

*CUPE's Strategic Directions 2003-2005*

# REPORTING BACK



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# Introduction

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Over the course of four days at the 2003 National Convention in Quebec City, delegates debated a strategic plan for CUPE and on the last day adopted a plan with the following three key objectives for CUPE over the period 2003-2005:

- To Strengthen our Bargaining Power;
- To Increase our Day-to-Day Effectiveness;
- To Intensify our Campaign to Stop Contracting Out and Privatization.

This Strategic Directions document contained analysis and commentary, as well as action items for us to achieve our goals. These key strategic directions are the ongoing priorities for our union stretching far beyond the year 2005. We will never stop trying to strengthen our bargaining power, trying to increase our internal effectiveness as a union, or fighting contracting out and privatization.

Throughout our history we have focussed on these and other key priorities, and we are proud of our successes. In the Spring of 2005 we issued *CUPE Celebrates: A report on the actions, events and trends that shaped Canada's largest union in 2004* for distribution at CUPE division conventions and many other CUPE events to let CUPE members know what we have been doing, and to celebrate the vitality of our union.

This report, *Reporting Back*, attempts to capture some of our activities on the specific action recommendations from the 2003-2005 Strategic Directions Plan.

Given CUPE's size and diversity and the sheer number of actions that CUPE has undertaken, it is not possible for this report to be an exhaustive list of each and every strategic action at the local, regional and national levels of our union. Similarly, the very brief mention of these initiatives does not do justice to the countless hours that our activists and staff have devoted to try to meet these key strategic policy objectives.

Prior to embarking on a debate regarding our 2005-2007 Strategic Directions Policy and its specific objectives at this convention, it is important that we review our collective efforts over the past two years. We are held accountable to our membership for implementing convention decisions and this report serves that purpose. There were 54 points in the 2003 Strategic Directions Policy Paper and herein we will attempt to summarize the action-oriented recommendations.

Finally, we recognize and thank each and every CUPE activist and staff member who has worked tirelessly to embrace strategic directions and in turn, helped build a bigger and better CUPE.





# Strengthening Our Bargaining Power

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*Strategic Direction:*

**To mobilize our members to win at the bargaining table.**

*Strategic Direction:*

**To strengthen our capacity to mobilize strike support for any group of workers in and outside of CUPE.**

- In Newfoundland and Labrador, CUPE members formed a solidarity pact with the Newfoundland Association of Public and Private Employees (NAPE) and were on strike for four weeks in April 2004 to defend free collective bargaining.
- The New Brunswick Council of Hospital Unions (CUPE Local 1252) were successful in bargaining in the fall of 2004 because they formed “solidarity pacts,” area committees and a labour movement-wide mobilization to defend free collective bargaining. CUPE N.B.’s fightback campaign “Standing Up for Health Care” rallied thousands of union and community members and was instrumental in the victory.
- In early 2004, the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions (OCHU) took a leading role in forming an alliance with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and progressive community organizations such as the Ontario Health Coalition and the Council of Canadians to successfully push back threats that Bill 8 (the so-called *Commitment to the Future of Medicare Act*) could open up collective agreements to concessions on wages, benefits and job security. The campaign resulted in thousands of e-mails, phone calls and faxes to Members of the Provincial Parliament.
- OCHU formed a solidarity pact with SEIU to gain a groundbreaking settlement for hospital workers with the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA). The settlement directly affected 22,000 hospital employees and led the way for another 10,000 employees engaged in other contract negotiations with the OHA.

- In Quebec, beginning November 2003 a mobilization plan and a solidarity pact with the Quebec Federation of Labour were passed, leading to an extensive campaign against the Charest government's policies. More than seventy activities mobilizing the majority of our members were carried out, several of them on a province-wide scale (distributing leaflets, visiting MNAs, parades, surprise visits, strategic occupation, etc).
- After years of preparation, the Ontario Association for Community Living sector has put central bargaining on the table. Of 35 bargaining units who have an expiry date of March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2005 or earlier, 30 units signed onto the 2005 bargaining strategy. The locals have agreed to four coordinated proposals for 2005.
  - A Letter of Understanding that commits employers to undertake a form of central bargaining for the next round of bargaining plus a commitment for them to pressure the government for the resources for a central table to bargain the identified central issues of wages, benefits, pensions and common job titles;
  - A common expiry date of March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007;
  - A common wage proposal based on the KMPG study that provides a recommendation to address the historical inequities of underfunding in the sector; and,
  - Enrolment in the Multi-Sector Pension Plan for locals with no existing pension plan.

This coordination has already paid off as several settlements have the four proposals. There are also weekly calls with national representatives and members to maintain the momentum. Locals not at the table are entering into solidarity pacts to support the locals that are at the table.

- The Hospital Employees' Union (HEU), CUPE's Health Care Division in B.C., engaged in a significant fightback against a provincial government that attacked, and continues to attack, our members at every turn. CUPE members and members of other unions across B.C. stood side by side with HEU members in this struggle.
- Each year, in every province, CUPE conducts collective bargaining conferences to prepare our members and locals in each sector for bargaining in the coming year. These conferences are coordinated efforts involving CUPE divisions and their committees and CUPE staff from a variety of departments – national servicing representatives, technical staff from research, equality, legal, communications, health and safety, and education representatives. While it is difficult to place a firm number on how many local executives, bargaining committees and activists attend these conferences, it is safe to say that the number is in the thousands.

In June 2004, our National Executive Board adopted an action plan entitled “Plan to Fight Concessions and Defend Free Collective Bargaining” which called for our provincial divisions, district councils and local unions to set in motion regional or area pacts of solidarity and support for any group of striking CUPE members. As a result of this plan, the following coordination has occurred:

- CUPE Ontario held a series of area leadership meetings at which area solidarity pacts to bolster support for locals entering bargaining were adopted. These pacts are to provide support for CUPE locals within a particular region.
- CUPE Locals 3550, 784, and 474 in Edmonton public schools proved that coordination works when their support for each other’s bargaining paid off by successfully reaching good agreements.
- CUPE Locals 7 and 21 bargaining side by side at one table with the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) in the City of Regina under a solidarity pact that all bargaining units must achieve a fair settlement.
- Union Development has written and piloted new courses on bargaining benefits and a new collective bargaining course. These courses are now available.

### *Strategic Direction:*

#### **To develop strategic plans across the union to consolidate coordinated bargaining.**

- CUPE members in Prince Edward Island are taking very important steps in developing a strong strategic direction plan for the island. Four regional action committees act as the first point of contact for issues or campaigns within their regions. The committees mobilize members to support all strikes and walk picket lines in support of striking members from other unions. The bravery shown by “The Fearless Five” striking members of CUPE Local 3373, Montague Group Home, and the solidarity that generated provides inspiration for the regional action committees. CUPE organized their first ever collective bargaining conference in February 2005.
- In Nova Scotia, CUPE Local 5050 school board workers reached an agreement with the government after a 20-day strike. The agreement contains an unprecedented commitment to develop province-wide bargaining in the school board sector. A joint committee with equal representation from the union and the Nova Scotia government will begin determining

how to make this happen by April 1, 2007. The joint committee will also be charged with implementing wage parity by developing standardized job descriptions, classifications and wage rates for CUPE school board workers across the province.

- The Ontario Social Services Coordinating Committee met in the spring of 2005 and developed an action plan to further the fight against privatization, committing to a solidarity pact to mobilize its members and undertaking an organizing project to significantly increase union density in the social services sector, using coordinated and central bargaining initiatives as a tool to organize new locals.
- CUPE Saskatchewan will host a Solidarity Conference November 18-19, 2005.
- Six Extendicare locals in Alberta are coordinating for the next round of bargaining.
- CUPE B.C. has created sectoral committees for all sectors. These committees have been asked to develop strategic plans to achieve greater coordination and/or centralization of bargaining.
- CUPE's National Executive Board has put a greater priority on collective bargaining by making it a regular agenda item at all Board meetings. NEB members report in on the state of collective bargaining in their respective regions.
- Regular collective bargaining updates are provided by our Organizing and Regional Services Department.
- CUPE Research provides a compilation of Canadian economic and bargaining trends in a publication called *Economic Climate for Bargaining*. This publication summarizes key economic indicators and wage settlement information. Our Research Branch also produces a quarterly publication, *Tabletalk*, designed to provide members and staff with groundbreaking collective agreement language and the latest on wage settlements.
- Research Representatives in the regions produce reports on settlement trends, collective agreement language, and key economic indicators for regional sectoral bargaining conferences and for general use. Some examples are: CUPE Ontario Long Term Care Collective Bargaining Report; CUPE Ontario Long Term Care Wage Averages Report; CUPE Ontario Municipal Sector Settlements Summary; Bargaining Achievements in the School Board Sector (Saskatchewan).
- In Quebec, CUPE is a major player that is highly mobilized in several sectors, notably education. Under the theme "The Indispensables", several days of action were organized and other events are planned to force the government to move.

*Strategic Direction:*

**To coordinate and consolidate bargaining structures to ensure that the diverse needs and priorities of local unions will be reflected in our bargaining strategies and demands.**

- A first ever bargaining conference was held in P.E.I. during February 2005. CUPE members took a closer look at how they achieve collective bargaining in a province where most of the members don't have the right to strike and where every settlement contributed to setting a pattern for other workers. The members discussed the importance of strengthening coalitions and coordinating bargaining to make breakthroughs whether it is at binding arbitration or at the table.
- A Nova Scotia School Board Employees provincial bargaining council has been formed and will bargain for support workers.
- A provincial solidarity pact in New Brunswick helped to mobilize the entire CUPE N.B. membership. Mass meetings supported a general strike to protect free collective bargaining. Support from the New Brunswick Federation of Labour and 18 other public and private sector unions forced the government to back down and negotiate a new collective agreement for 6,500 hospital workers after a three-week strike.
- CUPE Local 4400 (Toronto District School Board) launched an effective and innovative work-to-rule campaign in support of their bargaining in September 2004. It culminated in a 14 per cent wage increase over the term of agreement in May 2005. The action meant that CUPE members weren't coming in early or staying late without pay, weren't working during breaks or lunch periods without pay, and were carefully following all rules and regulations.
- OCHU solidarity pact with SEIU.
- Manitoba school board bargaining plan.

## Regional Child Care Initiatives

- Two regions, Ontario and Nova Scotia, have begun addressing organizing and bargaining structures in the child care sector. These regional initiatives are focusing on three broad areas: delivery, internal structure and bargaining structures.
- Preliminary work on the child care organizing campaign is now well underway in Nova Scotia. The bargaining teams of the two larger non-profits in Halifax, St. Joseph's, and North End Child Care Centre, have focused on outreach to other child care providers. Specific plans will be put in place to connect with other CUPE locals and unorganized non-profit centres.

Our members, along with others in the sector, are frustrated with the direction the Hamm government is taking regarding new federal money (no commitment on wages, continuing to fund a subsidy-based, "mixed" system, etc.). This should prove to be the catalyst we need for launching our organizing the unorganized child care workers later this year.

- Our research report on labour market trends in the child care sector was peer reviewed and released in early September, in conjunction with a number of coalition partners.
- *Ad hoc* meetings with non-profit directors and other unions in the sector continue on a regular basis. We have been feeding material and information to key directors, and are currently preparing material for distribution to all childcare workers at the more than 100 non-profit centres. It outlines the many problems and pitfalls in the new funding arrangement.
- In Ontario, the Childcare tour led by the Chair of the Childcare Subcommittee, has traveled to many of the regions in the province raising staff, local executive and membership awareness, of CUPE's Childcare Organizing and Support Plan. The tour has allowed us to gather information that will be of assistance in determining the locations for organizing and coordinated bargaining pilot projects.

The Childcare Committee will finalize the organizing work plan. The organizing work plan will set out pilot project locations, identify member organizers in the pilot locations, set timeframe for training of member organizers, as well as establishing a timeframe for developing the organizing campaign.

- We are creating a standard collective agreement reflective of the best in CUPE child care contracts. This tool will assist expediting the coordinated bargaining process for child care units in targeted areas.

*Strategic Direction:*

**CUPE will provide tools and assistance so that local unions can win rank-and-file membership support for a CUPE Solidarity Pact.**

*Strategic Direction:*

**CUPE will expand our efforts to coordinate activities with other unions representing workers in our sectors.**

- CUPE Newfoundland and Labrador–NAPE coalition – Faced with a regressive government intent on stripping away at least a dozen major provisions in our members’ contracts, 20,000 CUPE and Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees members united to stage a 28-day province-wide strike that exposed the real Danny Williams to the people of the province. CUPE and NAPE agreed to send their members back to work pre-empting back-to-work legislation.
- CUPE Newfoundland and Labrador President’s Tour
- P.E.I. area action meetings
- P.E.I. public sector bargaining coalition
- New Brunswick “We are One” campaign
- Quebec Common Front Coalition
- Standard solidarity pact motions were presented and adopted at all CUPE Ontario area leadership meetings.
- Bargaining continues for the Manitoba Council of Health Care Unions which includes 10,000 health care support workers. In June 2005, the Council held a series of eleven membership consultation meetings. The majority of members indicated that they wanted the negotiating committee to address a reasonable wage increase, full payment of the Disability and Rehabilitation plan (Long Term Disability plan), and full implementation of Wage Standardization. Members recognize that strike action might be necessary to achieve these goals and mandated the Council to continue discussions with other unions to develop a coordinated plan for such action.

- OCHU–SEIU coalition to resist privatization of health care and the contracting out of support services.
- Regina CUPE Locals 7 and 21 bargaining in solidarity with ATU and each other
- Edmonton School Board locals
- Thirty delegates from four unions (CUPE, SEIU, NUPGE and NSUPE) met in Calgary in May 2005 to plan strategies to deal with their employer, Canadian Blood Services. Their plan includes a strategy designed to strengthen their bargaining power and to increase communication amongst their locals. For example, they have a plan to implement support immediately if any one of them is faced with a strike or lockout.
- Through their strong communities campaign, CUPE B.C. continues to build capacity to mobilize members to take action. Following a developed “Local Action Plans” tool, over 100 CUPE locals in B.C. have developed individual local action plans.
- HEU–CUPE B.C.–B.C. Federation of Labour rallied in support for health care workers in the face of legislation that would strip their collective agreements, facilitate contracting out and deny them successor rights when their work was contracted out.
- CUPE B.C. is coordinating with other unions in sectors like universities, transportation, social services and community health, and has been instrumental in the establishment of joint union committees to deal with common issues. In the K-12 sector, a strong Coalition for Public Education includes the BCTF, BCGEU, CUFA, FPSE and CFS.
- In Saskatchewan, 12,000 CUPE health care members are at a joint bargaining table with SGEU and SEIU.
- Penticton, B.C. is one of the many examples across the country of CUPE locals involved in civic union coalitions to coordinate bargaining.
- In Quebec, since 2001, an important exercise has been implemented to assist local officers and all union representatives in playing their role in their respective jurisdictions. Presently, a study on the status of each local is being carried out in close cooperation with local union officers. This study will deal with all aspects of the union: union life, education, labour relations, bargaining, health and safety among others.



*Strategic Direction:*

**Put in place a new internet-based computer system to allow all local unions to access the collective agreements of other local unions, as well as collective agreement settlement information.**

CUPE has always been proud of our capacity to support collective bargaining with solid data. In the past our System for the Analysis of Collective Agreement Data (SALAD) was a groundbreaking database giving us a distinct advantage in bargaining.

- The newest generation of the CUPE collective agreement database is about to be unveiled. It is called the Collective Agreement Information System (CAIS) and will have the capacity to generate reports more quickly and easily than ever before. Staff in the field will be able to generate special reports remotely over the Internet. A new text feature of CAIS will allow CUPE staff to upload CUPE collective agreements into a database and to download collective agreements from other CUPE locals. Text search features will mean that specific collective agreement language can be located easily and quickly. The first features of CAIS are being piloted by staff at convention and subsequent features will follow shortly after.
- A companion to CAIS is the collective agreement settlement form that will provide up to date summaries of CUPE settlements including wages, benefits and other improvements. Complete memoranda of settlement will be attached where available.
- Both of these databases will provide CUPE members and staff with critical information on bargaining trends and language.
- CUPE Research produces information on collective bargaining that is posted regularly to the CUPE website and tabled at NEB meetings. *Tabletalk* is a bargaining newsletter published quarterly and is designed to be a reference for CUPE local bargaining committees, elected officers, and servicing representatives. *Economic Climate for Bargaining* is produced for each NEB meeting and provides a broad overview of the general trends in wage settlements and other economic information as it pertains to public sector collective bargaining in Canada.

### *Strategic Direction:*

## **To embark on a program, along with CUPE provincial divisions, to increase the number of local unions affiliated to CLC labour councils and provincial federations of labour.**

- CUPE is proud to have CUPE members and staff on every provincial federation of labour across the country as well as in the North West Territories and Iqaluit. These individuals are profiled in our publication *CUPE Celebrates*. We are also represented on the Executive Committee and the Executive Council of the CLC.
  
- CUPE's National Executive Board is actively encouraging CUPE divisions, bargaining councils and members to take action in the specific struggles of the labour movement and the broader struggles we face with our progressive allies in the community. The NEB regularly passes resolutions of support for these struggles at each meeting. In the last two years the following resolutions have been passed:
  - Support and solidarity for the USWA at Stelco in Hamilton in their militant defence of workers' rights and pensions while the company restructures under bankruptcy protection.
  - A solidarity pact with the PSAC in support of their collective bargaining with the federal government including lobbying, picket line and financial support if necessary. The resolution calls for CUPE to actively pursue better relations with all public sector unions.
  - A re-affirmation of our opposition to ballistic missile defence and the weaponization of space and to support the NDP and BQ in their efforts to have full and open debate on the BMD in parliament.
  - Support for the CLC-UFCW-QFL national campaign exposing Wal-Mart's anti-labour positions.
  - Urgent support for the passage of Bill C-38 on equal marriage prior to parliament standing down for the summer recess.
  - To speak out against hate crimes based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or language, and to raise awareness of these issues among the CUPE membership.
  - To build alliances with the Council of Canadians and other progressive organizations to fight back against the deep integration agenda of the U.S. government and corporations to integrate our economies, our social security systems, our energy markets and armed forces.
  - Support for members of the Telecommunications Workers Union (TWU) who are locked out by Telus.
  - Support for an end to the CBC lockout of members of the Canadian Media Guild and in support of public broadcasting in Canada.

*Strategic Direction:*

**To carry out strategic organizing campaigns to expand our bargaining power and strengthen our bargaining positions by organizing any unorganized workers in CUPE sectors and jurisdictions.**

Since November 2003 we have organized over 3,500 new members into CUPE through more than 115 certifications. Over 41 per cent of the new members were organized in the health care sector, 33 per cent in the community and social services sectors, over 15 per cent in the education sector and 7 per cent in municipalities.

- Run-off votes after Manitoba school board amalgamations resulted in CUPE gaining over 600 new members.

Some regions have developed comprehensive strategies.

- Ontario has worked through their planning and priorities committee to create comprehensive plans that include post-secondary education and long-term care. Ontario is also addressing the potential implications of the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) and the impact on representation rights and bargaining for our membership. LHINs capture long-term care, acute care, community health centres, mental health and addictions agencies, CCACs and Community Support Agencies.
- Saskatchewan has developed a strategy to increase union density in the school board sector as new boundaries come into effect in January 2006.
- Alberta and Manitoba have made significant headway in pursuing mergers with existing associations as well as signing service agreements with groups with the intention of joining CUPE.
- In Quebec, following the demergers in the municipal sector, we coordinated our strategies to ensure and reinforce solidarity.

*Strategic Direction:*

**To develop new and innovative approaches to organizing workers in small, public service agencies that are inadequately funded by government, such as child care centres and social service agencies.**

- The National Executive Board has approved plans for organizing child care workers in Nova Scotia and Ontario. In Nova Scotia we are developing a plan to organize and represent workers in child care with a view to establishing a coordinated bargaining structure for these workers.
- Home care workers in Nova Scotia have already been meeting to establish common bargaining demands as the first step to establishing more formal coordinated bargaining.

We recognize that workers, primarily women, employed by small employers need union representation and that unionization will mean a qualitative improvement in their wages, benefits and working conditions. Specific examples of small groups we have organized include:

- B.C.
  - Kwantlen College Student Association (16 members)
- Alberta
  - Brigantia Place Camrose Women’s Shelter (13 members)
  - Discovery House (9 members)
  - Mountain Plains Family Service Society of Edmonton (10 members)
- Saskatchewan
  - Metis Management Board, Yorkton (9 members)
  - Centre éducatif Félix Le Chat (16 members)
  - St. Alphonse School Division (4 members)
- Manitoba
  - Jane’s Clinic (4 members)
  - Ten Ten Sinclair (8 members)
  - Gateway Recreation Centre (7 members)

- Ontario
  - Brampton Employment Resource Centre (5 members)
  - Catholic Children’s Aid Society of Hamilton (10 members)
  - College Street Tots Day Care (9 members)
  - Muskoka Landing RNs (8 members)
  
- Quebec
  - École Polytechnique de Montréal (10 members)
  - Ville de Baie Comeau (9 members)
  - Ville de Desbiens (7 members)
  - Centre local de développement des Etchemins (9 members)
  
- Maritimes Region
  - Charlotte County Human Resources/Kindred Home Care (11 members)
  - Service Ambulance de la Péninsule (15 members)
  
- Atlantic Region
  - Hillsvie Acres (14 members)
  - Children’s Aid Society of Halifax (9 members)
  - Jewels and Gems Day Care, Glace Bay (15 members)

While we continue to organize smaller groups, the best way to represent these workers is to strengthen their bargaining power through coordination and we continue to develop plans to coordinate bargaining in their respective sectors.

*Strategic Direction:*

**CUPE will identify some union-wide bargaining objectives and priorities by conducting a national random survey of our members.**

- In 2005 CUPE embarked upon an ambitious random survey of CUPE members to find out what their issues are and to assist us in developing better ways to communicate with, and serve our members. The survey captured 2,425 members from every province and sector and was completed in July 2005. Ten focus groups of CUPE members were conducted in Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto and Montreal to provide the basis for constructing the survey questionnaire.
- Respondents to the survey identified job security, wages and benefits, pensions and health and safety as the top four areas upon which CUPE should concentrate.
- Other areas identified as important include: protecting quality public services; dealing with grievances; negotiating family and maternity leave; taking strong stands on national issues like child care and medicare; and lobbying governments for better legislation affecting our members.
- In addition to the national survey, both CUPE Saskatchewan and CUPE B.C. have conducted surveys of their membership in the last two years.

*Strategic Direction:*

**To support and supplement our bargaining strategies by political action locally, provincially and at the federal level.**

- In an attempt to pro-actively counter the Binns government's "Program Renewal" initiative, the CUPE P.E.I. Division met with health care and school board locals to strategize and prepare. They requested a meeting with Premier Binns to discuss the initiative, protested the lack of labour representation in the review process, and presented a brief outlining services.
- CUPE Local 5050 strike in Nova Scotia resulted in provincial agreement to province-wide school board bargaining.
- CUPE New Brunswick campaign to confront the Lord Government to defend free collective bargaining.
- CUPE Quebec members, in addition to those working in Quebec's university sector, threw their support behind striking students by denouncing the Charest government's decision to cut \$103 million from the student grant program. CUPE and the Quebec Federation of Labour stood firmly in solidarity with the students in their successful negotiations with the government.
- The Ontario Council of Hospital Unions waged a strategic battle against Bill 8 that could be used to override or open collective agreements. The legislation could be used to coerce the boards and CEOs of health care institutions to regionalize and privatize a wide range of support services. OCHU called an emergency meeting of all local presidents to review the bill and its implications. The Council also organized a series of demonstrations to protest the bill.
- In Toronto, CUPE along with labour and progressive organizations, worked to have David Miller elected as a progressive mayor of Toronto.

- CUPE Ontario is waging an ongoing campaign against P3s in almost every sector of our membership. P3 hospitals, recreation facilities, water treatment plants, and other public infrastructure are all on the P3 drawing table for the Ontario Liberal government. CUPE, OPSEU, SEIU and the Ontario Health Coalition joined together to take the Ontario government to court to stop two P3 hospitals. While the action was unsuccessful in the courts it was very successful in raising the awareness of Ontarians to the issue.
- CUPE Ontario declared June 2005 as “lobby month” and prepared a lobby kit for members to use in the fightback against privatization. Materials to support the lobby include: a video on P3s, a brochure and a PowerPoint presentation and several articles explaining what P3s are and how to fight them.
- CUPE B.C. and HEU campaigned against the Campbell Liberals in B.C. and had a great measure of success by increasing the NDP seats from 2 to 33 so that there is now an effective opposition in the B.C. legislature.
- HEU–CUPE B.C. mobilization to limit contracting out of health care work.
- CUPE targeted key ridings and CUPE members during the 2004 federal election resulting in an increase in the number of NDP seats in the House of Commons to 19 to become a key player in the minority Liberal government.
- CUPE’s national lobbying has been centred on health care, child care, the new deal for cities, public infrastructure, P3s, employment insurance, federal budgets, and federal anti-scab legislation.
- CUPE Alberta and AFL worked hard in Alberta provincial elections and the NDP attained party status with four seats.
- Seven CUPE members were elected in municipal and school board elections in Nova Scotia in 2004.
- Seven CUPE members were elected to municipal and school board positions in Alberta province-wide municipal elections in 2004.
- CUPE helped the Saskatchewan NDP to win their fourth consecutive term in 2003.



*Strategic Direction:*

**CUPE district councils should play an active role in organizing strike support, in supporting coordinated bargaining, and in community and political campaigns.**

- CUPE has budgeted \$30,000 per year since 2003 for a total of \$90,000 towards strengthening CUPE District Councils in recognition of the critical role the councils play in coordinating strike support at the community level, supporting collective bargaining with political action plans and in organizing against threats of privatization. Special project funding in amounts ranging from \$200 to a maximum of \$2,000 can be accessed through this fund. CUPE sends regular reminders to all CUPE chartered organizations that these monies are available.

District council projects funded by CUPE national include:

- Funding to assist locals in sending members to CUPE schools for the Cape Breton CUPE Council (N.S.).
- Project to undertake a membership drive in support of the district council for the Lakehead and District Council (Ont.).
- Costs to host an All Presidents' meeting aimed at establishing solidarity pacts and planning to implement CUPE's Strategic Directions Policy for the Toronto District Council (Ont.).
- Funding to host several workshops aimed at increasing activists' effectiveness for the North Bay and District Council (Ont.).
- Toronto CUPE Council brought 32 locals together in the spring of 2004 to plan a strategy for the Council to assist the locals in political action and community involvement.
- Toronto CUPE Council held a meeting in the fall of 2004 where it was agreed to establish a regional strike fund and a solidarity pact.
- Ottawa CUPE Council organized a bus contingent to support striking brothers and sisters in Espanola.
- Promotional material for information booths promoting CUPE for the Brandon District Council (Man.).
- Costs to host a planning session to determine needs and goals for the Okanagan Mainline District Council (B.C.).
- Travel costs to bring CUPE locals together to plan and mount a fightback campaign against the provincial government for the Northern Area Council (B.C.).
- Funding for the costs of hosting a stewards' conference for the Fraser Valley District Council (B.C.).
- Leadership training for the district council executive in support of a strategic plan for the Vancouver Island District Council (B.C.).



# Increasing Our Day-to-day Effectiveness

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## *Strategic Direction:*

**To carry out an extensive examination of the difficulties facing local unions and bargaining councils in carrying out effective day-to-day representation of members.**

- CUPE has supported major organizing campaigns across the country allocating \$1.75 million to those projects.
- Over the last two years CUPE National has allocated and spent over \$1.55 million to assist locals with restructuring challenges.
- National union support to Alberta locals in representation campaigns with AUPE.
- Direct national assistance to assist local unions with internal issues and restructuring challenges.
- CUPE Quebec embarked on an ambitious and in-depth review of roles and responsibilities amongst its local unions, staff and the division. Four years of consultation and analysis led to the Ad Hoc Committee on Services tabling its report at the 2005 Quebec Division convention, attended by over 450 delegates. The report and its findings will serve as a significant tool to help focus on the strengths and needs of the locals and the province.
- Creation of an NEB Governance manual and updated CUPE Policies book.

*Strategic Direction:*

**CUPE will hire, train and deploy staff to provide specialist assistance to local unions and bargaining councils that are in particular need of internal rebuilding and strengthening.**

- Over the past two years CUPE has added 17 permanent positions across Canada including 7 national representatives, 2 communications representatives, 2 clerical/bookkeepers, 1 technology support, 1 job evaluation representative, 1 research representative, 1 legal and legislative representative, 1 union development officer and a senior economist.
- We have also utilized many additional staff in the regions on a short-term basis to deal with many of the challenges facing our locals including restructuring and bargaining after representation votes, raids, health and safety and job evaluation.
- We have staffed in excess of 30 temporary positions to assist where necessary to meet the challenges faced by CUPE members in the following areas:
  - Union Development, to assist in course development in the area of pensions and benefits (National)
  - Research, to assist with coordination and development of policy in the energy sector (National)
  - Servicing requirements (various)
  - Organizing (various)
  - Coordination of our literacy program (National)
  - Building Strong Communities campaign (B.C.)
  - Political Action Coordinator (B.C.)
  - Equality representative (B.C.)
  - Local government liaison (B.C.)
  - Job evaluation representative (Ont.)

*Strategic Direction:*

**To provide financial support on a cost-share basis to local unions, bargaining councils, and CUPE divisions to assist them in their campaigns, including organizing and political action and community-based campaigns. The national union must also continue to finance, to the greatest extent possible, our national union campaigns for public services and social justice, including our national health care campaign and our campaign for respect for social service workers.**

Our national campaigns and initiatives include:

- A major lobby campaign for the federal government to implement an adequately funded national child care program.
- A continued lobby campaign targeted to provincial governments that signed child care agreements with the federal government to make a commitment that the child care they would provide would be based on the “QUAD” principles of quality, universality, accessibility and developmental programming.
- A continuation of our highly successful “Rebuilding Strong Communities” initiative through which we lobby politicians at all levels to invest in public services within our communities. CUPE is the community union and the work that our members do in providing public services is integral to making our communities strong.
- We have lobbied the federal government very specifically to implement a New Deal for Cities – one with enough money for cities to tackle the task of replacing and renewing crumbling public infrastructure without privatization of ownership or delivery of services.
- We have been relentless in our analysis and lobbying for a publicly funded and delivered health care system in accordance with the principles of the *Canada Health Act*. We have joined with other unions and coalition partners to condemn all attempts to privatize through private clinics and private insurance.
- We have hosted and facilitated several strategic sectoral meetings in order to strengthen locals in that sector both on day-to-day effectiveness and collective bargaining, as well as to fight back against privatization and contracting out.

- Emergency Medical Services locals met in Edmonton in May 2005 to discuss and plan actions and strategies to strengthen bargaining and to coordinate on issues of common concern.
- Municipalities – The largest CUPE locals in municipalities met in Toronto in June 2005 to strengthen their fight against privatization. They strategized about increasing support for public investment in public services. Workers at the meeting shared insights and lessons, and put their heads together with experts on public finance, environment, social inclusion and local government. Broadening and sustaining a New Deal for Cities and Towns that delivers the “real deal” for communities was a top priority.
- Blood Services – Four unions (CUPE, SEIU, NUPGE and NSUPE) met in Calgary in May 2005 to plan strategies to deal with their employer, Canadian Blood Services.
- Health Care – Representatives from CUPE’s provincial health care bargaining councils and the CUPE National Health Care Issues Committee met in June 2005 in Ottawa to share information on attacks against health care workers and to plan strategies and a plan of action to stop privatization and contracting out as well as to strengthen bargaining for our locals.
- Teaching Assistants – CUPE locals joined other teaching assistant unions from across Canada at a meeting in Vancouver in August 2005 to share information and strategies to improve their working conditions and position themselves to get better contracts. The inaugural meeting of the Canadian Coalition of Graduate Employee Unions (CCGEU) is set to include discussions of coordinated bargaining and organizing.
- Seven energy worker locals met in a two-day meeting in Ottawa in May 2005. Delegates reviewed recent international developments in energy markets as well as privatization, the need for investment in new power sources and smart metering.

- At each CUPE National Convention time is set aside on the prior Sunday for delegates from our major sectors to come together to meet each other, make contacts, share information and plan strategy for the coming two years. Delegates from the following sectors are meeting this year:

- Paramedics and emergency medical services
- Libraries
- Child care
- School boards
- Water and wastewater
- Municipalities
- Electrical utilities
- Social services
- Post-secondary education
- Health care

### **Cost-share Campaigns**

Over the past two years, CUPE has allocated over \$2.22 million in cost-shares to improving effectiveness through promoting public services, fighting privatization, mobilizing and political action, and strengthening collective bargaining.

- Cost-shared campaigns directed to improving effectiveness generally include:

- Campaign – Racism, Whose Problem? (N.S.)
- Campaign to counter the demerger of cities (Que.)
- Campaign to promote participation and cohesion (Ont.)
- Membership support campaign (Ont.)
- Membership survey (Sask.)
- Pay equity campaign (Sask.)
- Internal membership campaign (Alta.)
- Weighing the Evidence Conference (Alta.)
- Video about Aboriginal CUPE members (B.C.)
- Membership support campaign (B.C.)
- Building workplace communicators (B.C.)
- Community action day (B.C.)
- Pay equity campaign (B.C.)

■ Cost-shared campaigns directed to promoting public services include:

- Campaign against the closure of a hospital (P.E.I.)
- Campaign against the closure of newsrooms (Que.)
- Campaign “Schools we make them possible” (Ont.)
- Public awareness campaign for paramedics (Ont.)
- Campaign against the closure of schools (Ont.)
- Raising CUPE’s profile (Man.)
- Campaign to avert closing of libraries (Sask.)
- Raising the profile of CUPE education workers (Sask.)
- Campaign on the value of municipal services (Sask.)
- Public visibility campaign (Alta.)
- Public support for public delivery (Alta.)
- Clean schools improve students’ performance campaign (Alta.)
- Campaign to oppose restructuring of ambulance services (Alta.)
- Campaign on the impact of service reductions (B.C.)
- Public awareness campaign on the value of CUPE work (B.C.)
- Public visibility campaign (B.C.)
- School calendar changes (B.C.)

■ Cost-shared campaigns directed to fighting privatization include:

- Campaign against contracting out (P.E.I.)
- Campaign against privatization (Que.)
- Strong communities campaign (Ont.)
- Several anti-privatization and bargaining support campaigns (Ont.)
- Campaign against privatization of Ontario Works employment services (Ont.)
- Campaign against contracting out of sanitation and greenwaste (Ont.)
- Campaigns against the closure of libraries (Ont.)
- Campaign against privatization in electricity (Ont.)
- Campaign against Bill 8 (Ont.)
- Campaign against privatization of waste collection (Man.)
- Public awareness campaign on the dangers of privatization (Man.)
- Campaign against the transfer of wastewater (Alta.)
- Sponsorship of a play addressing water issues (Alta.)
- Several campaigns against contracting out and privatization (B.C.)
- Campaign against the privatization of janitorial services (B.C.)
- Campaign to stop the P3 RAV transit line (B.C.)



■ Cost-shared campaigns directed to mobilizing and political action include:

- Municipal and school board elections (N.S.)
- Municipal election campaign (N.B.)
- Political action campaign (N.B.)
- Campaign on workload and pensions (Ont.)
- Mobilizing campaign – “We deliver Toronto” (Ont.)
- Municipal by-elections (Man.)
- Workers’ Compensation legislation (Man.)
- Campaign on pensions (Man.)
- Campaign on most available hours legislation (Sask.)
- Campaign for political support of budget financing (Sask.)
- “Our Saskatchewan – It Works” campaign (Sask.)
- Taxation campaign (Sask.)
- Municipal election campaign (Alta.)
- Political action campaign (Alta.)
- Making our future fair campaign (B.C.)

■ Cost-shared campaigns directed towards bargaining include:

- Bargaining support campaigns (Nfld.)
- Right to free collective bargaining campaign (N.B.)
- Effects of arbitration award (Que.)
- Bargaining support campaigns (Que.)
- Bargaining support campaigns (Ont.)
- Campaigns to defend collective agreements and successor rights (Ont.)
- Bargaining support for health care council (Man.)
- Strike averting campaign – health care (Man.)
- Bargaining support campaigns (Sask.)
- Bargaining support campaign – municipal (Alta.)
- B.C. School Watch: examining the fine print in K-12 (B.C.)
- Campaign against concessions (B.C.)

## Organizing

- CUPE membership continues to increase. We are by far the largest union in Canada and at a time that membership has decreased for many of the major unions, our membership continues to grow – CUPE continues to be the best choice for unorganized workers.
- We continue to train and utilize member-organizers in all aspects of our organizing work. In Ontario, we piloted training member-organizers from equity seeking workers of colour to better reflect the changing faces of CUPE members.
- In Ontario and Nova Scotia, we have committed to addressing the many challenges child care workers face. We are reviewing our internal structures and bargaining models including how we provide service and support child care locals.
- We continue to assess the role that organizing should play in our union and the resources we require to fulfil this role. We are at a point in time where we must acknowledge the decline in the rate of membership growth. While many unions wait until there is significant membership loss before they seriously address these questions, we are moving to create a national strategy and approach before this occurs.
- Organizing continues to take on many dimensions as government-initiated mergers and amalgamations, raids, decertification and internal rebuilding of existing locals impact organizing in each region. As a consequence we are developing strategies for bargaining first collective agreements and supporting our new locals through this process.
- We have a “New Member’s Kit” for organizing new members and welcoming new members into existing CUPE locals.
- We have seen a noticeable shift in organizing over the last two years. In the past, we could count upon regular requests from unorganized employees and relatively uncontested Labour Board proceedings. The last two years have seen a decrease in the requests and employers often contest even the simplest certification. This shift has resulted in fewer units being organized and fewer members joining CUPE's ranks. Our activists and staff are rising to the challenge. We are working to change our approach and create strategic targets and goals. Some regions have responded to this challenge and committed to a planning process through planning and priority, jurisdictional activists, servicing representatives and devoted Organizing staff.
- In Quebec, following the passage of Bill 30 in the health sector, we were faced with several union representation votes. Thanks to the relentless participation of union representatives and local officers, we believe our gains have exceeded our expectations.

### *Strategic Direction:*

## **To develop effective leadership skills at all levels of the union.**

Since the last national convention, the CUPE education staff has focused on developing leadership skills at all levels of the union.

- Between 2003 and 2005, thousands of local union members received training in effective stewarding, health and safety, human rights, collective bargaining, and labour law. In addition, hundreds of local union officers took part in more specialized activist and leadership skills development workshops.
- Pension education was made a priority with considerable resources devoted to a new high-level training program aimed at CUPE members serving as union representatives on pension boards. This program consists of a one-week residential pensions workshop, as well as ongoing continuing education. As well, we have put in place a network of union pension activists and trustees to keep them informed of new developments in this area.
- Union Development is developing specialized courses for local executive officers including a new workshop for financial officers, and one for recording secretaries. We are also developing a core education program for newly certified local unions.
- A new education and training program for CUPE women has also been put in place. This consists of a special weeklong course that explores the full range of discrimination faced by women in society. The workshop develops analytical and strategic skills so that barriers facing women can be identified and addressed by local activists. The program includes a series of short three-hour workshops to help women develop the practical skills required to take on leadership positions in CUPE. The weeklong workshop is being offered on a trial basis this fall to women in B.C., Alberta, Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland and Labrador. The program will be expanded to other provinces in 2006.

*Strategic Direction:*

**To advance and promote CUPE's equality agenda by increasing the participation at all levels of our union of women and members of other equality-seeking groups.**

We recognize that our great union is diverse and that future CUPE members will come from the growing Aboriginal and workers of colour populations. To better reach out to our changing make-up, the following are some of the initiatives that have been held:

- CUPE Ontario held a very successful three-day Human Rights Conference.
- A three-day training program for organizers has been completed in Toronto focusing on workers of colour. Eleven members from a cross-section of workers of colour were trained. Similar sessions are being planned for other areas of the country.
- CUPE B.C. held its first ever Aboriginal Council gathering in the spring of 2004.
- The new anti-racism course was offered on a pilot basis at the B.C. weeklong school and will soon be available to all regions.

CUPE has been trying to step up our activities on women's issues since the 2003 national convention. These initiatives include:

- February 2004 Ontario Division Women's Forum, "Are We There Yet?" focusing on barriers women face in getting involved in CUPE.
- March 2004 meeting of the women of the NEB with the members of CUPE's National Executive Committee resulting in the adoption of a document titled "Increasing the participation of women in CUPE" focusing on education and how to break down the barriers.
- A weeklong Women's Leadership course has been developed and run in several provinces. By the end of 2005 we will have delivered it in all regions.
- Women's conferences have been held in (2004), Saskatchewan (jointly with Manitoba in 2004), and Ontario (2004).
- CUPE Nova Scotia's women's committee has hosted educational lunches for women at the last two conventions.
- Our Rebuilding Strong Communities initiative emphasizes pay equity, child care, harassment, and other issues important to women.
- CUPE continues to support international work related to women and privatization through a project with a sister union (SAMWU) in South Africa.
- The National Contracting Out and Privatization Committee held a joint session with the National Women's Committee to discuss the impacts of privatization and contracting out on equity seeking groups.
- Plans are underway for four-day workshops for women on a variety of topics including economics, history, politics, along with skills building courses such as public speaking, handling the media, and local union leadership.
- On the advice of the National Women's Committee, daily women's caucuses are scheduled during the 2005 convention.
- A women's issues panel of women from labour and the community will be held during convention time.

*Strategic Direction:*

**To take action to encourage and assist all local unions to maintain current membership contact lists in such a way that provincial privacy laws are respected.**

- The survey of CUPE membership was only possible because of the cooperation of locals and staff to provide membership lists so that we could draw a random sample of our members. We were able to collect approximately 110,000 names and phone numbers from across the country. This is a huge step forward to our being able to understand members' needs and our being able to communicate with them.
- Contact information including e-mail information for CUPE members is now being gathered and entered into databases from every possible source – union development course registrations, sector meetings, and other union-sponsored meetings.

If adopted by delegates, this *ad hoc* approach will be superseded in the coming months by a more systematic approach as proposed in *Gaining Ground: Strategic Directions Program for CUPE: 2005-2007* as follows:

- Initiate a program to encourage all local unions to maintain current contact information for all members.
- Facilitate the purchase by local unions of common membership database software systems.
- Take steps to force reluctant employers to turn over regular membership updates to local unions as is required by law.
- Develop a privacy policy that restricts who can access the membership contact list and for what purposes it can be used.
- Initiate a program to win agreement of each local to give CUPE National access to local membership lists in accordance with the privacy policy.

# Intensifying Our Campaign to Stop Contracting Out and Privatization

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## *Strategic Direction:*

**To encourage and assist local unions/provincial divisions/sectors/district councils to organize against every specific privatization or contracting out initiative in CUPE's jurisdiction.**

- In 2004 CUPE spent almost \$1.5 million in the National Defence Fund in cost-share campaigns submitted by CUPE locals, councils and divisions. We have budgeted another \$1.2 million for cost-share campaigns in 2005. When you combine this with the funds from the requesting organizations CUPE has spent close to \$6 million in campaigns to fight back against contracting out and privatization, and to advance the effectiveness of our locals, councils and divisions.
- In addition to the cost-shares, CUPE spent \$1.13 million from the National Defence Fund in 2004 to meet obligations under the "national strategic priorities" which included:
  - \$1.04 million to the fightback against privatization
  - \$125,000 to support for coordination/centralization initiatives
  - \$85,000 for increasing effectiveness

The contracting out and privatization campaigns include:

- A major campaign against privatization in P.E.I.
- Ontario Electricity Coalition campaign in Ontario
- A "Dangers of P3s" campaign in Ontario
- A "Value of Municipal Services" campaign in Saskatchewan
- A "Keep Enmax Public" campaign in Alberta

- Lawyers for a coalition of unions and health care advocates wrote to the Ontario Minister of Health informing him that an interim injunction will be sought unless they receive his immediate undertaking that no further action will be taken to approve P3 schemes at the Royal Ottawa Hospital or the William Osler Health Centre in Brampton. CUPE joined with OPSEU, SEIU and the Ontario Health Coalition in asking the courts to quash any deals that have been signed for P3 hospitals, arguing the deals contravene the *Public Hospitals Act*.
- CUPE B.C. Anti-Contracting Out Committee developed a *Shop Steward's Guide to Contracting Out*.
- CUPE National developed a web-based privatization database map.
- OCHU has established a cooperative relationship with Ontario Health Coalition and progressive physicians from MacMaster University to coordinate a tour of the province to expose the dangers of P3 hospitals. The tour is highlighted by a giant 15-foot replica of a Trojan horse symbolizing that Ontarians should be very wary of the dangers within P3s.
- In the face of increased employer efforts to contract out health care support work, OCHU has organized a tour of the Superbug and Mobile Hospital Room display to highlight the importance of cleaning in the battle against hospital acquired infections.
- CUPE Ontario and its Social Services Committee have devised an action plan to fight privatization in social services. The plan includes:
  - Developing education materials and tools
  - Working with coalition partners
  - Exposing corporations who profit from privatizing social services
  - Lobbying all parties in the legislature
  - Exposing underfunding in the sector and campaigning for more funding
  - Developing structures to assist in central and sectoral decision-making
  - Developing bargaining language to address the many aspects of privatization
  - Committing to solidarity pacts within social services
  - Organizing to increase union density in the sector
  - Developing affiliations with regional labour councils
- In Quebec, we held a special meeting of local executives that brought together more than 650 people. We adopted an action plan and a policy statement on public private partnerships to continue our fight against the policies of the Charest government. Following our meeting, we organized a major province-wide tour to mobilize our members and allow an exchange of information with them.



Over the past two years, CUPE Researchers have issued over 100 research papers and briefs. These documents include papers in the following areas, all of which touch directly or indirectly upon the need for quality public services and our ongoing campaign to fight back against contracting out and privatization:

- Federal and provincial budget analyses, including alternative budgets and presentations to federal and provincial finance committees
- Participation in consultations on changes to labour codes and acts
- The impact of trade treaties on public services
- Funding of education, health care, and social services
- Reasons why publicly funded and publicly delivered health care is essential
- The “New Deal for Cities”
- Deregulation, restructuring, regionalization, and amalgamation
- Pensions and mandatory retirement including a pension trustees kit
- Investing in public infrastructure
- Electricity and energy policy including energy conservation and smart metering
- Public private partnerships
- Contracting out, privatization, and commercialization of all public services
- Wages and working conditions in child care
- How to navigate the unemployment insurance system
- The economic climate for bargaining
- Contract language analysis
- Reviews and analysis of various pieces of legislation
- Inventory of major privatization initiatives in health care
- Fact sheets on bargaining extended health benefits
- Coordinated and central bargaining structures
- The threats to Canada’s water and wastewater systems
- Bargaining workload
- Fighting concessions

- Research on corporations seeking to privatize public services
- Research on “big box” child care corporations
- Collective bargaining support on wages, benefits, job security and working conditions

The listing above is not meant to be exhaustive. It only covers the tip of the research iceberg. The scope of research reaches into almost every area of the union and almost every area of public policy. Researchers are called upon to provide expert analysis, advice and factual information that assist locals to protect their rights and to make improvements.

*Strategic Direction:*

**To fight for successor representation rights whenever our members’ jobs are contracted out or whenever a service is privatized.**

Following the work is the best way to ensure that workers remain within CUPE in the face of privatization and contracting out.

- We have had success in organizing contracted out work in B.C. where HEU has organized over 3,300 contracted out workers in Aramark, Sodexho, and Compass.
- CUPE 182 Calgary Health Region, Human Resources and Payroll – work that was contracted to Telus.
- CUPE 38 in Calgary has followed electrical utility work as it has been contracted out, first to Enmax, then to Accenture.
- In Quebec, in collaboration with the public transit and social services sectors and Crown corporations, we planned several activities successfully; rallies, flyer distribution, meetings with MNAs, etc.

*Strategic Direction:*

**To organize support in the broader labour movement for a labour movement-wide strategy to stop privatization that will include supporting our efforts to continue to represent members after services have been contracted out or privatized.**

- CUPE and the other public sector unions were instrumental in a P3 policy paper being adopted at the 2005 CLC convention. The paper contains important statements supporting public services as integral to the public good. The paper outlines what P3s are, how they undermine democracy and good governance by not being accountable to citizens, how they are bad economics by costing more than traditional procurement and not transferring any financial risk to the private sector, how they reduce quality of services and restrict access, how they are bad for workers by creating a two-tier workforce, how they use pension funds from working people against their best interests and for the profits of corporations, and why it is essential that public services be in public hands.
- We coordinated with other public sector unions to submit resolutions integral to the health of the public sector to the CLC convention. CUPE's resolutions included support for:
  - A child care system that is publicly funded and sustainable with low parent fees. There must be a child care act that guarantees standards, public accountability and that the money should be directed towards care and not towards profits.
  - A new deal for local infrastructure with governments investing in areas which have been neglected for some time e.g., municipal water treatment, roads, bridges and highways, public transportation, and recreation facilities.
  - The federal government should increase funding for post-secondary education by restoring and enhancing transfers to provinces. The government should repeal the Canada Social Transfer and replace it with dedicated, separate funding for both post-secondary education and social services.
  - A strong publicly funded and delivered health care system. The CLC should continue to pressure all levels of government and all parties to ensure that publicly funded and publicly delivered health care is accessible to all and that the principles of the *Canada Health Act* are enforced. The CLC should spearhead a campaign of affiliates, coalitions, and progressive community organizations to protect and strengthen public health care.

- On voluntary recognition agreements, the CLC will continue to oppose the use of voluntary recognition agreements when they are used by corporations to attack workers and unions. The CLC will support in every way possible the affiliates' right to follow their work in cases of contracting out, outsourcing and privatization, including the first opportunity to organize the contracted out workers.
- A disputes protocol was also debated by CLC delegates and entrenched in the CLC constitution in response to the very divisive situation created in the IWA-HEU dispute.
- We continue to work with provincial federations of labour on strengthening public services. As noted elsewhere in this paper the solidarity pacts created in New Brunswick with the assistance of the N.B. Federation of Labour was integral to making the government back down and settle a three-week strike.
- The Quebec Federation of Labour and CUPE Quebec are engaged in a very constructive fightback campaign against the Charest government's agenda to contract out work, to decentralize collective bargaining and to implement P3s for hospitals. We have been successful in stalling some of these matters and protecting the rights of CUPE members in the process.
- The B.C. Federation of Labour was integral to our fightback campaign to defend HEU workers' rights when the Campbell government introduced legislation to change the face of collective bargaining and public services.
- We are working with the Ontario Federation of Labour to learn more about P3s in all of our sectors. CUPE is coordinating with the OFL on a tour of the U.K. to assess the impacts of P3s and to hear the lessons learned from a decade of experience in the U.K. The delegation met with unionists and activists in London, Edinburgh and at the TUC Convention.

*Strategic Direction:*

**To carry out a focused and strategic initiative aimed at stopping pension fund investment in public sector privatization schemes.**

The Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System (OMERS) is one of Canada's largest pension plans and it has been a major investor in P3 projects across Canada putting public sector jobs at risk. The McGuinty government in Ontario is counting on OMERS for that investment as it pursues a P3 strategy for hospitals and other public infrastructure.

- CUPE Ontario is waging a campaign to keep OMERS funds (our members' retirement money) from being used against us. The plan calls for:
  - CUPE Ontario, CUPE locals, district councils and the Coalition for Pension Fairness to mount an intensive lobby for joint trusteeship negotiations.
  - Coordination with the NDP to raise the issue in the legislature.
  - Coordination with union representatives on the OMERS Board to challenge the plan's P3 strategy.
  - Legal action against OMERS.
  - Coordination with the Coalition for Pension Fairness, and the OFL to broaden union opposition to pension funds being used for P3s across Canada and internationally.
  - A communications strategy to raise public awareness through referenda, mobile exhibits, leaflets, community forums, and member book-offs.
- CUPE is coordinating with the CLC to respond to the federal Department of Finance consultation paper on federally regulated pension plans. We will also make our own separate submission.
- We support the CLC position that restoring faith in public and private pensions is an urgent priority. The Government of Canada should signal its commitment to this goal by appointing a Minister of State for Pensions and Retirement Security, addressing the need for higher Old Age Security (OAS) and Canada/Quebec Pension Plan (CPP/QPP) benefits, and amending Canada's bankruptcy laws to protect pensions and wages.

The work of our National Advisory Committee on Pensions is key to our struggle to control our pension plans and to stop pension plan investment in projects that threaten public sector jobs and services. Over the last two years the committee's work has covered the following areas:

- Redesigning the pension trustees' training course that has been piloted in Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan in 2005. The course provides important tools ensuring our workplace pension plans work in the best interest of workers and not our employers or governments.
- Defending our defined benefit (DB) plans against some of our employers who want defined contribution (DC) plans in our workplaces. The committee is working on easy-to-read handout materials to help members and staff defend DB plans.
- Defending our public pension social safety net. The Quebec Pension Plan (QPP) will be amended before the end of 2005. Many of the amendments aim to make us work longer to achieve the same benefit and reduce the benefits payable to survivors and disabled workers.
- The Canada Pension Plan (CPP) is also up for review in 2005. Given the events in Quebec we can expect to see many, if not all, of the same proposals tabled. The committee will assist CUPE lobby to prevent regressive amendments to the CPP, and to argue for enhancements.
- Promote our publication *Pension Talk* - a publication that provides information, arguments and practical assistance for dealing with issues that union-named trustees face at the pension board table. Topics include: how to prevent P3s in the pension portfolio; accountability to plan members and the union; fiduciary duty from a union perspective; and questions to ask your money manager. Two new *Pension Talk* issues are in the works dealing with defending our defined benefit plans and phased retirement.
- Promoting our kit designed to help pension trustees fight money managers when they come with a P3 proposal.
- Lobbying the CLC to have another pension conference within the next two years to follow up from their conference in 2004.
- Promote all of our pension courses including the basic course, "The Politics of Pensions, and Building Pension Activism."
- Participating in CUPE's first national pension trustees meeting to be held in Ottawa in November 2005.
- Lobbying the CPP Investment Board to stop making investments that fail to meet trade union values. We will discourage investing in companies that make war and war products, violate civil, human, social, environmental and labour rights. We will continue to argue that the CPP fund must not help to privatize public sector jobs and services but rather continue to partner with governments through the purchase of government bonds.

- The NEB passed policy in support of mandatory retirement and to ensure that workers have the right to retire at age 65. The committee commits to promote the policy broadly within the union. The committee will work to ensure that members and staff understand the issues around this debate, including the danger to our workplace plans, training and employment practices of employers, immigration policies, and its impact on women, immigrants and tenuous workers. Poverty cannot be overcome by forcing older workers to stay in the workforce. Rather our social safety net must be improved.
- The committee is committed to establishing a network that will share information particularly about progressive investing of our members' deferred wages.
- The committee will continue to work to ensure that our pension funds avoid investment in P3s. CUPE research, mobilization and legal challenges are working to slow down the onslaught but "alternative investment strategies" include private placement equity and infrastructure bonds, which are most often P3s. The committee will continue to press that the partnership our workplace pension plans should have with government is the purchase of government bonds.
- The committee will continue to promote the Multi-Sector Pension Plan (MSPP), our national defined benefit pension plan designed for bargaining units, regardless of size, that would not otherwise have access to a DB plan. It has grown to nearly 50 participating employers and more than 2,500 active members. The fund, at March 31, 2005 stood at just over \$4 million.
- An important first step in stopping public sectors workers' pension plans from working against them through investments in P3s is to gain joint trusteeship of the plan. In Alberta, unions participating in the Local Authorities Pension Plan (LAPP) have been trying to gain joint trusteeship by lobbying through the AFL labour coalition on pensions.
- CUPE emergency medical services members in B.C., Alberta and Ontario along with the Paramedics Association of Canada have successfully lobbied the federal government to have paramedics included in the list of public safety occupations entitling them to negotiate unreduced retirement benefits five years earlier than others with registered pension plans.

*Strategic Direction:*

**To defend our members' jobs from privatization and contracting out by negotiating improved job security provisions.**

In the face of the continued threat of contracting out and privatization, job security is one of the most important issues at many bargaining tables. The following locals have achieved improved job security for their members in the last two years. This list is not an exhaustive one but a selection only.

- CUPE 3890 Chignecto Central Regional School Board, Nova Scotia
- CUPE Hospital Workers, Nova Scotia
- CUPE 4459 Tearmann Society for Abused Women and Children, first contract, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia
- CUPE 416 and CUPE 79 (City of Toronto) improved job security including language on contracting in
- The Ontario Council of Hospital Unions reached an agreement that contained strengthened job security provisions and enhanced bumping rights.
- CUPE 109 City of Kingston, Ontario
- CUPE 543 Windsor Essex County Health Unit, Ontario
- CUPE 4705 City of Sudbury, Ontario
- CUPE 5100 Grand Erie District School Board, Ontario
- CUPE 894 Group Health Centre Sault Ste-Marie, Ontario
- CUPE 4207 Brock University, Ontario
- CUPE 4705 Manitoulin – Sudbury District Social Services Administration Board, Ontario
- CUPE 2157 Keyano College, Fort McMurray, Alberta
- CUPE 2087 Village of Warfield, B.C.



*Strategic Direction:*

**To carry out extensive internal union education about privatization and contracting out.**

- The New Ways of Winning course has been offered in 26 locations covering all 10 provinces across Canada since the March 2003 National Privatization Conference. The course is very flexible and can be offered in modules ranging from one day to five days. The weeklong version is the most popular.
- The New Ways of Winning course is currently undergoing a further revision by the National Committee on Contracting Out and Privatization in conjunction with the Union Development Department.
- A *Guide to P3s* will soon be completed. The guide is designed to accompany new CUPE education workshops on P3s and for general distribution both within CUPE and throughout the labour movement and progressive community allies.
- 300 CUPE activists attended the 2004 National Health and Safety Conference. The negative implications of privatization on occupational health and safety were a significant part of the agenda.
- CUPE Quebec distributed over 60,000 P3 pamphlets across Quebec and organized a P3 Conference in November 2004 which 700 delegates attended.

*Strategic Direction:*

**To mobilize effective opposition to free trade agreements that strengthen the rights of corporations to take over public services in Canada and that risk making privatization irreversible.**

*Strategic Direction:*

**To work in coalitions with other organizations to educate our members and other Canadian citizens about the dangers of such free trade agreements, and to build effective community-based activist networks.**

CUPE continues to be very active on international matters.

- We coordinate with a number of labour bodies including Public Services International (PSI), the CLC, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the International Transport Workers' Federation, and the Inter-American Organization of Workers (ORIT). Almost every provincial division has an active international solidarity committee.
- Our members work in agencies providing services on an international level e.g., OXFAM, CUSO, KAIROS, CoDevelopment Canada.
- We have bilateral relationships with South African Municipal Workers' Union (SAMWU), the National Education Health and Allied Workers (NEHAWU) in South Africa, UNISON representing public service workers across the United Kingdom, the Union of State Workers (ATE) in Argentina, the Municipal Workers Union of EMCALI (SINTRAEMCALI) in Colombia and a longstanding relationship with the Cuba Trade Union Central.
- We are active in fighting back against trade agreements by collaborating with allies in the community such as the Council of Canadians, Common Frontiers, the Polaris Institute and Red Vida.

*Strategic Direction:*

**To strengthen our links to unions around the world to help stop privatization globally. All chartered organizations of CUPE will be actively encouraged to contribute financially to CUPE's Global Justice Fund (formerly called the Union Aid Fund) so that we can continue to sponsor international solidarity projects that help build a global people's movement against privatization of public services.**

CUPE National supports the Global Justice Fund with a payment of around \$54,000 each year. Each year we make an appeal to members, locals and staff to contribute to the fund. The Global Justice Fund has a line of merchandise/apparel which we promote on our website, through general mailings and in other literature.

Our Global Justice Committee oversees many projects funded from our Global Justice Fund which include:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Health Care Workers' Exchange, Niagara Falls, August 2003
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Health Care Workers' Exchange planning meeting, Quito, Ecuador, July 2004
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Health Care Workers' Exchange, Buenos Aires, Argentina, November 2004
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Health Care Workers' Exchange planning meeting, Havana, Cuba, April 2005
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Health Care Workers' Exchange, Havana, Cuba, March 2006
- Gender Impacts of Privatization with SAMWU, 2002–2004
- Gender and Privatization Workshop in South Africa with SAMWU, October 2003
- Gender and Privatization Workshop in Ottawa with SAMWU, March 2004
- Joint meetings of the Global Justice Committee, the National Women's Committee and the Contracting-Out and Privatization Committee on gender and privatization, May 2004
- Guatemalan Human Rights Project, 2004
- Guatemala Radio Libertad Project, 2005–2007
- Strengthening solidarity with Cuban public sector unions
- Cuba – Not Just Tourists Project, 2004
- Cuba hurricane relief 2004
- Colombia, public sector workers front line tour against privatization, 2004
- Colombia, defending human rights with Colombian trade unionists, 2004

- El Salvador union school, 2004–2006
- Central America, empowering women maquila workers, ongoing
- Honduras, empowering women maquila workers, ongoing
- Maquila solidarity network, 2003–2005
- Chile–Saskatoon community clinic health workers project
- Peoples’ Summit Workshop against FTAA, Argentina, November 2005
- Phase 2 of the Gender and Privatization project with SAMWU, 2005–2007

*Strategic Direction:*

**To identify specific areas of work or key parts of the public sector operations and services that are being privatized, or that are already predominantly private, and that should be back in the public sector.**

- Extremely regressive provincial legislation in B.C. has fostered the contracting out of HEU members' jobs and the loss of members for HEU. But HEU is fighting back with a very aggressive organizing campaign. They are following the work to the private sector employers such as Compass, Aramark, and Sodexo and organizing those workers back into HEU. To date, they have successfully organized over 3,300 employees of these corporations into CUPE-HEU.
- In Nanaimo, we were able to convince council not to commercialize water by voting no to selling the water treatment to EPCOR.
- In a victory for CUPE public transit workers, the head of the Longueuil (Que.) transit authority, the Réseau de transport de Longueuil, has said no to P3s.
- Two major hospitals planned for Montreal will not be P3s. Quebec treasury board president Monique Jérôme-Forget made the announcement in mid-May, as part of an update on the province's P3 progress.
- The president of Montreal's public transit board is on the record saying that public private partnerships are not in the cards for public transit in Montreal. The announcement came after a lengthy campaign by members of CUPE.
- The Hamilton-Wentworth water treatment plant was brought back into the public sector after a decade of disastrous results as a P3.
- Contracting in of school board maintenance work in Newfoundland and Labrador, CUPE Local 1560.



# Conclusion

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Delegates to the 2003 CUPE convention provided clear policy direction for the union. We have met most of the challenges and continue to work on others; these challenges are not one-time challenges but are ongoing and CUPE's obligation to our members is to continue to meet them. Making CUPE a stronger and more effective union is an obligation we all share to which we must all contribute. All members, locals, councils, divisions, and staff are integral to our success and policies set by convention are integral in providing the direction for our activities over the next two years. We look forward to building on past policy directions and implementing new policies and strategies that will be provided by delegates to this 2005 convention in Winnipeg.

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