

YOU DIDN'T TAKE NOTES?
HERE'S A QUICK SUMMARY OF

PLA advantages

A PLA GIVES YOU:

Standardized conditions and established wages. Labor costs are stable and contractors can bid a project with no guesswork.

A reliable supply of talented and skilled, local workers for the duration of the project.

Apprenticeship training programs.

A no-strike, no-lockout commitment. Binding procedures for settling disputes. You are protected against work stoppages.

Little chance of cost overruns.

Flexibility in meeting local conditions and any special project needs.

State laws permitting PLAs offer lower workers' compensation premiums.

And more...

In a recent letter to Robert A. George, former President of the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO, Douglas B. MacDonald, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority, had this to say:

"We stand precisely by our statements that achievements on our project to date - on project progress, project quality, schedule performance, cost control and safety - stand as a tribute to the millions of hours of craft labor invested at Deer Island under the BHP (Boston Harbor Project) Labor Agreement.

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Douglas B. MacDonald, Executive Director of
The Massachusetts Water Resource Authority

For more information and for a copy of Public Sector Project Labor Agreements - An Objective Review contact
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PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS

**For Fast Relief from
Construction
Project Headaches**

Efficient, Reliable, Long-Lasting



We have help for what could be a headache that won't go away

IT'S A CONSTRUCTION PROJECT, AND IT'S ALL YOURS.

A taxpayer's construction project.

Visions of bids...

...contract negotiations

...cost overruns

...money-eating delays

...haunt you.

YOUR HEAD BEGINS TO THROB.

How are you going to stay within budget...

...ensure quality and

...complete work on schedule?

You've heard the horror stories. The media love to charge "mismanagement" on public works jobs.

YOUR SCALP SEEMS TO BE TOO TIGHT FOR YOUR HEAD.

Construction headaches come in all sizes...

...a city center complex

...a college library

...a hospital

...a waste water treatment plant

...an airport expansion.

You know whenever and wherever public funds are used for construction, pressure and accountability come with the territory.

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS?

A project Labor Agreement (PLA) is the best way to avoid construction headaches, because a PLA guarantees you quality assurance and craftwork every step of the way.

A PLA also guarantees you construction without surprises - more headache relief.

READ ON.

We'll answer your questions, clear up misunderstandings, and give you the facts you need to do your job.

Q You Have Questions...

WHAT IS A PLA?

A comprehensive pre-hire collective bargaining agreement. That means basic terms and conditions for labor are established in advance for everyone involved in the project: the public sector employer, contractors and subcontractors, and the labor force.

AND?

Under a PLA, contractors make exact bids. Costs are established for labor. Those costs include wages and benefits including health insurance, and workers' compensation. No surprises!

NO SURPRISES AT ALL?

None. A typical PLA includes no-strike, no lock-out agreements. And for additional headache relief, a PLA includes procedures for settling - quickly - any problems or disputes that might develop during the project.

WHAT ABOUT MY BUDGET?

Your budget is safe with a PLA. There are no hidden costs and no cost overruns. You won't be confronted with unexpected wage demands or disputes halfway through the project. One more headache eliminated.

DO I HAVE TO USE UNION CONTRACTORS?

No! Public works PLAs never restrict bidding solely to union contractors. A PLA is available to any contractor who will accept its terms. It's the contractor's decision.

UNION LABOR?

No again. Public-owner PLAs do not exclude nonunion labor.

BUT I WANT TO NEGOTIATE FOR LOWER WAGES.

You like headaches? Lower wages can cause problems further down the line. Lower wages mean lower productivity and higher accident rates. Both lead to cost overruns. Lower wages also mean you're going to see all kinds of hidden costs popping out - good headache material. There are no hidden costs with a PLA. Everything is settled before construction begins, right up front for the life of the project... including any wage increases.

SPEAKING OF NEGOTIATIONS...

No fancy footwork here. Most PLAs are drafted by project or construction managers retained by the public entity.

AND THE UNION?

The union has input like all other parties to a PLA. It does not lead or dominate the proceedings.

THIS IS PUBLIC SECTOR CONSTRUCTION. IS A PLA LEGAL?

Very legal. In a major 1993 decision (the Boston Harbor case), the United States Supreme Court ruled in favor of public sector PLAs, affirming that private and public owners can decide for themselves when a construction project should utilize a PLA.

HOW LONG HAVE PLAs BEEN AROUND?

PLAs have been used for more than 60 years. They have an impressive record.

IMPRESS ME.

For starters: the Grand Coulee Dam; the Shasta Dam; the Cape Kennedy Space Center; the Oak Ridge, Tenn., nuclear research facility; O'Hare Airport; Boston Harbor clean up; Detroit's Cobo Hall; Logan Airport's remodeling; a Veterans Administration Medical Center, Tenn.; and Los Angeles' LRT (Light Rapid Transit) system. Those are some of the big names, but PLAs are used routinely in hundreds of smaller construction projects at state, county, and municipal levels. Every project, big or small, had enormous headache potential (by the way, how is your headache?) but in each case, a PLA administered in advance eased the pain.

ARE PLAs USED ONLY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR?

Not at all. Corporations, large and small have managed their construction projects with PLAs...corporations like General Motors, British Petroleum, Walt Disney and Toyota.

PLAs, Congress, and the U.S. Supreme Court— an objective review

Congress endorsed PLAs in 1959, when it amended the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) to reflect policies and practices in use for privately and publicly funded construction since the 1930s.

In a 1993 landmark decision, the Supreme Court ruled that allowing states and their agencies to use PLAs "promotes the legislative goals that animated the passage of the [1959 amendments] for the construction industry..."

The Court reached that crucial decision in the *Building & Construction Trades Council etc. v. Associated Builders & Contractors of Mass./R.I.*, generally called the Boston Harbor case. With that decision, the Court affirmed the equal rights of private and public owners to operate under the construction labor policies framed by Congress.

You've had a quick course on PLAs; now you need an in-depth resource. For a comprehensive examination of the policy arguments and legal issues concerning PLAs, including the impact of the Boston Harbor decision, we recommend our recent publication, *Public Sector Project Labor Agreements - An Object Review*. [The Review also covers (and demolishes) biased and misleading charges made against PLAs.]

The more you learn about PLAs, the better your job looks.

You can get moving on the project. You can cancel the special budget appropriation for wall-to-wall aspirin. You can even laugh at your colleagues' horror stories.

And we're available to answer all your questions.

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...We Have Answers

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