

## **CEC Bulletin**

(October, 2004)

### **CEC Meets with new Minister of Labour, Joe Fontana**

Brian Burkett and Andrew Finlay met on October 13<sup>th</sup> with Joe Fontana, the new federal Minister of Labour and Housing. The Minister discussed his interest in exploiting the strengths Canada has in the area of international labour policy at the governmental as well as representative level (ie. CEC and CLC). He appears to be very supportive of the CEC and CLC continuing their roles in connection with the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour process, and in making the Advisory Council on International Labour Affairs (ACILA) a more meaningful vehicle for consultation at the Ministerial level. He was also receptive to having the CEC provide input into the semi-annual meetings of Deputy Ministers of Labour.

Attending the meeting along with the Minister was Tony Giles, the new Director General of HRSDC's International and Intergovernmental Affairs division, and John McKennirey, ADM – Labour.

Earlier the same day, Burkett and Finlay met with Tony Giles alone. The discussions were extensive and frank. Giles recognizes the need for improvement in the ACILA model if it is to be worthwhile to the participants. He supported the suggestion that greater consultation occur prior to the federal government establishing its position on ILO matters. Giles, with a background in the NAALC (the North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation), has extensive experience on international issues, and gave every indication that he will maintain the excellent relationship that the CEC has with his division.

We should not expect a substantial change of direction with the new Minister and DG. There are strong indications from both that they are interested in hearing from the CEC, and that they will continue to involve the CEC in matters that affect labour policy.

### **CEC and Canadian Chamber of Commerce Collaborate**

The Chamber and CEC have entered into a partnership to enhance our inter-organizational effectiveness.

Effective immediately, the CEC will have a representative on the Chamber's International Affairs Committee, which deals with issues such as trade agreements, international standards, and international corporate conduct. Brian Burkett has been

appointed as the CEC representative on this Committee, which will complement his work with the CEC on CSR and trade related labour matters.

Returning to the CEC Board in an ex-officio capacity is Bob Keyes, who brings his experience with the Chamber and the Canadian Council on International Business. Bob is known to many of us in the CEC, and is a welcome return to the Board.

The Chamber and CEC have been working effectively together at the ACILA meetings, where the CEC formally holds three of the six employer seats (with members or organizations associated with members occupying two of the other three seats). While ACILA has not been challenged over the last two years, increasing activity in relation to international labour standards and trade make our involvement and collaboration with the Chamber of utmost importance to business. While the Chamber brings its own network and perspective to the table, the CEC contributes the knowledge and expertise around international labour standards and processes.

The Chamber recognizes that over the next few years, we will see greater pressure to develop and adopt international standards for corporate responsibility. The CEC and Chamber share the view that if business is not effectively involved in the discourse behind these developments, we will lose the very best opportunity to influence the outcomes in a positive and constructive way. Our collaboration will position Canadian business to most effectively participate and influence these outcomes.

Andrew Finlay, Chair of the CEC, and Garth Whyte, a member of the Board from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business participated in the discussions leading to this collaboration, which was supported by the Board of the CEC.

## **Bell Canada to represent CEC on IOE Working Group on Employment and Economic Policy**

Geneviève bich of Bell Canada has been appointed to the IOE Working Group on Employment and Economic Policy, which will assist the IOE in dealing with the emerging issues from the World Commission on the Social Dimensions of Globalization. The Group will assist the IOE in developing responses relevant to its work on broad employment and economic issues, both in the ILO and elsewhere.

## **Tripartite Meeting on the Future of Work and Quality in the Information Society: Media, Culture and Graphical Sector**

Celese Fletcher of Global Television will represent the CEC at a meeting this October on the media, culture and geographical sector. The meeting will deal with an industry that is particularly sensitive to technology, and that is so very diverse within both local and international markets. The meeting will build on previous work, and is setting the stage for still further work.

## New Members

Dofasco has joined the CEC, providing the CEC with representation from an important Canadian industry that has been absent for a few years. Dofasco is a well-established player in the increasingly competitive and diversified industry, which often gets the attention of the ILO. Early next year, the ILO will be holding a meeting of experts on health and safety in the steel industry, and Dofasco (John MacNamara) has kindly volunteered to participate in the meeting.

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The Canadian Employers Council (CEC) prepares and distributes the CEC Bulletin for its members' individual use only. This message is composed in MS Outlook and contains hyperlinks that require an HTML-enabled email program. For inquiries or comments, please contact Andrew Finlay of Scotiabank, Chair of the CEC, at [andrew.finlay@scotiabank.com](mailto:andrew.finlay@scotiabank.com) or Brian Burkett of Heenan Blaikie, Counsel to the CEC, at [bburkett@heenan.ca](mailto:bburkett@heenan.ca).

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