

INNOVATIVE WORKPLACE PRACTICES

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This overview of workplace innovations is based on a review of 93 collective agreement settlements negotiated during the first quarter of 2006. Of these, 37 settlements contained provisions considered to be innovative or of particular interest.

Duration

During this quarter, settlements with a 36-month duration represented close to one-third (35 collective agreements and 27% of all agreements) of the 93 settlements reviewed containing such a duration. Nineteen agreements had a duration of 48 months while 13 settlements had durations of 24 months. There were 3 education settlements with 12-month duration. During this period, there were several settlements with a longer duration than normally recorded. Three settlements had a duration of 52 months, 15 settlements with a 60-month duration, and 2 settlements each with a 72-month and 84-month duration. The longest duration of 102 months was between National Grocers Company Ltd., Toronto, Ontario and United Food and Commercial Workers International Union.

Compensation

A **share purchase** plan applies between Canadian Pacific Railway Company, system-wide and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Employees can purchase company shares through payroll

deductions and the employer will cover all brokerage fees.

TELUS Corp. and TELUS MOBILITY, province-wide Alberta and British Columbia, and Telecommunications Workers Union have a **bonus pay** plan. The plan, linked to the business performance, could provide lump-sum payments to a maximum of 3.0% of annual earnings in 2005, 4.0% in 2006 and 5.0% in 2007 and beyond. In 2008, the employer may raise the payout above the 5.0%. The parties have also introduced a **market-based competitive pay** provision whereby the employer will seek the union's approval where it finds it necessary to offer remuneration above the wage scale to attract or retain skilled employees.

The Okanagan Mainline Municipal Labour Relations Association, on behalf of Kelowna and other centres in the Okanagan Valley, British Columbia and Canadian Union of Public Employees have provided wage adjustments for the intention of **addressing the recruitment and retention** concerns resulting from the pay disparity that exists between the members and their primary competitors for human resources.

A provision for a **long service lump-sum payment** has been initiated between the City of Longueuil, Quebec and Canadian Union of Public Employees. Each year, permanent employees will receive a premium as follows:

Years of Service	Lump-Sum Payment
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5	\$80
10	\$160
15	\$240
20	\$320
25	\$400
30	\$480
35	\$560

Health and Welfare

A **health spending account** has been established with the Board of Trustees of the Calgary Board of Education, Calgary, Alberta and Canadian Union of Public Employees. Effective January 1, 2006, an individual account in the amount of \$500 will be set up on behalf of each employee; on January 1, 2007, \$750 per year. The account may be used to cover health costs for services not covered in the group benefits plan.

The Saskatoon School Division No. 13, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and Canadian Union of Public Employees have negotiated a provision to **cover any deficit in the extended health care and dental plans**. For the period up to December 31, 2004, the employer will fund the difference between what is currently available in the benefit account and the combined deficit in the benefits plan to \$193,066. In order to cover the projected deficit for 2005, each bargaining unit member will have \$50 deducted from their retroactive pay cheque following the ratification of the collective agreement. Effective January 1, 2006, employer contributions for the plans will be deposited into a fund, from which future premium costs will be paid. Should the assets of the fund be short of the amount required for premiums, the parties will meet

to determine steps to contain costs within the allocated fund amounts.

Working Conditions

Cara Flight Kitchen, Dorval, Quebec and Canadian AutoWorkers have introduced a **reduced work week** for employees at age 50 or more. Effective June 22, 2005, employees may reduce their normal week to 4 or 3 days with vacations paid in percentage of salary earned. Contributions to the Quebec Pension Plan are calculated on regular wages and a 6-month period is required to opt out of the plan.

Job security provisions were negotiated between TELUS Corp. and TELUS MOBILITY, province-wide, Alberta and British Columbia and Telecommunications Workers Union. The first provision deals with the **outsourcing of non-core functions**. The employer may outsource 375 non-core positions such as janitorial, vehicle maintenance and coin counter classifications. Specific provisions have been provided for employees impacted by such outsourcing including severance packages or the opportunity to be redeployed within core operations. The other provision covers **office closure or contracting out**. The employer will offer 2 voluntary severance packages. The *Early Retirement Incentive Plan* offers 12 months salary plus \$500 per year of service to a maximum of \$15,000 for employees who can apply for early retirement with an unreduced pension. The *Voluntary Departure Incentive Plan* offers either 1 month's salary times years of service to a maximum of 18 years plus \$1,000 per year of service to a maximum of 20 years or 12 months salary plus \$500 per year of service to a maximum of 30 years. Alberta

employees are limited to the first voluntary departure option.

Stradacona S.E.C., Québec, Quebec and Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada have also established a **special voluntary departure program**. In order to minimize operating costs and mitigate the impact of downsizing, the employer will offer employees with 10 years of service or less who are not eligible for early retirement, a lump-sum payment of \$15,000. The amount is \$25,000 for employees with 10 or more years of service. An employee 55 years of age with 20 years of service who is not eligible for early retirement is entitled, up to age 65, to continue life insurance and employer contribution to the medical and dental insurance coverage. To be eligible, the voluntary departure must follow the elimination of a regular position. The program is in effect until December 31, 2007, with a possible one-year extension.

Education and Training

Compagnie minière Québec Cartier, Port-Cartier and Fermont/Mont-Wright, Quebec and United Steelworkers of America have established two types of **scholarships for employees and their children**. The first provision for pursuing formal education will provide 15 scholarships per year for employees and another 15 for their children. The employee will be granted \$4,900 and the children \$1,700; March 1, 2006, \$5,000 and \$1,800 respectively; March 1, 2007, \$5,100 and \$1,900; March 1, 2008, \$5,200 and \$2,000; March 1, 2009, \$5,300 and \$2,100; and March 1, 2010, \$5,400 and \$2,200. The second provision will be for work-related education and the employee must return to work after completion. The provision will provide an amount which will

be half as a scholarship and half as a loan. The employee will receive \$6,600 and the children \$3,600; March 1, 2006, \$6,800 and \$3,800 respectively; March 1, 2007, \$7,000 and \$4,000; March 1, 2008, \$7,200 and \$4,200; March 1, 2009, \$7,400 and \$4,400; and March 1, 2010, \$7,600 and \$4,600.

Leave

The Government of the Northwest Territories, territory-wide and Public Service Alliance of Canada have a provision for **mandatory leave**. Effective April 1, 2008, all employees, except casual and relief employees, will take 4 days leave without pay and 1 day with pay each year. Where the employer is able to shut down its operations, this leave will be taken between December 19 and January 5 on days set by the employer. Where the employer is unable to shut down its operations, the leave will be scheduled in advance to be taken at a time that is mutually acceptable by the parties. Employees will have 1.535% deducted from their bi-weekly salary in order to annualize the cost of the leave on employees' pay and will only be paid to the employees over the period of leave.

A **special leave** provision has been negotiated between the Government of Nunavut, territory-wide and Federation of Nunavut Teachers. An employee will earn 1 half-day's credit per month to a maximum of 25 days. When enough credits are earned, the employer will grant special leave in the following circumstances:

- 5 days to attend funeral of an immediate family member and 3 days for a brother-in-law or sister-in-law; 2 days if the employee does not attend the funeral;

- 3 days on the birth of an employee's child;
- 3 days on the adoption of a child;
- 2 days for an employee's or child's wedding, or graduation of employee, spouse or child.

The employer may also grant up to a maximum of 6 days of advanced leave to an employee who does not have enough credits to be deducted from future special leave credits.

The parties have also established a **public service leave** provision. An employee will be granted leave to a maximum of 15 days per year to do public service work where operational requirements permit the employee's absence. The leave will be either with or without pay depending on the following circumstances:

- 1) where the employee receives and honorarium for the public service that is equal to or greater than the daily rate of pay, the leave is granted without pay;
- 2) where the employee is entitled to an honorarium which is less than the daily rate of pay, the leave will be granted with pay but the employee must relinquish the entitlement to any honorarium;
- 3) where an honorarium is not received, leave is granted with pay.

Public service work includes participation in a search and rescue mission, serving on a government board, serving on a co-management board or institute, serving on a municipal council or committee, or participating in a consultation forum.

IPSCO Saskatchewan Inc., Regina, Saskatchewan and United Steelworkers of America have introduced a provision to **pay expenses while an employee is on union leave**. Employees on the union negotiating committee will be paid a \$25 per diem to cover meals and other miscellaneous expenses for all days when bargaining meetings are held with the employer. The employer will also pay reasonable travel expenses and lodging for committee members who have to travel to a city other than the city of their normal residence to participate in negotiations.

Transit Windsor, Windsor, Ontario and Amalgamated Transit Union have negotiated 1 day of paid leave for the **employee's birthday**.

Labour-Management Committees

During the first quarter of 2006, 24 of the full complement of 93 agreements contained provisions for establishing committees dealing with a wide variety of issues.

The Saskatoon School Division No. 13, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and Canadian Union of Public Employees have established a **representative workforce** committee. The parties agree to the principle for Aboriginal employees and will develop, implement, monitor and evaluate proactive initiatives designed to ensure Aboriginal people are present in all occupations as represented by their proportion in the provincial labour force.

A **workplace violence and harassment** committee has been established between Confédération des syndicats nationaux and affiliated organizations, Canada-wide and Syndicat des travailleuses et travailleurs de

la CSN in order to further develop and update the violence and harassment prevention policy. The committee will examine all complaints submitted, raise the awareness of employees and participate in workforce violence and harassment prevention training. The employers must take all necessary measures to ensure the physical and psychological integrity of

employees, specifically by providing them with adequate workplaces and conditions.

Other committees included in collective agreements deal with such items as common interest forum, work reorganization, health and welfare provisions, classification review, pension plan, and training and development.

Source: Workplace Information Directorate, HRSDC—Labour Program.

Enquiries: http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/lp/wid/contact/contact_us.shtml

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