

## CAPE Collective Bargaining and Defence Fund Survey Results – Fall 2023

- In partial fulfilment of the Members’ resolution on Strengthening and Expanding CAPE’s Defence Fund, all CAPE members were invited to complete a survey to gain insight into their experiences, knowledge, and opinions on a number of topics related to collective bargaining, labour action and the Defence Fund. For more information about the Defence Fund, [please click here](#).
- CAPE conducted the survey with n=1,287 CAPE members between August 11<sup>th</sup> and September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- Members from across numerous departments and occupational groups participated.
- Nearly three-quarters (72%) of respondents consider themselves familiar with collective bargaining, and 6 in 10 say they have participated in a ratification vote. Fewer members have shared their bargaining priorities (41%) or participated in a tentative agreement session (34%); while 3 in 10 have not been involved in any way.
- Nearly half of members (47%) say that they have never been involved in labour action in any way. The most common participation among members is publicly expressing their support for a negotiation team, though before they joined CAPE (24%).
- In the future, the majority of respondents are interested in publicly supporting their bargaining team, and the majority are interested in work to rule action or supporting another union’s labour actions. Support is somewhat lower for participating in a strike within their own union.
- Two-thirds of members (67%) are interested in learning how CAPE determines bargaining priorities. No other topic has uptake from a majority of members, though there is significant interest in learning about what is “in scope” for bargaining; bargaining strategies; the collective bargaining process in the federal public sector environment; potential risks for unions and workers in collective bargaining; how impasses are resolved; and building leverage. Only 9% say they are not interested to learn more about collective bargaining.
- Most members (74%) prefer to get collective bargaining information by newsletter, and over half (55%) on CAPE’s website. Fewer would prefer a webinar (38%) or another online course (27%).
- The vast majority of members (85%) say they participated in a ratification vote in June 2023; however, fewer say they were satisfied with the agreement (61%).
- Familiarity with the terms ‘binding arbitration’ (82%) and ‘conciliation and strike’ (73%) among members is as high (or higher) as with collective bargaining overall (72%).

- A soft majority (57%) say they have enough information to make an informed decision between binding arbitration and conciliation and strike.
- In terms of members' interest in taking job action, protecting pensions, wages keeping pace with inflation, a potential workforce adjustment and telework/work from home provisions were the top four issues most likely to motivate members to take action.
- Longstanding members (10+ years as CAPE members) were more likely to say that they would not want to take any kind of job action compared to newer members; though many said they would support such action if the membership was highly engaged and mobilized or if they believed CAPE has the financial capacity to support one.
- A significant number of members say that their level of support for conciliation and strike as a form of impasse resolution has changed in recent years; with some becoming more supportive and others becoming more opposed.
- Members were divided on how CAPE should choose a method of impasse resolution, with a survey being slightly more popular but many members preferring a survey and a formal vote.
- Only 12% of respondents say they participated in the Defence Fund knowledge event in June 2023; however, most of event attendees who did attend felt that the event impacted their perception of binding arbitration and conciliation and strike.
- Participants have high confidence in CAPE's current ability to negotiate a fair collective agreement but indicate that CAPE has work to do to gain members' confidence and build the organizational capacity to carry out a successful strike action.
- Nearly 4 in 10 respondents say they are familiar with CAPE's Defence Fund, including one-third who only describe their familiarity as 'somewhat'; furthermore, one-quarter say are not familiar at all with it.
- Following reading a brief description of the Defence Fund, a strong majority (69%) would describe it as very (33%) or somewhat important (36%).
- Members were asked to review a list of potential uses of the Defence Fund and describe each as either 'must be covered', 'would prefer to be covered, but not necessary', or 'should not be covered'. Only two of the potential uses tested are considered a 'must' among the majority of members; that is, financial support for members in the event of labour action (72%) and legal defence of members' rights (61%).
- Excluding respondents who indicated they were unfamiliar with the Defence Fund, over half (56%) of the remaining respondents say that they are not familiar with how it is currently financed. While 4 in 10 say that they are familiar, 36% would say they are 'somewhat familiar'.



- To understand members' perceptions of the Defence Fund balance, members were asked their satisfaction with the current balance, their impression of whether it is properly funded, and their preference towards the future balance.
- Half of members are somewhat (28%) or very (23%) satisfied with the current balance of the Defence Fund, and feel it is adequately (35%) or under (20%) funded. 6 in 10 would like to see the Defence Fund either maintain its current balance (20%) or grow in the future (43%). Few members are dissatisfied (12%), feel it is over-funded (15%), or would see it shrink/dismantled (16%).