province-wide, and Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union. If three quantitative corporate goals are met and exceeded in any year, a maximum payment of 4.0 per cent of annual salary will be given. Employees who retire during the year are eligible for a pro-rated payment for the period they worked during that year.

Boeing Toronto Ltd., Mississauga, Ontario, and Canadian Autoworkers have agreed to discuss the possible implementation of a mutually acceptable incentive

gain sharing program to support unit cost reductions and involve the employees in the success of the company.

Alcan Smelters and Chemicals Ltd., Jonquière and other centres, Quebec, and Canadian Autoworkers have a wage reopener on January 1, 2006. The **wage adjustment negotiated will take into account** the CPI forecasts for the upcoming year, the wage increases paid in companies of the overall market and the financial situation of the company. Unless, Alcan is recording a deficit, the applicable increase will not be less than 1.0 per cent of salary.

Temporary market adjustments have been negotiated between Saskatchewan Transportation Company, province-wide, Saskatchewan, and Amalgamated Transit Union. In addition to the general wage adjustments, Mechanics and Maintenance Coordinators will receive between \$1.00 and \$2.00 per hour in each year of the 3-year contract. These adjustments would be reduced by any amount of COLA that might become applicable.

SaskPower, province-wide, Saskatchewan and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers have introduced a **flexible spending account**. Effective January 1, 2005, the employer will provide each regular and seasonal employee with \$800 and, effective January 1, 2006, \$1,600 per year. Future years will be based on the \$1,600 plus any cumulative general wage increase in that year. The benefit may be allocated to the following options:

- health care spending account,
- registered retirement savings plan,
- vacation purchase with allocation of number of days purchased based on hourly wage,
- pension plan,
- superannuation plan, or
- cash pay out.

Health and Welfare

CFTO-TV, division of CTV Television, Toronto, Ontario, and Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada have negotiated a provision when an employee requires the **use of a wheelchair** to be ambulatory after an accident. The coverage will be a one-time cost to make the employee's home wheelchair accessible and habitable and modifications to the employee's motor vehicle to make the vehicle accessible or driveable for the employee to a maximum of \$15,000 within 365 days from the accident.

Working Conditions

The Regional Health Authorities of Manitoba, province-wide, and Manitoba Nurses Union have initiated a new **representative workforce** program. The

parties had agreed that Aboriginal persons were significantly underrepresented in the health care workforce. They will work in cooperation to:

- a) develop strategic initiatives and programs that foster mutual respect, trust, fairness, open communication and understanding; focus on recruiting, training and career development; identify workplace barriers that may be discouraging or preventing Aboriginals from entering the workforce;
- b) promote and publicize initiatives undertaken to encourage and support development; and,
- c) implement educational opportunities for all employees to promote cultural awareness of Aboriginal peoples. This will include enhanced orientation sessions for new employees to ensure better understanding of respectful work practices to achieve a harassment free environment.

Also, within the health sector of British Columbia, the Emergency Health Services Commission, province-wide, and Ambulance Paramedics of British Columbia have established a **community response designation**. The parties acknowledge that a provincial ambulance service should have a responsive and flexible model to meet the diverse needs for pre-hospital care and transfers of patients. They agree to post designations of remote, rural, urban and metropolitan communities and that these designations will recognize and complement the geographic and demographic differences that exist throughout the province.

Pratt & Whitney Canada Corporation, Longueuil, Quebec, and Canadian Autoworkers have initiated a provision **guaranteeing no layoffs** as the employer implements **future production improvement programs**. The employer will undertake to train and/or reassign employees affected by the programs aiming to improve technology, productivity and work organization.

Funds

St. Boniface General Hospital, Winnipeg, Manitoba, and United Food and Commercial Workers International Union have established a **hardship fund**. If the support staff becomes eligible for any reduced employment insurance premium, then such monies will be used for the purposes of providing monetary relief to local members in times of economic crisis. If Human Resources Skills Development Canada disallows the use of the reduced employment insurance premium to be applied in such a manner, then such monies will be placed in the education and training trust fund.

A new **humanity fund** has been negotiated between Kruger inc., Trois-Rivières, Quebec, and Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada. The employer will contribute an amount equal to that of the employees to a maximum of \$20 per year per employee and \$10,000 per year for the company as a whole.

Labour-Management Committees

During the first quarter of 2005, 16 of the full complement of 80 agreements contained provisions for establishing committees dealing with a wide variety of issues.

The Government of New Brunswick, province-wide, and Canadian Union of Public Employees have introduced a **job evaluation committee**. The current classifications will be reviewed by establishing a gender-neutral point rating system to evaluate all positions. The cost of the study will be borne by the employer and the exercise will be completed 90 days prior to the expiration of the collective agreement. The results will be implemented at the next round of negotiations.

An **employee relations committee** between SaskPower, province-wide, Saskatchewan, and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers will address the improvement of communications between the parties by engaging in constructive problem solving and exploring items of mutual interest. Areas of discussion will include contracting-out, safety/health care, isolated headquarter locations, classification qualifications, workforce planning, attraction and retention, and workforce representation.

Other committees included in collective agreements deal with such items as early retirement, training, safety and health, harassment, job classifications, gain sharing and heavy workloads.