



**GPMC**  **NMC**

General Presidents' Maintenance  
Committee for Canada

National Maintenance Council  
for Canada

**LEADERS IN UNIONIZED MAINTENANCE**



## THE GPMC SUCCESS STORY

“Our maintenance agreements, which represent 13 separate unions, provide stable, long-term labour/management relations with a process that’s about as simplified as you can get. We meet owners’ needs in ways that would be impossible with 13 separate agreements. We also provide construction workers with long-term jobs where they can make good money in a work environment with very few grievances.”

— Budrow Tozer,  
Chairman, UA  
International (NB)

The GPMC/NMC is an alliance of international unions that negotiates and administers labour agreements designed to facilitate the maintenance of industrial plants across Canada by providing single contracts covering 13 building trade unions.

The alliance provides stable, long-term agreements for routine industrial maintenance and short-term agreements for plant shutdowns and intermittent maintenance. Contracts can cover from one to 13 trades, and all tradespeople covered by the agreements work under the same terms. The agreements respect the basic monetary terms negotiated by the 13 unions in the alliance, and feature a cooperative, streamlined grievance process. They also incorporate a clause ensuring that there will be no strikes or lockouts to disrupt essential maintenance activities.

The GPMC/NMC was created in 1952 and negotiated its first contract to cover maintenance work at what is now the Shell refinery in Sarnia, Ontario. The concept quickly took hold and the number of maintenance agreements grew steadily until the mid-1980s recession. Rapid expansion resumed in the 1990s. During the first decade of the new century, the number of work hours covered by maintenance agreements doubled as projects in British Columbia,

Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and Newfoundland came online.

Today the GPMC/NMC administers collective agreements in eight out of 10 Canadian provinces and serves a range of industrial sectors including oil sands extraction, oil refining, petrochemicals, mining, electricity generation, pulp and paper, natural gas processing, offshore oil and gas processing, steel production and consumer product production.

More than 120 employers make use of GPMC/NMC agreements, which account for over 28 million work hours a year—the equivalent of 14,000 full-time, high-paying jobs for skilled building trades workers.

As it celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2012, the GPMC/NMC alliance is responsible for an increasingly significant fraction of Canada’s economy: the hours devoted to maintenance in any given year easily match those devoted to megaprojects that are heralded as major economic drivers.



## A SAMPLE OF GPMC/NMC LONG-TERM CLIENTS

|                             |            |                 |
|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------|
| <b>Shell Canada</b>         | ON, AB     | <b>60 years</b> |
| <b>Suncor/Petro-Canada</b>  | ON, AB     | <b>59 years</b> |
| <b>Dow Chemical</b>         | AB         | <b>51 years</b> |
| <b>Mosaic</b>               | SK         | <b>50 years</b> |
| <b>Canadian Fertilizers</b> | AB         | <b>36 years</b> |
| <b>Imperial Oil</b>         | ON, NS, AB | <b>36 years</b> |
| <b>Syncrude</b>             | AB         | <b>34 years</b> |
| <b>New Brunswick Power</b>  | NB         | <b>29 years</b> |
| <b>Irving Oil</b>           | NB         | <b>20 years</b> |
| <b>U.S. Steel</b>           | ON         | <b>18 years</b> |
| <b>Spectra Energy</b>       | BC         | <b>12 years</b> |
| <b>Albian Sands Energy</b>  | AB         | <b>12 years</b> |

## FAST FACTS

GPMC/NMC maintenance agreements deliver:

- ▶ GPMC/NMC collective agreements bring skilled tradespeople from up to 13 unions together under a single agreement. Employers can negotiate a single set of terms and conditions that apply to all of the construction tradespeople doing maintenance at client facilities.
- ▶ The agreements are designed to ensure stable, long-term labour relations with no strikes, walkouts or lockouts to disrupt critical maintenance activities at plants producing commodities such as oil, gas and electricity that are central to the Canadian economy.
- ▶ GPMC/NMC agreements respect the basic monetary terms of existing building trades agreements, and the alliance's labour relations system ensures that there are few grievances and inter-trade jurisdictional disputes.
- ▶ The GPMC/NMC alliance taps into a large pool of highly skilled tradespeople who can meet the maintenance needs of Canada's industrial sector.
- ▶ The alliance offers stable long-term employment for thousands of Canadian construction workers and is responsible for almost 28 million hours of maintenance work annually.

“The GPMC is responsible for almost 30 million work hours a year but it functions smoothly and in a very understated fashion. We have a good working relationship with the committee and often turn to it to solve problems and to assist with determining strategic directions for the future.”

— **Randy Stefanizyn,**  
Syncrude (AB)





## PROJECT OWNERS

“Before we started working with the NMC about 30 years ago, we had multiple contracts and a lot of work stoppages and walkouts. Thanks to this agreement, all the unions are under one umbrella and we have continuity. We can interact with all of the trades consistently, our workplaces are more harmonious, and we see relatively few grievances.”

— **Charlie Ryan,**  
New Brunswick  
Power (NB)

The GPMC/NMC provides project owners with access to a large pool of the highly skilled tradespeople needed to maintain complex industrial facilities. The alliance’s multi-trade agreements simplify contract negotiations and ongoing labour relations, ensuring a stable work environment with no strikes or lockouts that could disrupt critical maintenance activities.

The alliance’s managers are international representatives who hold long-term positions and have a grasp of the big picture. They provide continuity and stability and are able to deal directly with clients that need stable labour relations to ensure that maintenance is completed competently and on time.

The GPMC/NMC recognizes the importance of maintenance trades to industry and the economy, and is able to partner with owners’ associations to develop cutting-edge approaches to deal with industry’s changing needs and to plan for its future requirements.

## MAINTENANCE CONTRACTORS

The GPMC/NMC is a pragmatic and flexible organization that responds quickly to the needs of contractors. The leaders of the alliance are long-serving international representatives who contribute their knowledge and wisdom to managing the relationships between owners, contractors and tradespeople. They understand the constraints that contractors work under and are able to respond quickly to upcoming issues such as plant shutdowns or shift issues.

The alliance’s leadership can deal directly with all of the stakeholders and negotiate cutting-edge agreements designed to build partnerships between owners, contractors and tradespeople. The agreements reduce disputes between trades and foster good labour relations with a grievance process that’s designed to satisfy all parties.

GPMC/NMC staff can use their knowledge and experience to provide contractors with valuable information they can use to negotiate with clients.



# GPMC AGREEMENTS DELIVER VALUE FOR OWNERS, CONTRACTORS, THE CONSTRUCTION LABOUR FORCE AND THE COUNTRY



## MAINTENANCE WORKFORCE

GPMC/NMC maintenance agreements provide skilled tradespeople with the chance to earn good money in stable, long-term jobs. Many union members are attracted to these jobs because they offer more security than standard construction jobs, which may disappear once projects are complete.

While most of the construction industry is looking for a mobile workforce able to move from region to region as construction activity peaks and declines, the maintenance industry requires skilled tradespeople looking for long-term employment in one location.

Many tradespeople turn to jobs under GPMC/NMC maintenance agreements when new construction slows down. There is always maintenance and supplementary work to do, and the agreements have been in place for a long time and have proven themselves. Employment under the agreements is also attractive because the GPMC/NMC adopts the basic monetary terms negotiated by its member unions.

“One of the great benefits of the General Presidents’ Maintenance Committee and the National Maintenance Council for Canada is they have harmonized 13 international trade unions into a single multi-trade agreement. These collective agreements have proven their value over time and continue to provide industry with stability and security in a complex marketplace.”

— **Cory R. Channon, Assistant to the International President/Boilermakers International (AB), Secretary Treasurer of the GPMC/NMC**

“Before we started working with the GPMC, dealing with the various union locals and their different agreements was inefficient and often led to misunderstanding and misinterpretation. With the General Presidents’ Agreement (GPA)—put in place under the leadership of the GPMC—all parties are signatory to one agreement that union locals and contractors understand. The GPA allows both contractors and unions to ensure labour stability while minimizing and eliminating disputes. When issues do arise, the GPMC is there to assist in managing them; the message between labour and management is consistent and relations are a lot smoother. The GPMC has been critical to the success of the oil and gas business on the Scotian Shelf.”

— **Mark Healy, P.Eng., President, AMEC Black and McDonald (NS)**



## TWO AGREEMENTS TO MEET INDUSTRY NEEDS

GPMC/NMC agreements provide stable labour relations for the maintenance sector, which often plays a central role in ensuring uninterrupted production at facilities that deliver commodities such as oil, gas and electricity that are critical to the economy.

Through the agreements, clients, employers and unions work in partnership to ensure that these critical maintenance activities can be carried out in an efficient and timely fashion.

- Owners ensure that the maintenance agreement is used for all maintenance work; in some cases, they specify the maintenance agreement in bid documents.
- The GPMC/NMC tailors the basic agreement to meet specific project needs, provides a uniform labour relations system and ensures uniform working conditions.
- All tradespeople work under the same agreement. The standard workweek consists of 40 hours, rates are competitive, and work conditions, including shifts, are tailored to meet the demands of maintenance work.

The GPMC/NMC delivers two types of stand-alone maintenance agreement.

**The General Presidents' Maintenance Agreement (GPMA)** *(through the General Presidents' Maintenance Committee for Canada)*

Tailored for situations in which a single contractor provides full or supplemental maintenance services at an industrial site for a year or more, the GPMA provides a multi-trade agreement covering between four and 13 trades, depending on the needs of the contractor and owner.

**The National Maintenance Agreement (NMA)** *(through the National Maintenance Council for Canada)*

Designed for situations in which two or more contractors provide short-term or intermittent maintenance, such as seasonal shutdowns of industrial facilities, the NMA provides a multi-trade collective agreement for companies employing from one to 13 trades.

“Jacobs has been working with the GPMC since the 1960s; between 80 and 90 percent of our people work under the maintenance agreements. For us, the management of the GPMC is its biggest asset. Many of the administrative staff have been with the committee for years, and their knowledge and wisdom is key to maintaining long-term relationships with clients, contractors and union locals.”

— **Brett Horan,**  
**Manager of Labour Relations, Jacobs Industrial Services Ltd. (Canada-wide)**



### For more information contact:

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