Conventions at a Glance

What is the difference between Conventions and Conferences?

PSAC Conventions	PSAC Conferences

Types of conventions
 	
• Component Conventions
• Regional Conventions
• PSAC National Convention
	Examples of Conferences
	
	• Regional and National Equity-seeking group conferences:
	  • Women
	  • Access (Members with disabilities)
	  • Racially Visible
	  • Indigenous
	  • Pride (2SLGBTQIA+)
	• National Health & Safety Conference
	• Regional and national bargaining conferences

Frequency Every three years (triennial)	**Frequency** Equity-seeking group conferences, Health & Safety Conference: every three years Bargaining conferences – according to the timelines set for the bargaining process

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PSAC Conventions	PSAC Conferences
Authority Conventions are the supreme decision-making body of the union. They provide a forum for members to set the vision and the orientation for the union, component, region. Have the authority to: • elect union officers • Review, amend, adopt budgets • adopt dues (exception: PSAC regional conventions) • amend the Constitution (PSAC National) or Bylaws (Component, Region) • <u>discuss and adopt policy</u> papers (reports on issues facing the union and the union's plan to address these issues) • debate and vote on resolutions • debate and vote on reports from national PSAC conferences (e.g. National Health & Safety, National Equity Conferences) • debate and adopt strategic plans	**Authority** Conferences are usually a chance to learn, network and strategize around important union and social issues. Have the authority to • adopt policy papers or resolutions May have the authority to • refer papers and resolutions to the PSAC National Triennial Convention via the Alliance Executive Committee (AEC). • AEC will action as many adopted resolutions as possible. • AEC will forward resolutions that require constitutional change or are controversial to the PSAC Triennial Convention. The National Equity Conferences have the authority to • elect delegates to the PSAC National Triennial Convention • Reference: PSAC Constitution, Section 19, Sub-Section 7 National bargaining conferences have the authority to: • review bargaining proposals • establish bargaining priorities

Section 17 of the PSAC Constitution sets out convention proceedings. Component, Regional and PSAC Conventions are similar.	• develop mobilization strategies • elect bargaining teams • Reference: PSAC Regulation 15b

Other conventions that PSAC may participate in:

- Canadian Labour Congress convention
- Provincial labour federation conventions
- Public Services International convention

Rules of Order

At PSAC we use rules of order to ensure an efficient and democratic process for discussion and decision-making, including voting. The convention chair is responsible for ensuring that participants follow the rules of order.

PSAC uses its own PSAC Convention Rules of Order at National Triennial Convention and at Regional Conventions. Some Components may adopt their own, different convention rules of order.

Convention Rules of Order include:

- a delegate must be recognized by the chair before they can speak
- a time limit on speakers
- delegates cannot interrupt when another delegate is speaking to a resolution, unless they are raising a point of order or a point of privilege
- that no delegate speaks more than once on a motion until all others have had their say
- procedures for speaking to a motion, referring a motion, point of order, challenge or appeal the chair and adjournment, etc.

How does voting work at convention?

There are two types of votes.

1) Most resolutions: Simple majority vote (51% of votes)

2) Resolutions calling for constitutional/bylaw change: 2/3 majority vote for the change in the resolution to pass.

The voting method can vary:

- show of hands (all in favour, all opposed)
- voice vote (ayes and nays)
- standing vote (delegates must stand up to indicate their vote)
- recorded vote (ayes, nays, abstentions are counted and recorded)
- secret ballot

Who are the participants at a convention?

- **Component delegate entitlements** are outlined in the applicable constitution/bylaws and may vary from Component to Component.

- **PSAC Regional Convention delegate entitlement** is outlined in the PSAC Constitution, Section 16, Sub-Section (6) and in the regional by-laws.

- **PSAC Triennial Convention** participants include:
    - Component delegates and observers
    - Area Council delegates and observers
    - PSAC National Board of Directors
    - Delegates elected to represent equity-seeking groups (10)
    - Chairperson (PSAC National President)

What is the delegate entitlement to the PSAC Triennial Convention?

- Per section 19 of the PSAC Constitution, each **Component** shall be entitled to elect delegates on the following basis:
    - ➢ One delegate for the first 100-400 members;
    - ➢ One additional delegate for each additional 400 members or major fraction thereof.
- **Directly Chartered Local** shall be entitled to elect delegates on the following basis:
    - o One delegate for the first 100–400 members; and
    - o One additional delegate for each additional 400 members or major fraction thereof.
    - o For the purposes of representation at any National Triennial Convention of the PSAC, DCLs of a region who don't have enough members for entitlement to convention as noted above, can group-up under the jurisdiction of a REVP and elect delegates on the following basis:
    - o One delegate for the first 100–400 members from DCLs of a region as defined above; and
    - o One additional delegate for each additional 400 members or major fraction thereof.
- **Area Council**: per Section 14 of the PSAC Constitution, each Area Council shall be entitled to elect and send to any National Convention

of the PSAC one (1) delegate. This is provided they have met the constitutional requirement of meeting four times per year and forward meeting minutes within 30 days of their meetings.

- **Equity Delegates**: ten (10) representatives are entitled to delegate credentials at convention; two (2) representing each of the following groups: representatives of women, racially visible; aboriginal; gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender; members with disabilities (per Section 19 of the PSAC Constitution).

- Conventions usually feature a number of guest speakers.

Roles & responsibilities of convention participants

Understanding the different roles of convention participants will give you some insight on what you're supposed to do, and what you can expect from others in attendance.

Role	Responsibilities
Delegate	• being informed on the issues • speaking to issues and voting on recommendations during debates • voting and/or standing as a candidate participating in elections • promoting the views and concerns of the members they represent • reporting back to those members
Observer	• being informed on the issues • promoting the views and concerns of the members they represent • reporting back to those members. Observers may, under some circumstances, also act as alternates to delegates who, due to unforeseen circumstances or for accommodation reasons, must step down from their responsibilities as delegate. NOTE: This is **not** allowable purely for the purposes of sharing delegate responsibilities or letting observers obtain delegate experience.
Chairperson	• impartially apply the Rules of Order and procedures adopted by convention • not take part in debate while also acting as the chairperson • may assist the convention with rules and procedures • generally does not vote on matters before the convention
PSAC Staff	Assist in the administration of the convention, including:

	• addressing membership logistical needs • providing documents • taking notes • counting votes • distributing information • tiling doors (ensuring no one enters or leaves the room when a vote is taking place)

Convention Committees

National PSAC Convention committees are made up of convention delegates and their composition varies from region to region and component to component.

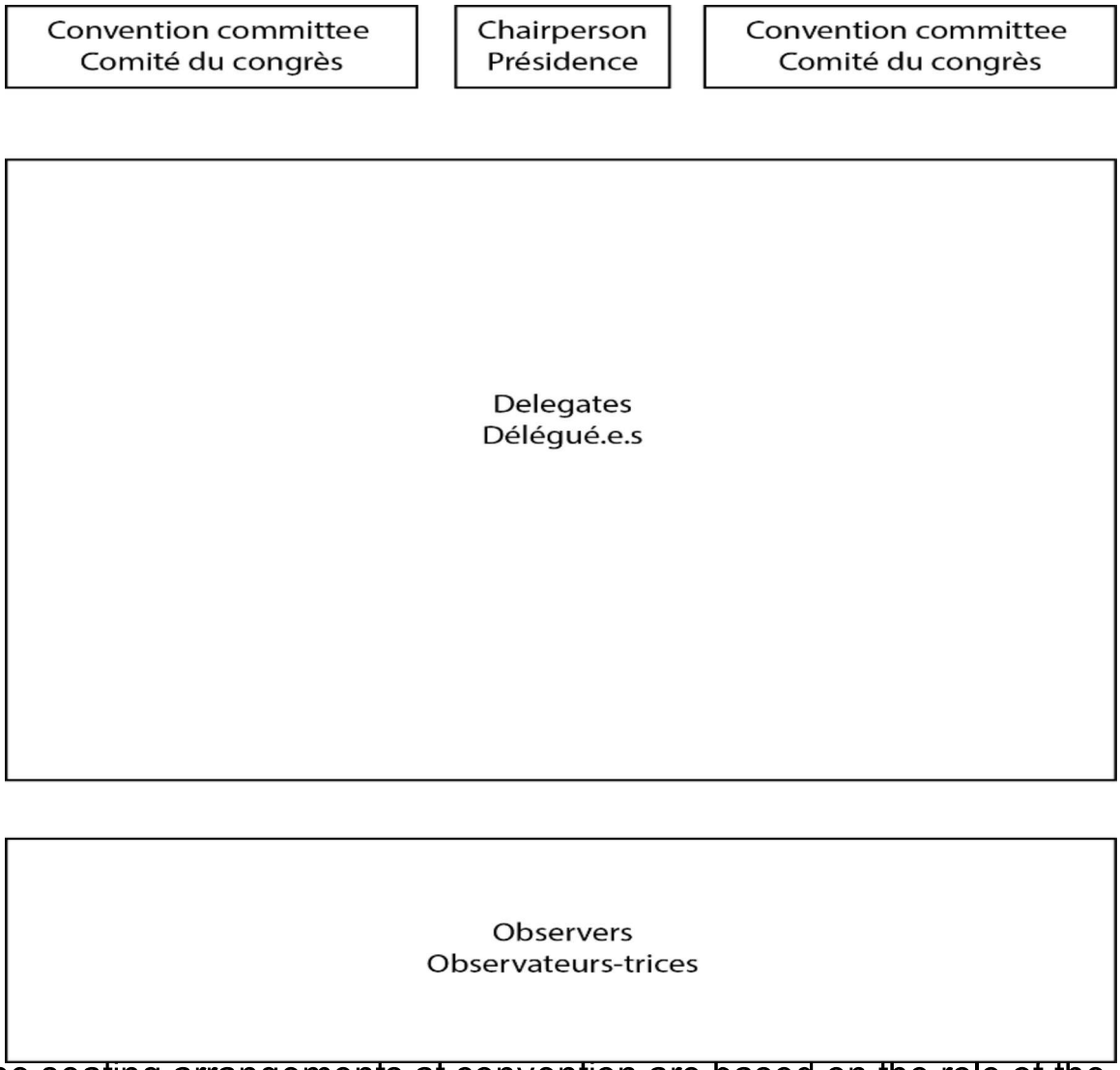
At PSAC National Triennial Convention, each component is entitled to appoint a representative to each committee. In addition, the PSAC President appoints: one Area Council representative, one Directly Chartered Local representative and one Equity representative

Convention Committee	Roles & responsibilities

• **Constitution**
• **General Resolutions**
• **Collective Bargaining**
• **Finance**
	• review resolutions submitted by authorized submitting bodies related to the subject of their committee
	• submit a report to convention with recommendations on whether the resolution should be adopted by the convention.
	
	• Recommendations state:
	  • concurrence (*they agree with the resolution*) or non-concurrence (*they don't agree with the resolution*)
	  • the rationale that supports their recommendation
	  • occasionally the names of the committee members who strongly disagree with their committee's recommendation.

Credentials Committee	• report on the number of delegates at convention. • The delegate count is used for vote tabulation during recorded votes and elections.
Nominations Committee	• assist the Election Chairperson with conducting the elections at conventions. • members of a Nominations Committee must be neutral and not visibly support any of the candidates.

What Convention Looks Like



The seating arrangements at convention are based on the role of the participant.

- When reporting, each **Convention Committee** will be at the front of the room.

- **Delegates** are usually grouped by the body they represent (i.e., Local, Component, Area Council). For the PSAC National Triennial Convention, a lottery held during Convention Committee meetings in early February, determines the seating arrangements, by group, at convention.

- **Observers** The observer section is usually separated from the delegate section by a rope or short room divider.

- **Staff** will be found in all areas, depending on their assigned responsibilities.

When do convention participants meet?

The circumstances under which convention participants meet depend on the work at hand.

- Convention committee members may meet months or days in advance of the convention as well as at the convention itself.

- Delegates and Observers may caucus (meet) when convention is not sitting to develop strategies on issues of importance to the groups they represent, i.e., Component caucuses, regional caucuses, equity caucuses, etc.

- Delegates also gather at convention for the plenary session and for elections.