

Part 3. Japan's Labour Relations Commission System

I Roles of Labour Relations Commissions

1. Outline of labour relations commissions

The Constitution of Japan guarantees workers the right to organize, to bargain collectively, and to act collectively. To protect these rights and properly adjust labour-management relations, Japan has Trade Union Law and Labour Relations Adjustment Law. Based on these statutes, Labour Relations Commissions (LRCs) were established in order to resolve labour-management collective disputes in a simple, swift and correct manner. As organs in charge of general workers, Japan has two types of LRCs as follows:

- i) Central Labour Relations Commission (CLRC) (national government's organ; in Tokyo); and
- ii) Prefectural labour relations commissions (prefectural-level organs; total 47 commissions).

Prefectural LRCs handle labour disputes at their responsible prefectural levels, while the CLRC handles nationwide or important disputes, and reviews the decisions of prefectural LRCs. Both types of LRCs are independent administrative agencies, free from the control of the prefectural governor or the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare.

Each LRC distributes an equal number of its seats to members representing employers, workers and public interests. CLRC members are appointed by the Prime Minister, while prefectural LCR members are appointed by the prefectural governor.

Since seafarers are subject to the Mariners Law and have totally different working environments, their labour disputes are handled by the Labour Relations Commission for Seafarers, an organ under the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport.



The General Assembly of the Central Labour Relations Commission