

legislation. If the parties reach agreement through the bargaining process, the terms and conditions are set forth in a collective agreement signed by both parties. It will become effective on the date specified. Canadian labour relations laws stipulate that an agreement must remain in force for a period of at least one year. A collective bargaining agreement is binding on the parties concerned, and strikes and lockouts during its period of effectiveness are unlawful. Thus it is a usual requirement of Canadian law that collective agreements contain a procedure for the settlement of grievances that arise during the life of the agreement, culminating in the use of binding arbitration if necessary.

If the parties are unable to reach a collective agreement through bilateral negotiations, they may be required by the Minister of Labour to submit their differences to conciliation. If conciliation is imposed by the Minister or requested by either party, a strike or lockout cannot legally take place until a certain number of days have elapsed following completion of the conciliation processes, except in Manitoba and Quebec, where this requirement does not exist.

For the most part, collective bargaining in Canada is decentralized, with the result that most collective agreements are between an employer and a union acting on behalf of the

employees of a single plant. There are, however, a limited number of industries — for example, construction, clothing manufacturing and logging and lumbering — in which bargaining encompasses employees in large numbers of firms within a locality or geographic area. In some of these circumstances, the negotiations may involve several unions separately, each representing a particular craft or other grouping of employees. There are other situations in which a collective agreement applies to several or all plants of a certain company, especially where the plants are in close proximity to each other. Finally, bargaining units in a few companies, particularly those engaged in national transportation and communication activities, are company-wide in scope, although separate agreements are made for different groups of employees. For example, there are company-wide agreements for railway employees applying separately to operating tradesmen, non-operating employees, shop crafts, etc. Collective bargaining on a national industry-wide basis has not, on the other hand, developed in this country.

Generally speaking, collective-bargaining agreements in Canada are broader in scope than those of many countries outside North America. This may be explained, at least in part, by the fact that some of the wide variety