



COCA speaker explores industry's "open period"

Quoting Keith P. Burkhardt

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Keith Burkhardt, a partner with the labour and employment law firm Sherrard-Kuzz, spoke about the "open period" in construction labour relations during his recent keynote address at the Council of Ontario Construction Associations (COCA) annual general meeting.

"The subject of the 'open period' is of particular interest because 2013 is a bargaining year in construction labour relations," stated COCA president Ian Cunningham in a press statement.

"Keith's presentation was of great interest to everyone in attendance because he gave direct advice on the role construction employers and construction employers' associations play in the process."

Under the Ontario Labour Relations Act, most construction collective agreements — including ICI agreements — expire on April 30, 2013.

The three months leading up to the expiration of the agreements is known as the "open period", a time that is often highlighted by the bargaining of new agreements. This year appears to have a different focus as the unionized construction industry is in a period of instability with a number of unions attempting to displace (or "raid") other unions, noted the press statement.

No changes were made to COCA's executive committee for 2013 as Don Gosen of Gosen Electric, representing the Grand Valley Construction Association on COCA's Board of Directors, was re-elected as chair, Domenic Mattina of Mattina Mechanical, representing the Hamilton-Halton Construction Association, was re-elected as first vice-chair, Gary Van Bolderen of Dutch Masters Construction Services, representing the Canadian Farm Builders Association, was re-elected as second vice-chair and Robert LeChien, of the Association of Millwrighting Contractors of Ontario, was re-elected as treasurer.

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