

Pay equity

Good progress achieved

NOTE : To improve understanding and facilitate reading of information concerning equity, we have consolidated the information provided to the Federal Council meetings of March and April 2003 in the same section.

Good reading!

At the March Federal Council, Lina Bonamie, before specifically discussing the activities carried out on the pay equity issue, reminded delegates of the major social issues behind the current initiative and its impacts.

The recognition of equal pay for work of equal value originates from the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, adopted in 1975. Quebec union organizations have long demanded that this right be entrenched in the various collective agreements, including those covering the Quebec public and parapublic sector.

Under political pressure from women, particularly on the occasion of the **BREAD AND ROSES MARCH**, the Government made a commitment to adopt a proactive pay equity law. This legislation is based on the premise that wage discrimination exists within organizations and that each organization must take the necessary action to eliminate it.

However, the Government wrote an exception into this law. Employers who had carried out pay equity or pay relativity work before the legislation came into force could ask the Commission de l'équité salariale (C.E.S.) to recognize that their organization had achieved pay equity. The *Conseil du trésor* made such a request.

In January 2001

The Commission decided that the job evaluation plan used by the *Conseil du trésor* was in compliance with the legislation, except for the method of estimating gaps (calculation of the wage correction to be paid between female and male jobs of equivalent value).

Despite this C.E.S. decision, which was contested before the courts by various union organizations, including the *Fédération des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec* (FIIQ), the *Conseil du trésor* agreed, in April 2001, to revise its job evaluation method and to conduct a wide-ranging pay equity exercise. All this would be done in accordance with the letters of understanding contained in the various collective agreements.

Since that time, the Intersyndicale sur l'équité salariale, an interunion body composed of the CSN, the CSQ, the FIIQ, the FTQ and the SFPQ, has worked with the *Conseil du trésor* to define a plan free of sexist bias. Under this new plan, it will be possible to make a totally equitable comparison between predominantly-female jobs and predominantly-male jobs. By the end of this work, every predominantly-female job will have been evaluated and, from now on, will receive a wage based on the qualifications required, the responsibilities assumed, the effort required by the job and the conditions under which the work is performed. The work currently in progress is therefore crucial, because it will define the Quebec government's future salary structure. Once this is defined and the various jobs are ranked, the government and the union organizations will have to ensure that this pay equity is maintained. It can therefore be foreseen that wage increases negotiated in the future could not result in a job receiving a wage different than the one prescribed on the basis of the job's value, unless there are changes to the very nature of the job. In such a case, the job would have to be re-evaluated.

The Coordinator for the province-wide negotiations, Richard Beaulé, presented the job evaluation procedure.

Mid-October 2002

The survey of employees belonging to the different job categories ended in mid-October. Throughout November, December and January, the union organizations processed this information to produce a summary document by job category. This made it possible to produce an exact profile of the duties, functions, effort, responsibilities, qualifications and working conditions for each job category to be evaluated.

The summaries were then delivered to the Intersyndicale's members so that each organization could produce an initial evaluation of the job category. A common position was also defined in interunion committees. Once harmonization was completed, the ratings agreed by the Intersyndicale were tabled with the *Conseil du trésor*, which also proceeded to table its ratings. Four parity committees were established. Each was mandated to evaluate jobs in a specific sector of activities (health and social services, education, public service).

By mid-March, approximately 150 job evaluations had been tabled. The objective was to table another hundred before the end of March. You can track the progress of the work by consulting the FIIQ Web site regularly at www.fiiq.qc.ca.

The salary scale: Pay adjustments soon

Before presenting the pay adjustments which the government is about to introduce, the executive officer in charge of negotiations and the Coordinator for the province wide negotiations presented a progress report to the delegates on the work accomplished by the *Intersyndicale sur l'équité*. This work is still forging ahead. In the past few weeks, a fifth parity job evaluation committee was set up to accelerate discussions with the *Conseil du trésor*. A team set to work with the *Conseil du trésor* to discuss the issues related to weighting of the evaluation plan and to perform various validation tests, based on the values assigned to the different job categories to date. The *Conseil du trésor* and the *Intersyndicale* will thus be able to ensure that the new evaluation plan allows the achievement of pay equity.

At this Federal Council, the delegates were also informed that the *Conseil du trésor* was preparing to apply salary corrections for Nurses and Assistant Head Nurses, calculated on the basis of the former 16-factor plan.

To understand why the *Conseil du trésor* is correcting salaries at this time, we must review the history of the current wage structure.

Since 1990...

In the early 1990s, the *Conseil du trésor* adopted a wage structure based on the relative value of jobs in relation to each other. This is known as pay relativity. Under this structure, the *Conseil du trésor* ranked each of 600 job categories on a scale of 1 to 21, according to their relative value. This value was calculated on the basis of a 16-factor job evaluation system.

The value of many jobs was negotiated between the *Conseil du trésor* and certain union organizations, particularly the FTQ, the CSQ and the SFPQ. At that time, even though some work had been initiated with the aim of evaluating nursing jobs, the FIIQ had not concluded its work with the *Conseil du trésor*. The absence of agreement did not prevent the *Conseil du trésor* from determining that the Nurse title had a rank of 15, based on the 9.2% pay increase, at the top of the scale, obtained in the 1989 negotiations. Work had also begun regarding the Baccalaurate Nurse job title, but it had been introduced too recently to allow an adequate profile.

In 1997, after the Pay Equity Act came into force, the *Conseil du trésor* asked the *Commission de l'équité salariale* (C.E.S.) to recognize that the application of the 16-factor evaluation system had enabled it to achieve pay equity. The *Conseil du trésor* filed this application under Division IX of the Pay Equity Act, which specifically provides for such a possibility.

Despite the opposition of the FIIQ and several other union organizations, the Commission, in a decision rendered in January 2001, approved almost all of the 16-factor evaluation system. However, the C.E.S. did not accept one component of this system: the method of estimating wage gaps. The *Conseil du trésor* was given until November 21, 2001 to complete its program, change the method of estimating wage gaps and proceed to wage adjustments, in application of the Pay Equity Act.

Method of estimating wage gaps

The method adopted by the *Conseil du trésor* for estimating wage gaps under its 16-factor system was as follows: for a given rank, the *Conseil du trésor* ensured that no predominantly-female job received a wage lower than the wage for the lowest-paying predominantly-male job. The FIIQ and the *Conseil du trésor* had already revised this calculation method for the nursing job categories at the conclusion of the 1998-2000 negotiations. At that time, nurses had received a 2.7% wage adjustment at the top of the scale. For this purpose, instead of using the lowest-paying male job in rank 15, the FIIQ calculated the average salary paid for predominantly-male jobs in this rank. For Baccalaureate Nurses, the FIIQ demanded and obtained that they receive the same treatment as all other job categories for which a Bachelor's degree is required. This meant a rank 20 salary, the same as for social workers. This was nothing more than

pure parity, because under the 16-factor evaluation plan, jobs classified in ranks 18, 19 and 20 received the same salary as those in rank 20.

Despite the adjustments negotiated by the FIIQ for nurses, the *Conseil du trésor* had not changed its method of estimating wage gaps for the other predominantly-female job categories. In November 2001, given that the *Commission de l'équité salariale* had ordered it to develop a new method for producing a fair comparison of wages between predominantly-female and predominantly-male jobs, the *Conseil du trésor* agreed with the *Intersyndicale sur l'équité salariale* to adopt the comprehensive method. Thus, to compare wages, the *Conseil du trésor* henceforth had to plot a wage curve from the value of all the predominantly-male jobs and their hourly rate. The wage for predominantly-female jobs was then adjusted on the basis of this curve. However, to avoid any confusion with the work on the new evaluation plan, the parties agreed to defer payment of the wage adjustments resulting from this new method.

Last December, since the work was still going on, the *Conseil du trésor* and the *Intersyndicale* agreed to defer payment of the wage adjustments. The *Conseil du trésor* considers that these amounts are due no later than June 29, 2003, unless the equity work currently in progress made it impossible to calculate other adjustments. On February 14, the *Conseil du trésor* presented its calculations and the terms of payment to the *Intersyndicale* members, given that a 90-day delay is necessary to adjust the payroll system.

In applying the 16-factor evaluation plan, the *Conseil du trésor* maintains that Nurses are in rank 15. It also determined that Assistant Head Nurses were in rank 16, Baccalaureate Nurses in Rank 19 and Baccalaureate Assistant Head Nurses in rank 20. These ratings are those of the *Conseil du trésor* and these evaluations have never been approved by the FIIQ. This explains why the *Intersyndicale's* work is still continuing.

Adjustments

Pay scale adjustments are minor for the jobs of Nurse (1.06 %) and Assistant Head Nurse (2.08 %). No adjustment is foreseen for the Baccalaureate Nurse and Baccalaureate Assistant Head Nurse job titles, given their current rank. Baccalaureate Nurses already receive the salary prescribed for rank 19, whereas Baccalaureate Assistant Head Nurses receive a salary slightly higher than the one prescribed for rank 20, even though the benchmark salary for rank 20 will be increased by 1.68%. Since the *Conseil du trésor* is proceeding with adjustments in accordance with the Pay Equity Act, it has 4 years, effective from November 21, 2001, to adjust the scales. It will therefore correct the scales in 5 equal adjustments: November 21, 2001, November 21, 2002, November 21, 2003, November 21, 2004 and November 20, 2005. The tables present the new pay rates for the Nurse and Assistant Head Nurse job titles.

NURSE

36.25 h

Echelon	Rate prescribed in the collective agreement for 2001	Adjusted rate on November 21, 2001 (+0.2111%)	Rate prescribed in the collective agreement effective January 1, 2002 (+2.5%)	Adjusted rate on January 1, 2002 (+2.5%)	Adjusted rate on November 21, 2002 (+0.2111%)	Adjusted rate on November 21, 2003 (+0.2111%)
1	620.24	621.69	635.83	637.28	638.73	640.18
2	642.71	644.16	658.66	660.11	661.56	663.01
3	667.00	668.45	683.68	685.13	686.58	688.03
4	691.29	692.74	708.69	710.14	711.59	713.04
5	716.66	718.11	734.43	736.24	737.69	739.14
6	743.49	744.94	761.98	763.43	764.88	766.33
7	771.04	772.49	790.25	791.70	793.15	795.33
8	798.95	800.76	818.89	820.70	822.51	824.33
9	828.68	830.49	849.34	851.15	852.96	854.78
10	859.13	860.94	880.51	882.33	884.14	885.95
11	891.39	893.20	913.50	915.68	917.49	919.30
12	924.01	925.83	947.21	949.03	951.20	953.38

35 h

1	598.85	600.25	613.90	615.30	616.70	618.10
2	620.55	621.95	635.95	637.35	638.75	640.15
3	644.00	645.40	660.10	661.50	662.90	664.30
4	667.45	668.85	684.25	685.65	687.05	688.45
5	691.95	693.35	709.10	710.50	711.90	713.30
6	717.85	719.25	735.70	737.10	738.50	739.90
7	744.45	745.85	763.00	764.40	765.80	767.20
8	771.40	772.80	790.65	792.05	793.45	794.85
9	800.10	801.50	820.05	821.45	822.85	824.25
10	829.50	830.90	850.15	851.55	852.95	854.35
11	860.65	862.05	882.00	883.40	884.80	886.20
12	892.15	893.55	914.55	915.95	917.35	918.75

ASSISTANT HEAD NURSE

36.25 h

Echelon	Rate prescribed in the collective agreement for 2001	Adjusted rate on November 21, 2001 (+0.2111%)	Rate prescribed in the collective agreement effective January 1, 2002 (+2.5%)	Adjusted rate on January 1, 2002 (+2.5%)	Adjusted rate on November 21, 2002 (+0.2111%)	Adjusted rate on November 21, 2003 (+0.2111%)
1	673.89	676.79	690.56	693.83	696.73	699.63
2	696.73	699.63	714.13	717.03	719.93	723.19
3	721.01	723.91	739.14	742.04	744.94	747.84
4	744.94	747.84	763.43	766.69	769.95	773.58
5	770.68	773.94	789.89	793.15	796.41	800.04
6	797.50	800.76	817.44	820.70	823.96	827.23
7	825.05	828.31	845.71	848.98	852.60	856.23
8	852.60	856.23	873.99	877.61	881.24	885.23
9	882.33	885.95	904.44	908.06	911.69	915.68
10	912.78	916.40	935.61	939.24	943.23	947.58
11	945.40	949.39	968.96	972.95	976.94	980.93
12	978.03	982.01	1002.31	1006.66	1010.65	1015.00

35 h

1	650.65	653.45	666.75	669.90	672.70	675.50
2	672.70	675.85	689.50	692.65	695.45	698.25
3	696.15	699.95	713.65	716.45	719.25	722.05
4	719.25	722.40	737.10	740.60	743.75	746.90
5	744.10	747.60	762.65	766.15	769.30	772.45
6	770.00	773.15	789.25	792.40	795.55	798.70
7	796.60	799.75	816.55	819.70	823.20	826.70
8	823.20	827.05	843.85	847.70	851.20	854.70
9	851.90	855.75	873.25	877.10	880.60	884.10
10	881.30	885.15	903.35	907.20	911.05	914.90
11	912.80	916.65	935.55	939.40	943.25	947.10
12	944.30	948.15	967.75	971.95	975.80	980.00