

**Report on the Meeting of
Federal-Provincial-Territorial Ministers responsible for Labour
January 25, 2018 Ottawa, ON**

Nunavut Attendees

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (Minister of Justice), William MacKay (Deputy Minister)

Occupational Health and Safety (OSH) Harmonization

Deputy Minister M. Carr (Saskatchewan) delivered a presentation on the status of the Canadian Association of Administrators of Labour Legislation's subcommittee on Occupational Safety and Health (CAALL-OSH) Work Plan for the mutual recognition, harmonization and alignment of OHS Regulations. Mr. Carr noted that overall execution of the work plan was on track.

Ministers approved the draft statement on OSH Harmonization, which identifies the following commitments:

1. Continue to identify opportunities for regulatory harmonization, including reconciling legislative, regulatory and policy measures across jurisdictions;
2. Where appropriate, endeavour to mutually recognize standards in order to remove barriers to operating between jurisdictions so long as the standards that must be met are appropriate to each jurisdiction's need;
3. To the extent practicable, take into account cross-jurisdictional consistency as a principle behind policy, regulation and legislation preparation and application; and
4. Coordinate and share information on harmonization and mutual recognition opportunities, issues and challenges

International Labour Affairs

The Honourable Patty Hajdu (Federal) updated the table on the following topics:

- Status of ratification of ILO Conventions agreed to by Ministers;
- What Canada has planned as host of the G7 in 2018; and
- Negotiation of labour provisions in trade agreements.

Canada ratified ILO Convention 98 on the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining in June of 2017, coming into force June 2018. It was the eighth and final ILO fundamental convention ratified by Canada. The next area of focus will be Convention 81 on Labour Inspection and Protocol 29 on Forced Labour.

Canada hosted a G7 Employment and Innovation Ministerial meeting with the Honourable Minister Bains of British Columbia at the end of March in Montreal.

Minister Hajdu updated the table on trade negotiations that are underway with a wide range of international partners. The Minister stressed the importance of recognizing that trade agreements must benefit all segments of society, and that in the context of globalization, economic growth must be inclusive. There is also increased public interest in trade deals in general. While the conclusion of trade deals may take place at the federal level, the responsibility for labour legislation still resides at the

provincial/territorial level, which requires ongoing discussion and coordination.

Workplace Mental Health: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

This topic served as a follow up to the meeting that took place in Prince George in September 2016, where Ministers agreed on the importance of collaborating on the issue of mental health in the workplace, including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). They had also agreed to work together to reduce stigma and encourage workers to seek help, explore ways to enhance supports, and share information.

The Honourable Jeannie Ehaloak (Nunavut) called for an integrated and holistic mental health approach, noting that in October 2015 the territorial government declared a public emergency in Nunavut due to the sharp rise in the incidences of suicide. For Nunavut, improving the mental health of workers is linked closely with moving toward reconciliation for Inuit and addressing intergenerational trauma, loss of language and culture, and the impacts of housing and food insecurity.

All jurisdictions agreed that, while it is difficult to find common language for legislation due to the differing contexts across the jurisdictions, this does not preclude collaborative work to advance this issue.

Ministers agreed that the CAALL Strategic Labour Policy Committee (SLPC), in collaboration with partners such as the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS), the Mental Health Commission of Canada, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), and the various workers' compensation boards, examine next steps for collaborative work.

Workplace Impairment

Deputy Minister Jeff Parr (Alberta) delivered a presentation on behalf of the two CAALL standing committees.

The Honourable Jeannie Ehaloak (Nunavut) noted that due to the timeline for territorial elections and the need for the new government to conduct public consultations, Nunavut would be carrying out the bulk of its public consultation over the next four weeks, and would be well placed to develop policy following that consultation process. At present, the Minister can say that a coordinated approach among jurisdictions is the best approach and that there is support for harmonization, to the extent that it is appropriate and practical.

Ministers concluded by expressing interest in working collaboratively, and tasked officials to continue dialogue towards a collaborative approach in dealing with workplace impairment, including substance use in the workplace. Ministers directed that this work should focus on what types of tools could be provided to workers and employers, and could potentially include questions surrounding accommodation.

The Ministers encouraged continued exploration by officials to assess the potential for harmonization, and acknowledged potential linkages with the work proceeding around mental health and efforts toward early intervention.

Diversity and Employment (emphasis on Indigenous awareness of their rights)

Deputy Minister William MacKay (Nunavut) and Deputy Minister Michael Carr (Saskatchewan) delivered a presentation on Labour Ministries' Engagement with Indigenous Peoples. Their presentation highlighted the following: the importance of strong relationships between Indigenous communities and a wide range of organizations; that Ministries should collaborate and consult with Indigenous communities and other departments in order to meet the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's labour-related Calls to Action and to better engage, attract and retain Indigenous workers; and that a holistic and consultative approach to policies and programs should consider and incorporate the needs of Indigenous peoples.

The Honourable Jeannie Ehloak (Nunavut) called for increased engagement with Indigenous communities; in addition, the Minister called for clear objectives and terms of reference with timelines and outcomes for the project.

The Ministers directed that CAALL will develop a project that focuses on Indigenous labour issues, with the understanding that they often intersect with employment issues. Consideration will be given to existing projects undertaken by ministry partners across the various jurisdictions, as opportunities may exist to combine efforts or learn from best practices, where appropriate.

Addressing Harassment and Violence in the World of Work

The Honourable Patty Hajdu (Federal) made a presentation on the federal government's efforts to address harassment and violence in the world of work. The Minister pointed out that most women have experienced some kind of harassment and violence. According to a 2014 Angus Reid survey, 28 per cent of Canadians reported receiving unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favours or sexually-charged comments on multiple occasions while at work, and 27 per cent of violent incidents, including sexual assault, robbery and physical assault happened at the victim's place of work.

New and emerging workplaces

The Honourable Kevin Flynn (Ontario) provided an overview of the Changing Workplaces Review (CWR) process and also provided a summary of the Ontario Government's response to the Final Report, particularly outlining recent changes introduced by Bill 148 (Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017) and other related initiatives.

If deemed beneficial, consideration may be given to mandating the CAALL Standing Committee on Strategic Labour Policy (SLPC) to analyse the possibility of all Canadian governments prohibiting disparities of treatment with respect to pension and insurance plans. Officials may examine this issue at the next CAALL annual meeting in May 2018.