



“What are they talking about?”

Greetings,

Over the past few months it has been brought to my attention by our members and our executive that some members do not understand the terminology that is commonly used by your area reps and your executive. Recently at our executive meeting, I suggested that we would produce a document with the definitions of the language that we have been using particularly, the language that we are using during the bargaining process. Below is some of that language with the definitions. If you require further information, feel free to contact myself or you're your area rep.

Bargaining agent: “CUPE Local 3324”

- A union which has been chosen by workers and recognized by the employer or certified by the labour board. This union represents all workers in the bargaining unit and negotiates a collective agreement with the employer.

Bargaining unit:

A group of workers who: are part of the union,

- are considered by the labour board as an appropriate group to bargain together, and;
- are covered by the same **collective agreement**.

The workers can be employees of a department, agency, plant, industry, sector, or other grouping.

Collective agreement:

A written agreement between the union and employer that tells workers and the employer what their rights and responsibilities are. It is also called a “contract”. The collective agreement covers such things as:

- wages
- **benefits**
- hours of work
- conditions of work
- seniority

- how to handle disagreements.

Essential services:

Work that is considered so important to the health, safety, or security of the public that workers who do it are not allowed to strike. Legislation may say that certain services are essential, or labour boards may decide it. Sometimes all workers in a sector, such as health care, are labelled “essential” and lose their right to strike. An interest arbitrator decides their collective agreement.

Conciliation: “Process in which we are in now”

A process for reaching a collective agreement with help from a neutral person appointed by the government. Often, the union and employer must meet with a conciliator before a strike or lockout is legal. A conciliator may make recommendations, but they are not binding.

Arbitration:

A way of settling a disagreement using an arbitrator. An arbitrator is a **third party** or independent person, usually chosen by the both the employer and union. Sometimes the arbitrator is a board, which includes one representative chosen by the employer, one representative chosen by the union, and a Chairperson. The arbitrator’s decision is final and binding on the employer, the union and any employees who are affected.

Two main forms of arbitration are:

- A “grievance” or “rights” arbitration decides whether a collective agreement has been broken.
- An “interest” arbitration decides what should be in a **collective agreement** (usually for workers who are prevented by law from striking). See **Final Offer Selection**.

Final Offer Selection:

A type of interest arbitration where an arbitrator chooses either the union’s last offer or the employer’s last offer.

Binding:

Decisions or agreements can be binding. This means you must follow them. For example, the **articles** of a **collective agreement** are binding on the employer and the union. Both have to follow the instructions about wages, grievances, seniority and other rules in the agreement. An **Arbitration** award is binding. This means that the employer, union and any affected employees have to carry out the arbitrator’s decision.

Grievance:

A claim that the employer or union has broken the collective agreement.

- **Individual grievance:** A claim by one worker.
- **Group grievance:** A claim by or for more than one worker about an act of the employer.

- **Policy grievance:** A claim by the union about a general question or interpretation of the collective agreement.
- **Union grievance:** A claim by the union.
- **Employer grievance:** A claim by the employer.

National Representative: (Bill McKinnon)

An employee of the parent or national union who assists local union officers in representing workers. Also called staff representative.

Officers: (People that look for Brother McKinnon for guidance)

Members elected to act on behalf of the union. Examples include the President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, Recording-Secretary and Trustees. Officers' duties are set out in the bylaws or constitution.

Quorum:

The minimum number of members required to hold a meeting.

Retroactive: (something only Montague/ Souris Rep receives! "KIDDING" but the union needs a rep for that area!!!!)

A change comes into effect on a date that has passed. For example, if the union negotiates a wage increase during bargaining, you may be owed that increase back to when the collective agreement starts.

Hope this helps (:

In solidarity,



Jason Woodbury
President Local 3324