



Labour

Workplace Bulletin

Collective bargaining monthly update October 2013

Key Negotiation Activities

A number of major¹ negotiations took place throughout the month of October. The most notable ones were between:

- Canadian National Railway Co. (CN) and Teamsters Canada: After the collective agreement expired on July 22, 2013, parties had attempted to reach an understanding. Conciliation efforts discontinued on October 7 and resumed on October 21 with the help of federally appointed mediators. The union, representing some 3,300 conductors, trainmen, yardmen, and traffic co-ordinators, and CN finally reached a tentative settlement on October 31st. Health and safety issues were major considerations during negotiations.
- The Government of Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation: On October 31st, Saskatchewan teachers voted to reject a proposed contract that would have included a 5.5% wage adjustment over four years. The proposal also included two lump sum payments in the first two years of the agreement totalling 1.0% of annual wage earnings. The parties are expected to pursue negotiations into the coming months about wages, class size and composition, and the duration of the agreement.
- The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and the joint bargaining team of the Public Service Alliance of Canada and the Union of Taxation Employees: Negotiations started in September 2012 and continued throughout October 2013 as the bargaining team, representing some 31,000 workers, and the CRA are still trying to reach a common ground over some issues, including contract duration and bankable sick days.

An updated monthly list of [Key Negotiations](#) is available online under the [Resources tab](#) on the Labour Program website.

Settlements Reached

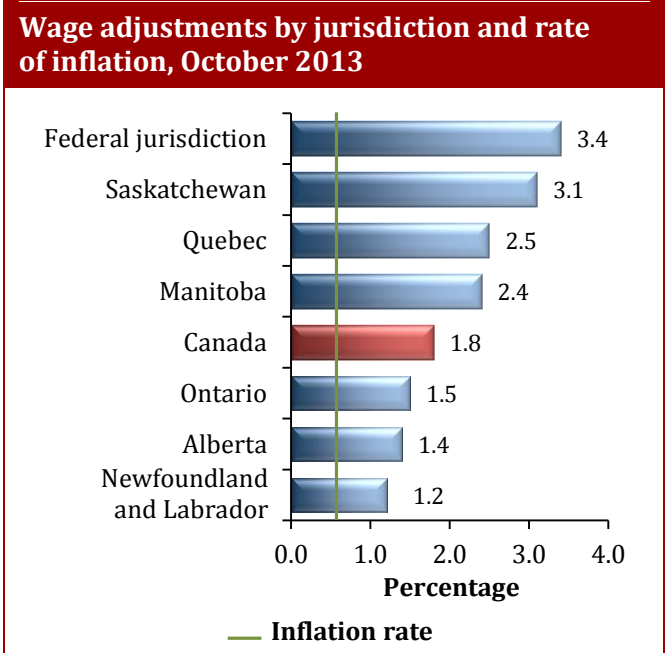
- A total of 18 major collective agreements, covering 29,030 employees, were ratified in October. Of these settlements, 13 were concluded directly by the parties (21,410 employees), four were reached through conciliation or mediation (5,020 employees), and one through arbitration (800 employees).
- The public sector had a larger share of negotiations with 10 agreements covering 17,560 employees, compared to the private sector where eight negotiations were concluded, for 11,470 employees.
- All but one agreement fell within provincial jurisdictions (97.8% of employees).
- The highest concentration of employees was in the education, health, and social services industry with 12,990 workers (44.7%). With eight contracts, this industry also had the highest number of settled agreements.

The texts of collective agreements are available online under the [Negotech](#) while the year-to-date list of [ratified settlements](#) in 2013 can be accessed online under the [Resources tab](#) on the Labour Program website.

Settlement Outcomes

Wages

- Base-rate wage adjustments² from major collective bargaining settlements in October averaged 1.8%³ annually over the terms of the contracts, a slight decrease from the September average of 2.0%. This average increase was higher than the rate of inflation for October (0.7%).⁴
- The last time the parties to these agreements negotiated, the average wage adjustment was more than double (3.8%).
- A single agreement was reached in the federal jurisdiction (Securitas Transport Aviation Security Ltd.) providing 630 pre-board screening officers an annual wage increase of 3.4%.
- Seventeen agreements in provincial jurisdictions registered an average wage adjustment of 1.8%. Amongst them, Newfoundland and Labrador had the lowest adjustment (1.2%) whereas Saskatchewan recorded the highest (3.1%).
- Wage adjustments in the private sector (2.3%) outpaced those in the public sector (1.4%) for the third month in a row. This was largely due to three agreements that granted high wage increases to 5,920 employees in the wholesale and retail trade industry (3.1%, 3.1%, and 2.4% respectively).



- At 3.4%, the highest average annual wage increase was in finance and professional services industry, whereas the lowest was in public administration (1.2%).
- The highest average wage increase was received by 800 invigilators at McGill University (5.4%). This was the only agreement settled through arbitration after protracted negotiations for 40 months.

Regularly updated information on [wage settlements](#) can be accessed online under the [Resources tab](#) on the Labour Program website.

Duration

- October was characterized by longer-than-usual collective agreements. Sixteen of the 18 ratified agreements were 48 months or longer, with seven of them being at least 60 months in duration.
- The average contract duration was 52.2 months, two months longer than the average term these parties last negotiated (50.2 months).
- Private-sector agreements were longer than public-sector agreements with durations of 56.9 months and 49.1 months, respectively.
- Agreements in the primary industry saw the longest average duration with 72 months, followed by the agreements in manufacturing (65.8 months).

Working conditions

- In Chapel Island, Nova Scotia, aboriginal fishermen from the United Food and Commercial Workers Canada, Local 864 negotiated an interesting clause for conflict resolution. The fishermen, who are citizens of the Potlotek First Nation, will have the option of resolving contract disputes through a process called the Kisikuewey Wantaqo'suti Procedure, which allows mediation by Band Elders.

Major work stoppages

- There were two major⁵ work stoppages in October, involving employees from retail trade industry and public administration industry, respectively. These work stoppages represented a total of 26,730 person-days not worked (PDNW).
- The work stoppage at Real Canadian Superstores across Alberta was the largest labour dispute (26,230 PDNW) since the Quebec construction strikes earlier this year.
- From January to October, work stoppages resulted in a total of 884,800 PDNW. This is more than double the PDNW recorded over the same period last year (398,985).

The listing of the weekly [major work stoppages](#) in Canada is available online under the [Resources tab](#) on the Labour Program website.

Features

Literature Scan

- A recent study titled [*Up in Smoke: Smokers Cost Their Employers More Than \\$4,000 Each Per Year*](#) released by the Conference Board of Canada analyzed the economic costs of smoking at the workplace. The study suggests that each smoker costs his or her employer an estimated \$4,256 due to unsanctioned smoking breaks and absenteeism. The study also suggests that employers could have a leading role in helping their employees quit by implementing a workplace cessation program.
- Statistics Canada recently released a research report titled [*Long-term Trends in Unionization*](#). The report suggests that between 1981 and 2012, Canada's unionization rate declined from 38% to 30%. The report found that union rates fell amongst men, but remained relatively stable amongst women, over the last thirty years.

Contact

For more information, please contact the [Workplace Information and Research Division](#) or call us at 1-877-259-8828.

¹ All data reported in this bulletin relates to major collective agreements covering 500 or more employees across Canada.

² The base wage rate is the lowest paid classification used for qualified employees in the bargaining unit.

³ The wage data are employee-weighted.

⁴ Statistics Canada, [The Daily](#). Inflation is measured over the twelve months to October 2013.

⁵ Major work stoppages involve 500 employees or more.