



# Report of the National Executive Board

**REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD**

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**SUBMITTED TO THE**  
**TWENTY-FIFTH QUADRENNIAL**  
**NATIONAL CONVENTION**

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# **Report of the National Executive Board to the 2015 National Convention**

The following is the National Executive Board's (NEB) report to the 2015 National Convention. This report contains relevant information that will give each delegate an overall view of the work that has been accomplished these past few years.

Convention delegates are tasked with creating structures, adopting policies and electing the officers that will guide the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) for the coming term. The decisions we make over the next five days will impact CUPW members for many years to come. It is our responsibility to ensure that CUPW members will have a secure future with decent jobs and healthy working conditions.

Our convention provides the democratic forum that our union requires to report on its activities during the past term, take stock of our current situation, and make the necessary decisions for planning the future.

Each convention takes place in a specific context that needs to be taken into account. This one is no exception. And we are in the thick of things. At the time of writing this report, February 2015, our "Save Canada Post" campaign is gaining momentum, the fight to get rid of the Harper government is building across the country, and we are starting to prepare for the upcoming urban and rural negotiations with Canada Post. All these struggles are political in nature. Their goal is maintaining a just and fair society, with a human face. The past term, like all previous ones, was one of action. We should be proud of it!

Over the past few years, we have been able to consolidate our work as a whole and develop union strategies that reflect the union's orientation. It would be helpful at this point to recall what this orientation is, as stated in the preamble to our National Policies:

*“In so doing, CUPW rejects all forms of trade unionism that fail to pose the basic division between the interests of workers and the interests of the employer. CUPW characterizes its orientation as a Union which, in an uncompromising fashion, pursues the class interests of its members, resisting all attempts by employers and governments to weaken or destroy the workers’ movement.”*

In the current political, economic and social context, we need to share and reaffirm CUPW’s orientation. During this term, the foundation and conditions of the struggle for the coming years have been set, for both our union and the labour movement, in the social, political and economic arenas, at home and abroad.

We have a vision of the future and we know what direction we want to take. At convention we will decide how best to continue this work.

This convention also marks our union’s 50th anniversary, hence the theme:

**“50 years of solidarity... the struggle continues.”**

This convention is an opportunity to recall our struggles since 1965. Remembering the highlights of our union struggles and our determination to protect our universal, public postal service, and reliving the key moments from previous rounds of negotiations, our strikes and our victories over half a century is always a good exercise. It’s also nice to see once again those members who played an active role in these struggles and stood firm against the employer. That is why our theme refers to solidarity. Without solidarity, nothing is possible! Building solidarity through direct action is the very basis of our orientation. And we must be proud! This convention is an opportunity to show how proud we are to be CUPW members.

Have a good convention.

Denis Lemelin,  
on behalf of the National Executive Board

The aim of the NEB's report is to provide an overall view of the union's work over the past few years, to point out how we have responded to the various situations, and to share the strategies we have developed to protect our public and universal postal service.

This report is based on the various reports prepared by the NEB throughout the term, i.e. the discussion papers for the Regional Presidents' Meetings and the National Presidents' Meeting, as well as the pre-convention discussion paper that was sent to locals in July 2014. In each case, these documents enabled us to take stock of our work, refocus, and strengthen our work priorities and our plan of action.

## **(I) Overview of our Work During the Past Term**

Our fight to protect our universal public postal service is one that we have been waging for decades. It is part of our history and our daily union life. Since October 2011, this struggle has been at the centre of everything that we do. It affects all facets of our union work, from collective bargaining to political action, to defending members on a daily basis. Here is an overview of what we accomplished during the past term.

- (a) First Year of the Term: Finalizing Negotiations for Both the Urban and Rural Units
- (b) Second Year of the Term: Implementing the Collective Agreements and Dealing with Other Challenges
- (c) Third Year of the Term: Our "Save Canada Post" Action Plan
- (d) Recent Months

### **(a) First Year of the Term: Finalizing Negotiations for Both the Urban and Rural Units**

Looking back, we will remember that the last convention took place in the midst of a legal saga. We were preparing for final offer arbitration and the challenge to Arbitrator Osborne's appointment. In addition, we had announced our constitutional challenge of the back-to-work legislation (Bill C-6), which is still ongoing.

Following Arbitrator Osborne's resignation in early November 2011, we made several attempts to resume negotiations with Canada Post, but in vain. Many weeks later, i.e. in March 2012, Minister Raitt appointed Arbitrator Dufort. Negotiations for the rural unit had also begun in 2011. So, we were fully engaged in battle with Canada Post.

With Arbitrator Dufort's appointment, events began unfolding very rapidly. We challenged his appointment as well, and once again we were successful. The arbitration was suspended until a Federal Court hearing scheduled for July 25, 2012.

Our determination in blocking the final arbitration process forced the employer to offer to resume negotiations for the urban unit. The employer made this offer on July 19, a few days prior to the Federal Court hearing. On August 8, the Federal Court decided to remove Arbitrator Dufort, which put even more pressure on the employer to resume negotiations. So on August 24, 2012, we began intensive negotiations for both the rural and urban units.

Both negotiating committees worked extremely hard to try to protect and improve our members' rights and working conditions. It's important to remember that although we had been successful in challenging the appointment of two arbitrators, we still had to deal with the threat of final offer arbitration looming large over the urban unit. On October 5, after many days of intensive negotiations, the NEB announced, following a majority vote, that a tentative agreement had been reached for both collective agreements.

The NEB decided that the ratification votes would be held from November 13 to December 19, 2012. Before the ratification votes began, the NEB provided the membership with the explanations it needed to make an informed decision. The national office prepared many bulletins and sent them to the locals for their discussion. Members in each local voted on the tentative agreements. Both were ratified and the collective agreements were signed on December 21, 2012.

## **(b) Second Year of the Term: Implementing the Collective Agreements and Dealing with Other Challenges**

The first few months of 2013 were spent implementing both the urban and rural collective agreements, and the two negotiating committees began preparing material for the National Presidents' Meeting that took place from April 20 to 22, 2013 (section 5.23 of the National Constitution). Several presentations were prepared for this meeting, including one on the Short-Term Disability Program (STDP), which affects both national units. Its implementation led to many meetings with the employer at the national level. The discussions dealt mainly with the appeal process and the list of independent medical practitioners. We now have some experience with the process and can make the following observations:

The worker must prove that he or she is ill, which means having a well-documented medical file from the outset.

The appeal process is faster than the grievance procedure, but also requires sound preparation and written submissions.

At the time of writing this report, we continue to have regular discussions with the employer regarding the problems still stemming from the implementation of the program.

The STDP has increased the union representatives' workload and, consequently, the Union's costs. To address this situation, we implemented a new accounting process for these costs, and a new budgetary item.

In addition to the presentations on the two collective agreements, we shared our action plan on maintaining the public postal service and on the *Canadian Postal Service Charter*, which would be up for review in September 2014. This plan included a review of the economic and political situation facing the country as a result of the Harper government's attacks, as well as a strategy for promoting debate around the renewal of the postal charter. This plan gave concrete expression to the need to move forward and strengthen our vision of the postal service by arguing for postal banking and financial services to secure our jobs and our future.



We also provided an update on the employer's Modern Post/Postal Transformation program. Local Presidents left equipped to face the employer's attacks and convinced of the need to wage a political battle to protect our jobs.

Immediately following the National Presidents' Meeting, the Conference Board of Canada published its report on the future of the postal service. This report rejects service expansion and postal banking as a way to generate revenues for the postal service, and instead advocates cutbacks in traditional services as the only way to avoid a deficit of one billion dollars by 2020. Although we have proven that the report was based on false premises and its findings are wrong, Canada Post continues to use it in its media propaganda. These attacks directly affect not only service to the public, but also our defined benefit pension plan. Of note, Deepak Chopra sits on the Board of Directors of the Conference Board of Canada.

The Union reacted vigorously to this false information by speaking out about the reduction in services, demanding public debate on the future of the postal service, and stepping up its campaign for financial and banking services. For example, we asked the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) to do an independent study on the feasibility of adding financial and banking services at Canada Post. This study clearly shows that there is a need for postal banking in Canada. We now know that Canada Post sponsored a comprehensive study between 2009 and 2013 on the feasibility of banking services, one it still refuses to make public.

Since then, our position on postal banking was widely broadcasted at our April 2014 symposium, and reiterated by the American postal unions. We also distributed our 7-point alternative plan with our vision for the future of the public postal service: "A Better Public Postal Service for Everyone: It's Time!" (Appendix 1) To us, the Postal Bank is more than a regular bank; it's also a "social" bank, a bank designed to meet the needs of all people, including the most underprivileged.

To fight for our universal, public postal service, it's important to know what we want it to look like. Our union has always been able to uphold its vision for the postal service and gear it to current political and economic realities.

### **(c) Third Year of the Term: Our “Save Canada Post” Action Plan**

From the moment the Harper government won its majority, in May 2011, we have seen it intensify its attacks against the labour movement and the public sector, as demonstrated by all the anti-labour bills put forward by this government (C-377, C-525, C-60, C-4, etc.). Taking advantage of this favourable political climate, Canada Post announced on December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013, a ‘five-point action plan’ of cutbacks. This announcement came immediately after the federal government made it known that it was giving Canada Post relief from making special payments to the Pension Fund and adjourned the House of Commons. This happened without any consultation with the Canadian public, let alone the unions. It is a perfect example of the Harper government’s lack of transparency and undemocratic initiatives, and of its collusion with Canada Post.

The announcement of Canada Post’s plan has elicited strong public reaction from every walk of life: from seniors groups and associations of differently-abled people, to small and medium-sized businesses, a host of municipalities, and the opposition parties. There is clear support for postal workers.

The announcement of Canada Post’s plan has also spurred union members into action. They have organized activities throughout the country. The Union responded by condemning the plan and proposing its own vision of the postal service, and suggesting an approach based on service expansion and innovation, instead of on the cuts proposed by Canada Post.

Immediately following the announcement, the NEB adopted an action plan to block implementation of Canada Post’s plan. The NEB reviewed and strengthened its plan after the first 11 affected municipalities were announced. This plan was presented at the Regional Presidents’ Meetings held in April and May 2014. (See Appendix 2)

### **(d) Recent Months**

Since then, the plan has been reviewed regularly, based on Canada Post's announcements and the support we receive across the country. In early January 2015, we issued a bulletin to all members outlining our work for the upcoming months. Convention will be a high point, allowing us to strengthen our solidarity. The bulletin outlined the four following main thrusts:

In 2015, we will force Canada Post to review its corporate plan.

In 2015, we will get rid of the Harper government.

In 2015, we will begin preparing for the coming round of negotiations.

In 2015, we will continue the struggle.

The only way to wage and to win this struggle is through unity and solidarity. This is what we have always done, and will continue to do in 2015, with the help of our allies in civil society and the labour movement.

## **(II) National Executive Board (NEB): Operation, Decisions and Daily Supervision of Work**

The activities listed above punctuated the Union's overall work. The NEB is responsible for analyzing the situation, conducting the required debates, and making the necessary decisions. The paragraphs below highlight the Board's operation, decisions and daily supervision of work.

At the 2011 Convention, two of the three newly-elected representatives on the NEB were also members of the urban unit's negotiating committee, and therefore well aware of the realities facing the Union. This enabled the NEB to quickly hit its stride.

With the adoption, by delegates at convention, of the resolution to implement a video-conferencing system to allow for remote attendance, NEB members had to get used to this new process. It was not easy. In fact, we are still making adjustments to the system three years later.

Over time, we changed the way we work to deal with the constraints of this new technology. However, we realized that some face-to-face meetings were still needed, and are now holding every third meeting in Ottawa.

Nevertheless, the videoconferencing system does provide us with some flexibility. For example, we can use it to hold half-day meetings or “Save Canada Post” campaign coordinator meetings. It was also used to organize meetings with regional officers (REOOs, RGOs, etc.). In time, we will discover new ways of using the system. For example, we may try to use the system for national committee meetings.

As we all know, technologies create needs, and the videoconferencing system is no different. However, it must be used to the benefit of all members. It has enabled the NEB to hold meetings more regularly and to reduce their duration from four to three days. The NEB requested a cost assessment of the videoconferencing system, which appears at Appendix 3.

Throughout the term, the NEB operated in a harmonious environment and conducted candid discussions in a spirit of solidarity. Generally speaking, NEB members were aware of what was going on and were able to make decisions to adequately face challenges. We have tried to reach consensus as much as possible. The NEB must pay particular attention to the Union’s daily life, so issues such as the work plan, negotiations, the pension plan, the financial situation, and, as of December 2013, the “Save Canada Post” campaign, almost always ended up on the agenda. Let us review each one.

### **Work Plan and Negotiations**

There is nothing more important than for the NEB to have a work plan. This allows us to fully understand the issues at stake and situations we face. In our work plan, we must take into account both our orientation and our vision of the future, while making decisions requiring implementation. The NEB must ensure it maintains sufficient resources to meet the members’ needs.

First, our work plan had to take into account the need to complete the negotiations with Canada Post. We filed a constitutional challenge of the back-to-work legislation, and challenged all arbitrators appointed under this legislation. Both tentative agreements led to difficult discussions on the NEB, but these were always conducted in a spirit of camaraderie and with the objective of arriving at a settlement for the membership.

Our challenge of the back-to-work legislation was filed with the Federal Court on October 12, 2013. Cross-examination on affidavits is now underway and the case should be heard in the coming months. We intervened in the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour case on the right to strike. The Supreme Court's decision, which was rendered on January 30, 2015, is a major victory for the labour movement. It recognizes that: "The right to strike is an essential part of a meaningful collective bargaining process in our system of labour relations. The right to strike is not merely derivative of collective bargaining; it is an indispensable component of that right." We will be relying on this decision in our constitutional challenge of the back-to-work legislation (Bill C-6).

The upcoming round of negotiations will be conducted under Bill 60, which allows the Treasury Board to intervene directly in negotiations with Crown Corporations, such as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and Canada Post. This bill was adopted in June 2013 and confirms the direct ties between Canada Post and the Conservative government, which is an important reason to get rid of this government in the upcoming federal elections.

### **Pension Plan**

In the last round of negotiations, we discussed the pension plan, and were successful in protecting it. Throughout this term, the pension plan was a major concern of the NEB. It's important to note two decisions made by the Conservative government: In 2011 and 2012, it adopted an omnibus bill that unilaterally changed the retirement age and eligibility conditions, and established the contribution rates on a 50/50 basis. The Corporation implemented these changes as soon as it was able to.

To us, it was clear that Canada Post would blame its financial situation on the pension solvency deficit, which was at \$6 billion in 2013. This is exactly what it did. The NEB thus ensured it had the tools needed to face the situation. We organized a training session with actuaries and a lawyer who specializes in this field. Then, we went on the attack, first, by organizing meetings with the other bargaining units that contribute to the pension plan. Later, we stood together on the Pension Advisory Committee.

The December 10, 2013 announcement that Canada Post would be provided with temporary relief from making special payments until December 2017 was made without consulting the parties concerned. The NEB determined that relief had been given in exchange for the five-point action plan. As a result, we decided, along with the other groups concerned, to ask the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI) to intervene and remove Canada Post as plan administrator. The OSFI did not grant our request. Instead, it asked the parties to hold consultations and to create an information and consultation committee. The creation of this 12-person committee, which will include two CUPW representatives and four retirees, is currently underway. Once this committee is in place, Canada Post will have to provide all information that relates to the pension plan.

At the same time, in April 2014, the Conservative government launched extensive consultations on a target benefit plan framework. We took part in this process and presented a brief that highlights our position. We still do not know if the government will introduce legislation in the spring of 2015. What we do know, however, is that we must continue to fight to protect our defined benefit pension plan and that this will likely be a key aspect of the upcoming negotiations.

On this issue, the NEB has always taken a firm stand, which we reiterated regularly over the years, and which is important to note here. It can be found in the bulletin to all members issued on September 17, 2014:

*“...I would like to remind you of the principles that guide the Union in all of its discussions regarding the plan, whether with Canada Post or with the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI). These principles are as follows:*

*The defined benefit pension plan must be maintained.*

*Acquired rights must be protected.*

*Changes to the plan can only be made through collective bargaining.*

*These principles are clear and very easy to understand. First, with a defined benefit pension plan, we know how much we pay into it and how much we will get at retirement. Second, the past is untouchable; acquired rights are to be maintained, and what’s been accumulated is guaranteed.*

*Third, if changes are made, they would only apply going forward, i.e. they only affect the future, and would only occur through negotiations. This will allow each and every member to have a say.”*

It's important to remember that any change to the plan would require negotiations, and would only affect future benefits, thus allowing paying members to vote on the type of pension plan they want.

## **Financial Situation**

The Union's financial situation has also been a constant source of concern for the NEB. The NEB regularly discussed the budget and any adjustments required. This forced us to make the decision, at the outset of the term, to use section 7.09 of the National Constitution to levy a special assessment of \$40.00 (four times \$10.00) to finance the 2015 National Convention. This was not an easy decision to make, but it was needed, given the Union's declining revenue. Our goal remains the same: maintaining member services.

The NEB also adopted a more stringent management of the Union's finances, and made changes to the way it operates. For example, it implemented an activity-based expense management system. In addition, the NEB created a human resource management committee that makes staff-related decisions, which has allowed for the streamlining of the Union's staffing, particularly at national office. In fact, we signed a collective agreement with the union (COPE) representing the support staff that reflects our budget constraints.

We made budgetary provisions, i.e. set aside yearly amounts to finance future activities. This means we will be able to pay for Convention without using the Reserve Fund or the Defense Fund. We should therefore end the term without a deficit. However, it's important to understand what this actually means. We will end the term without a deficit because section 7.20 of the National Constitution still allows us not to deposit the moneys that are normally earmarked for the Defence Fund under section 7.08.

This is why a majority of the NEB is recommending changes to the union dues structure and the breakdown of dues revenue between the various funds. In recent years, we have refined our understanding of the union's finances. NEB members fully understand the issues at stake. For the membership, clear and transparent management of our finances means an increased level of confidence in the organization.

## **Action Plan: “Save Canada Post”**

As mentioned earlier in this report, we discussed the need for a work plan that covers all areas of our work. We also need an action plan that mobilizes the membership to protect the public postal service. Such an action plan is adopted at each convention. Implementation of this plan is the responsibility of the NEB. From the very beginning of the term, and throughout the first half, we continued to mobilize the membership to obtain a collective agreement and eliminate the adverse effects of postal transformation. Then, we started preparing for the review of the *Canadian Postal Service Charter*, which was scheduled to take place sometime in 2014. However, Canada Post’s announcement of its five-point plan changed things drastically.

As soon as the announcement was made, the NEB understood that we were now in a fight for our survival as postal workers, that there was no tomorrow, and we needed to take all the means necessary to block this Canada Post and Harper government action plan. All members of the NEB agree on this analysis and want to ensure we do everything possible to prevent implementation of this plan. For the NEB, this is crucial.

That is why the NEB acted quickly and implemented the conditions needed to win this fight. The large demonstration held in January 2014 was a powerful symbol: over 3,000 people marched in the streets of Ottawa to say no to the plan and demand that the Harper government stop its implementation and conduct a broad debate on the future of the postal service.

The NEB adopted a plan of action that it reviews and updates at each meeting. To implement this action plan, the Board needed additional reinforcements to coordinate the work across the country. This is why, in June 2013, we decided to hire regional coordinators (Quebec, East, West and National) responsible for contacting Local Executive Committees, informing them of the action plan and helping them develop their own plan. Starting in February 2014, we added another coordinator at the national level. In total, we now have six coordinators: three working in the regions and three working out of the National Office. They work under the direction of the Board and the supervision of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> National Vice-Presidents.

Plan coordination occurs at the national level, while implementation takes place in each local. The NEB realizes the need for a two-way approach: a plan developed nationally, but improved on through local initiatives. Needless to say, we put all available resources into supporting the action plan.



The coordinators, the Communications Department and those responsible for implementing the action plan videoconference regularly to discuss and adjust the plan as needed. This process has enabled us to address the lack of information sharing on activities by producing at least one national weekly update. We also use social media to put out messages and calls to action to all individuals and groups involved.

The “Save Canada Post” campaign is financed using both the General Fund and the Reserve Fund. The NEB also set up a process to assist locals that need additional funds to conduct campaign activities. This process allows for the funding of local initiatives on a 50/50 cost-sharing basis. For example, locals in the Greater Toronto Area submitted a request for two temporary individuals to give the campaign greater visibility. Members can rest assured that a shortage of funds will not impede the campaign. We are in control of our expenses and any new initiative must be part of the action plan.

As we all know, the “Save Canada Post” campaign is political in nature. It is a political struggle. We must make sure that this campaign becomes an election issue in this year’s federal elections. This is why, last year, we asked federal parties a number of questions to determine their position on Canada Post’s plan. The NEB is well aware that we need to get rid of the Harper government in the next elections if we want to stop the plan.

The NEB is also aware that we cannot do this alone. We will need the help of our allies in civil society and the labour movement. We must be everywhere, particularly in every community across the country. Grassroots work in each riding is what will make a difference. This report therefore calls for all members to get directly involved in the political arena. We need to fight on all fronts. We must be everywhere.

When we launched our “Save Canada Post” campaign, it was clear to us that this was a medium and long term struggle. This is not a sprint, it’s a marathon! Time will be a determining factor. When Canada Post announced its five-point plan, it assumed that in time we would give up the fight, and the public would resign itself to the proposed changes. But we have now been waging this battle for over a year and resistance is growing by the day. We cannot give up. Each day, with every activity, every meeting, we must expand the base for our struggle. This is why we all need to get involved.

### **(III) Members First**

Article 1 of the National Constitution, which outlines the Union's objectives, clearly states that the power of the Union rests on the members' collective strength. In practice, this means that membership representation must be the Union's top priority. To do this, the NEB must ensure that the members are given the tools needed to face the employer on an equal footing. CUPW has always put its members first, and this continued over the past term. It happens on four fronts: representation, information, education and mobilization.

#### **Representation**

The Grievance Department deals with union-management consultation, occupational health and safety, national grievance and arbitration, and negotiations for our national bargaining units. Several important national files continued over the past term. Here are just a few:

##### *Interest Arbitration*

The interest arbitration before arbitrator Keller is still underway. We are currently dealing with the adverse effects on Group 2 in the urban unit. The arbitrator had ruled on Group 1 in May 2013. His decision dealt with the following issues: an independent ergonomic study on the multiline optical character reader (MLOC), joint studies on the IDC cart, the portable scanners and the ErgoMates soles. At the time of writing this report, this work was still underway.

##### *Burkett Arbitration*

The Union demonstrated determination in this fight and succeeded in convincing the arbitrator to put an end to the multiple-bundle delivery method. His decision took effect on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Following this decision, and after a lot of dithering on the employer's part, the parties agreed to conduct an ergonomic assessment of two methods and jointly selected the Golder Associates ergonomics firm. It will render its report in June 2015. We will need to keep a close eye on this matter, as our occupational health and safety depend on it.

### *Reaching Device (RD) and Right-Hand Drive (RHD) Vehicles*

As you know, the Union has been paying particular attention to RSMC work methods, especially in light of the Memorandum of Agreement that was signed in June 2013 on the introduction of the reaching device and right-hand drive vehicles. We now have a second-generation version of the reaching device. Many of our RSMC sisters and brothers have agreed to serve as trainers. The deployment of right-hand drive vehicles is continuing as agreed upon.

These are but three examples of national files that the Union has been dealing with and are still ongoing. Add to that thousands of grievances that have been settled. On the issue of the grievance and arbitration process, we adopted a resolution at the last Convention to implement a network of worker advocates for regular arbitration, which would allow union representatives to argue cases at formal arbitration. We took steps in that direction, but we must do more. Some regions have set up a network of worker advocates, but not all of them.

The NEB has also identified the need to streamline the administrative process for grievances. Using new technology, we may be able to eliminate paper documentation and review the grievance process, including data entry and referral to arbitration. A project is currently underway between the Metro-Montreal Region and the National Grievance Department to implement a process for the electronic transfer of files that would eliminate paper copies.

### **Information**

CUPW is continually in touch with its membership. We produce a national newspaper, *Perspective*, a publication on women's issues, *The Rose*, and a slew of weekly bulletins on the Union's work. We also keep adding to our website, so that it provides relevant information to all members in our various bargaining units.

With the “Save Canada Post” campaign, this work has increased. Our Communications Department produces all sorts of material to reach the public and the groups affected by the employer’s cuts: petitions, postcards, information kits, billboards, etc. The Department has also produced research material on postal banking and various analytical documents for the membership. The Union has begun using social media (Facebook and Twitter). We have also used virtual meetings, pre-recorded telephone messages and conference calls to reach even more members.

In recent months, we’ve experienced many problems with our website. It is showing its weaknesses (breakdown of the *E-digest* or the search engine, failure to store documents). Updating the website had been on the agenda for a long time, so the NEB adopted a plan to replace the current site with one that better meets our needs, is user-friendly and is easier to search. The new site will be fully operational by the end of February 2015.

## **Education**

Over the past term, the Education Department has developed new training methods and courses. Here are just a few:

### *Webinar: STDP Appeal Process*

Two training sessions were held by videoconferencing with the national and regional officers and union representatives on the Short Term Disability Plan (STDP) appeal process (December 6, 2013 and February 19, 2014). Over sixty regional and national union representatives and officers participated in either session.

### *Disability Insurance Guide Created for Locals*

The purpose of this guide is to help provide shop stewards and locals with a general understanding of the Short-Term Disability Program (STDP), the Long-Term Disability Program (LTDP) and the Extended Disability Plan (EDP). This guide outlines steps for advising and supporting CUPW members at the beginning of their claim and highlights the importance of following appropriate steps to increase the chances for a successful outcome.

### *Solidarity Skills Training*

At the last National Convention, held in Toronto in October 2011, the Union's Constitution was amended to provide for conflict resolution committees at all levels, and for compulsory solidarity skills training for officers, also at all levels. So far, more than 200 sisters and brothers have taken Level 1, 90 have taken Level 2, and 70 have taken the five-day course. This work continues on a regular basis.

### **Mobilization**

No one can say that life at CUPW is uneventful; there's always a battle to wage, a campaign to organize or an activity to support. This past term was no exception. We are facing our most serious challenge in recent years: preventing Canada Post from implementing its cutbacks, and protecting the future of the public postal service. And we will meet the challenge. Given the situation, membership mobilization is more important than ever.

Throughout the term, we organized several national days of action. These days enabled us to focus on a specific date, with a specific theme, and to have an impact across the country. The "I'm walking with my letter carrier" day of action on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014, the door-to-door canvassing in the municipalities where community mail boxes (CMBs) are being implemented, and our many presentations before municipal councils are just a few examples.

## **(IV) Areas of Work**

Given CUPW's orientation, we need to carry on the fight on all fronts and in all spheres of activity. What follows here is not meant to replace the officers' individual reports, but to emphasize specific aspects of our work that changed during the term. The purpose is to highlight NEB discussions on these various aspects and the decisions that we made. This will demonstrate the NEB's role and responsibility in overseeing the Union's daily and regular operation.

## **Grievance and Occupational Health and Safety**

There are currently over 40,000 active grievances in the system, which requires a lot of work by all those involved in membership representation. This is mostly due to the confrontational approach preferred by the employer and the drawn out process that results. For example, let's look at the "retroactivity" grievance that was filed after the June 2011 strike and lockout. First, arbitrator Bergeron heard the grievance and ruled on its validity. Then, the parties spent several days in hearings before the arbitrator, and obtained a decision in the fall of 2014. The decision, which is a major victory for the membership and the Union, requires the Corporation to make significant payments. But to avoid having to make these payments, the Corporation simply decided to ask for a judicial review. Members have already been waiting three years for the amounts owed to them, and the case could drag on for several more months.

We should point out two important grievance-related decisions made by the NEB, i.e. the constitutional challenge of the back-to-work legislation (Bill C-6) and the challenge to the elimination of door-to-door delivery. While such challenges are costly, they relate to violations of fundamental rights under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, i.e. the right to strike, and respect for the prohibited grounds of discrimination. These challenges are wide-reaching and directly affect the entire labour movement and everyone.

CUPW believes membership representation depends on both collective bargaining and protecting our health and safety. The Union took on several health and safety issues, such as the reaching device for rural and suburban mail carriers and its related ergonomic studies. As well, we dealt with right-hand-drive vehicles and the study on the new multiline optical character readers. We should also point out the Union's continued work in recent years in connection with the training provided for under Appendix "DD" of the collective agreement. Over 2,000 members received this training. We should also point out the long-term discussions we have been having with the employer regarding workplace violence. According to data received from Canada Post, there were 274 such incidents involving CUPW members in 2014.

## **Staffing**

The NEB is very concerned with the staffing reduction at Canada Post. With postal transformation, which eliminated 3,500 jobs, and Canada Post's five-point plan, it is obvious that the struggle to protect jobs plays a major role in our discussions. In this context, collective agreement enforcement is crucial. In addition to the many grievances it deals with, the Staffing Department actively supports the same-day parcel delivery project and the householder project. The NEB is also concerned with maintaining full-time jobs in Group 1 for the urban unit.

Postal transformation brought about new time values for Group 2 routes. The validation process under the route measurement systems is underway and will likely take a long time. To properly represent members in this process, the NEB had to rely on additional resources.

## **Organizing**

The Union's work plan for the current term described the work to be done in the area of organizing as follows: *"During the rest of this mandate we hope to build on previous organizing successes and to strengthen CUPW's role in the postal, transport, logistics and communications sectors."*

To enhance this work, the NEB, in November 2011, passed a resolution creating a national team of organizers (one per region). With a few organizing campaigns under their belts, they were given specialized training in the summer of 2013. Afterwards, they became directly involved in organizing campaigns (e.g. Shoppers' Drug Mart), and we are now implementing a new organizing model.

Moreover, the Union focussed particularly on companies with nation-wide operations. We now represent a greater number of Dynamex bargaining units, and this is making it easier to coordinate collective bargaining. We have also undertaken similar campaigns in the Atlantic region (Pro-Ex), as well as ones targeting companies with national scope (All Canadian Couriers). These are challenging campaigns that require a lot of coordination.

We are realizing as well that collective bargaining requires more and more time and effort. During the last term, the negotiations with Adecco, a company that provides labour to Canada Post, were carried out at the national level. This required the involvement of National Union Representatives in the Grievance and Arbitration Department.

We also obtained the Appeal Court's decision on the organizing of private postal outlets located in drugstores. This decision confirms the first instance decision, which stated that organizing is under provincial and not federal jurisdiction, and that the organizing efforts must cover all employees of the company. This will have a definite impact on our external organizing work. We will now have to organize each facility. This means developing an approach that will allow us to organize the 8,000 workers in private outlets (drugstores, convenience stores, etc.).

We should point out the work being accomplished by the various regions that have private sector bargaining units. They have taken control of the representation and negotiation work. During the past term, many private sector bargaining unit collective agreements expired and we were successful in renewing them. Although the number of private sector bargaining units has remained stable, the regions and locals have been taking over the day-to-day work.

## **Education**

Education represents a crucial aspect of union work. Our national program has remained consistent in recent years, providing a three-day seminar every six months, and a five-day seminar in each region. This means a minimum of 1,500 participant spots are available for national and regional courses.

There are now two sessions of the Union Education Program (UEP) during each term, and the number of participants has increased to 50 per session. We have also combined the preparatory weekend with the first week of the program. This enabled us to cut costs and increase the number of participants, which improves debate, particularly in the Francophone group.



In addition to the courses prepared by the Education Department, the regions have also developed courses to meet specific needs. For example, the Central Region offered a course entitled “Post Office, Politics and You.” The purpose of this course is to raise awareness about the country’s political and economic situation, the Rand formula and the Harper government’s anti-union legislation. Similar courses were offered in the Pacific and Atlantic Regions. The Metro-Montreal Region also developed and offered a course on the history of the postal service, with emphasis on mobilizing.

Some regions also organize joint sessions. This is consistent with the NEB’s position to try and eliminate barriers between regions to promote the sharing of skills.

In addition, the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Vice-President and the two National Union Representatives for Education travelled regularly to the regions and locals to help them adapt courses based on their specific realities, and to facilitate courses.

## **Human Rights**

With the changes that are occurring both politically and in the workplace, human rights and equity issues are becoming more and more important. As we all know, the demographics of CUPW’s membership have changed dramatically over the last few years and will continue to do so in the future. We see this in our workplaces, whether in the post office or in private sector bargaining units. We need to take this fact into account.

In recent years, the Union continued to play an active role in human rights activities and struggles. The Union implemented many of the suggestions made by the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC). We should point out that the NHRC designates representatives to meet with the NEB after each meeting. Here are a few of the human rights activities, publications, posters and support activities that we participated in or organized during this term:

Activities to mark Black History Month, Asian Heritage Month, National Aboriginal Day (June 21), International Day of Persons with Disabilities (December 3), International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (May 17), etc.

Posters on Albert Jackson, Rosemarie Brown, Carrie Best, National Aboriginal Day, differently-abled workers, etc.

Support activities around security certificates and Mohammed Harkat, Justice for Deepan, the Free Leonard Peltier campaign, funding for JersVision (Youth Diversity Initiative), etc.

The “Turtle Island” course, which provides training for facilitators, was given to NHRC members in August 2014. The course can now be used in all regions across the country.

These activities show the Union’s involvement in the community and its organizations. This work must continue and intensify across the country.

As you can see, the Union is directly involved in human-rights activities of all kinds. In June 2014, the Union also sponsored a Human Rights Conference that attracted more than 140 of our sisters and brothers from across the country. Held under the theme “Building Strength, and Making Change,” the conference also dealt with the representation of equity-seeking groups within the Union.

Both the urban and RSMC collective agreements provide for human rights training. While this training is an ongoing process, it has not always been easy. Training for new employees has been updated with the addition of a section on trans people. In the area of Aboriginal hiring, several initiatives have been studied, but without any concrete results so far. We even discussed this directly with Canada Post’s Chief Executive Officer in one of our meetings with him.

## **Women’s Issues**

The last term also featured several initiatives on women’s issues. The first of these was the Union’s involvement in the annual session of the United Nations (UN) Commission on the Status of Women, attended by dozens of sisters from around the world. Its last session dealt directly with ways of meeting the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which will come under review in 2015. Next year will also mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Women’s Platform.

The second initiative dealt with violence against Aboriginal women. At the last Convention, we adopted Policy D-26, which calls for “a public inquiry into the systematic problem of missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada.” The National Women’s Committee (NWC) organized various activities in support of calls for this inquiry, including the annual October 4<sup>th</sup> vigil and the March 8<sup>th</sup> activities.

The third initiative revolves around the studies in which the Union is currently actively involved, one of which is the study on domestic violence being carried out in conjunction with the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), and launched in November 2013. The purpose of the study is to assess the impact of domestic violence on the workplace, implement public policy in this regard, and develop awareness-building tools. The results of their study were made public on November 27, 2014. They confirm that there is a large number of spousal abuse victims, that such violence continues at the workplace, and that it has a negative impact, not only on co-workers, but also on the entire workplace. The second study is one being done in conjunction with other unions and the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAOW). The purpose of this study is to assess the impact of public sector changes on women, including their specific impact on equity-seeking groups. This cooperation between unions, women’s groups and research groups must continue.

The NWC, which will be celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary at Convention, also looked at the representation of women within the Union. Currently, women comprise almost 43% of our membership. See Appendix 4 for a breakdown of women’s involvement on local executive committees.

### **Child Care Fund**

This term saw the continuation of all of the Union’s child care projects, most notably our Special Needs Project, which benefits hundreds of children throughout the country. The Child Care Fund is funded directly through the Union’s two national collective agreements, i.e. Appendix “L” for the urban unit, and Appendix “J” for the RSMC unit.

In addition to pursuing these projects, the Union launched two major national initiatives. One was on the impact of Modern Post/Postal Transformation on work-life balance issues. The study included a survey that was sent to all members in five specific locals (Edmonton, Winnipeg, Scarborough, Montreal and St-John's). Focus groups were organized as well. The study highlights the major impact that postal transformation has on work and family life. This is not surprising, but the study provides undeniable facts and data documenting this impact. The results of the study will help us prepare for the next round of negotiations and develop demands for working conditions that protect our health and safety and improve work-life balance.

Another initiative features "kitchen table conversations," which are held at various regional activities, mainly during training sessions. These conversations allow participants to share their own child care experiences, including how child care concerns affect their family, work, personal lives and communities.

### **Labour Movement**

We have been active in the Canadian labour movement for many years. Our presence on the CLC, for example, is being felt in various ways, whether it be through our involvement on the Canadian Council, on national committees, or in labour federations and labour councils. The Union has three representatives on the Canadian Council: our National President, Sister Vikki Quocksister who is President of the Yukon Federation of Labour, and Brother Ron Rousseau, CLC Vice-President for Aboriginal workers. We must continue to make our presence felt in the movement, as this is critical to the success of our "Save Canada Post" campaign, and for getting rid of the Conservative government in the upcoming federal elections.

In May 2014, major changes occurred at the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). It now has a new President, and Brother Donald Lafleur was elected as a Vice-President. In our view, the CLC's voice will be considerably strengthened and better articulated as a result, and this will be good for us. One of the effects of the change will be an ever more important role for labour councils in each region. During the next term, the NEB will have to be mindful of the need to increase our participation on labour councils. As we know, our participation is inconsistent because Local Executive Committees are overburdened with work. But we need to identify brothers and sisters who would like to get involved in their community. Solidarity is a two-way street: to get support, we must show support, and labour councils play a key role.

### **International Labour Movement**

For many years, we've recognized the importance of taking part in international labour forums. We are affiliated to UNI (Union Network International) and the ITF (International Transport Federation). Moreover, the international labour movement has come out publicly in support of our action plan and our struggle to protect Canada's public postal service.

During the past term, we have substantially strengthened our ties to UNI in our regular work. We participated in the coordination meetings in Geneva on a more regular basis. We also initiated and supported projects such as MENA-MED (see further on). The National Women's Committee launched initiatives to promote the participation of women in international activities. For example, we sent two sisters to the Women's Conference in Peru in late May 2014. In addition, the National Human Rights Committee is concerned with the role of Aboriginal people in the Americas.

We should also mention UNI's cooperation in helping us prepare for and hold our symposium on banking and financial services. As well, our delegation to the UNI World Congress in South Africa was well received and took part in the debates (racism in the Americas and environment). However, it is clear that we must focus even more on this work, particularly considering changes affecting international public postal services.

During this term, a major project with UNI took shape and increased in scope over the months. This is the MENA-MED project, in which we have been meeting with postal unions from the Middle East and North Africa. An initial meeting took place in Casablanca, followed by a visit from a delegation of brothers and sisters from Morocco and Palestine, and, in April 2014, by a delegation of sisters from Morocco. We would like to recognize the role played by our sisters on the National Women's Committee, who took on organizing this last tour. Another meeting of the MENA-MED network took place in Amman, Jordan in September 2014.

Our approach to the international movement is to implement solidarity projects with unions undergoing battles. During this term, we completed our project with the PALTEL Union in Palestine, as well our project with Colombia. The NEB has just adopted a new project with the Colombia Postal Workers Union (STPC). There are two parts to this project: occupational health and safety training and organizing workers in postal companies. At the time of writing this report, we are in discussions with trade unions in Palestine and Trinidad and Tobago on developing joint projects. All these projects are funded under Appendix "R" of the urban operations collective agreement.

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is very active in supporting organizing work. We benefited from its expertise in this area to strengthen our organizing work in the courier and mail transportation industry. We take an active part in the regular meetings that are held, and have sent, among others, delegations to attend a meeting of the transportation sector in Japan, and to a women's meeting in India.

We should also mention our ties with our American sisters and brothers, who are facing drastic cuts, but who are also promoting postal banking as a solution to decreasing lettermail volumes. In November 2014, the NEB welcomed Brother Mark Dimondstein, President of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU), and discussed the similarities between our struggles and the need to strengthen our ties. We also took part in various conferences and international meetings. All of this goes to show that the struggle for keeping public postal services is a global one.

## **International solidarity**

CUPW is known internationally as a union that is directly involved in international solidarity work. Throughout the term, we showed our support for struggles and campaigns through concrete actions: letters asking for the liberation of political prisoners, support for social and political strikes, participation in solidarity activities, and financial support for information visits, etc.

Throughout the term, we demonstrated our tangible commitment to international solidarity by participating in the World Social Forum and the People's Social Forum. The Union sent delegations to the World Social Forum held in Tunis in 2013 and in March 2015. We established contacts and organized activities around the postal service. We also provided financial and logistical support to the People's Social Forum held in Ottawa in August 2014. To CUPW, this work is essential and must continue in the next term.

## **Freedom for the Cuban Five**

On December 17, 2014, an announcement shocked the entire world and was cheered by many activists who had been fighting for years for the liberation of the Cuban Five: They had all been set free, and could finally return to their native Cuba. CUPW's National Policy D-22 reads as follows: *"CUPW recognizes that the activities of the Cuban Five did not involve violence against the US ... and demands that the US government free the Cuban Five political prisoners held in US prisons."*

The NEB would like to thank all sisters and brothers who actively participated in the campaign for the freedom of the Cuban Five. This is a victory we should savour. It shows that we should never give up, and that determination and perseverance give results.

## **(V) Union Life: Intense Democratic Life**

When looking at the colossal amount of work we have accomplished during this term, we have to understand that this is possible only thanks to the commitment and activism of literally hundreds upon hundreds of union members. Union work requires a sustained level of commitment from those who carry it out. A union cannot function without the many hours put in by activists. Becoming familiar with the collective agreements, preparing grievances, meeting with members, meeting with the employer, organizing activities, participating in training, attending labour council meetings and taking part in coalitions are all part and parcel of union work. Without this work, no union could exist.

The NEB is responsible for directing the Union while applying the National Constitution. As you know, our National Constitution requires a lot of involvement and commitment, which is how it should be. The Constitution regulates our union life by setting aside specific times during the term for discussing, updating and reviewing our approach and action plan. The NEB fulfilled its role at these meetings by preparing discussion papers and directly taking part in the debates. Scheduled meetings took place and, each time, allowed us to take stock of our union work and make the necessary adjustments. However, the NEB did have to deal with the absence of one, two or three of its members due to illness or departures. These absences affected the Board's overall work and forced the postponement of projects and courses or prevented the NEB members' broader involvement in local and regional activities. One of the NEB's responsibilities is to manage the resources needed for the proper operation of the Union, and this became difficult at various times throughout the mandate. We thank those who took on additional work.

However, as we saw with the elimination of area councils, it takes a while to get used to any change. Changes made to Article 5 of our National Constitution are such that even though the NEB must prepare a discussion paper for regional conferences, discussions take place at the local level without any prior discussion with other local executive committees. The NEB is aware of this new reality and will do everything it can to send the discussion paper as soon as possible, which will give locals more time to prepare their resolutions for the regional conferences.



## **Article 8: Conflict Resolution and Discipline**

At the 2011 Convention, we made important changes to Article 8 of our National Constitution, ones that focus on conflict resolution rather than discipline, which is unavoidably a win-lose proposition. The aim was to emphasize the need to face conflict and implement alternative resolution mechanisms, including mediation. The Union developed a guide for conflict resolution committees that states the following:

*“The aim of the changes to Article 8 is to create a culture and structure that supports working respectfully and honestly with conflicts and the emotions they provoke. This will require commitment and courage from activists and the leadership at all levels because it means doing things differently—in effect, saying no to the aggressive reactive patterns that lead to toxic conflicts.”*

The NEB was aware that this new approach would require a change in culture, and that it would take time. This new approach is based on alternative conflict resolution procedures training and on the creation of conflict resolution committees. The first step was to provide training to officers. The “Solidarity Skills” course was already available and it was updated throughout the term. The second step involved producing a guide for conflict resolution committees, which we did at the start of the term.

Moreover, all regions were given the opportunity to offer this course to their locals. Over 200 brothers and sisters took the “Solidarity Skills” course, and committees have been set up in many locals, in the regions and at national level. However, there is still a lot to accomplish, despite a significant drop in formal complaints. During the last part of the term, the NEB had less time to take stock of the situation around Article 8 and assess where we are. As we know, a change in culture takes time and effort. We will have to increase our education efforts without neglecting training for the committees responsible for implementing Article 8.

## **The Union's Structure**

Discussions around the structure of our Union have been part of our union conversation for what seems like an eternity. However, such discussions obviously touch a nerve as there is resistance to change in everyone. At each Convention, delegates are “anxious” and ready to go to the wall to protect their rights. The same can pretty much be said for the NEB: the structure is an ongoing concern but difficult to figure out. This NEB tried to adopt a different approach that does not rely on all or nothing. The NEB's discussion paper for the regional conferences insisted on the need for a smooth transition and taking the time to make changes. This position is based on the simple fact that any change in structure will follow practice and our concrete reality. We could say that we are adopting a “step-by-step approach.”

Earlier in this report, we gave an overview of the Union's financial situation and our proposal for improving and strengthening our control over the financial situation. We would simply like to recall the concrete steps we've taken throughout the term to maximize the Union's work:

National Executive Board initiatives: videoconferencing, streamlining union travel, balanced budget taking into account section 7.20 of the National Constitution, activity-based expense management system and regular review of the Union's expenses.

National Executive Committee initiatives: streamlining support staff (collective bargaining) and implementation of a human resources committee.

National Directors initiatives: conference calls with locals, union-management meeting cost reduction, worker advocate training and streamlining support staff.

## **National Policies**

The NEB is also responsible for enforcing the national policies found in the buff pages of our National Constitution. However, these policies play a key role in our union life. The NEB has the duty to enforce all policies, whether they deal with “the struggle of CUPW against the employer,” or “CUPW and legislation,” etc.

The NEB is also responsible for implementing the new policies adopted at each Convention. For example, new policy E-6 “International Solidarity Delegation” required special attention. The NEB developed criteria for the participation of members from all levels of the Union, taking into account gender and equity issues. The NEB also opened some delegations to all members. For example, the most recent delegation to the World Social Forum in Tunis (March 2015) included two local members. This new process enabled us to increase the number of people involved in international solidarity.

Here are two other examples of policies implemented by the NEB. New policy D-27 requires that the Union get involved in the fight to combat HIV/AIDS. In the spring of 2013, the Union financially supported the Ontario tour of the Stephen Lewis Foundation, and established a formal relationship with the Foundation by providing financial support for projects in Africa from 2014 to 2016. The Union also called on the generosity and cooperation of locals to implement this initiative.

The Union cares about the environment, which is why, in 2011, it adopted a comprehensive policy based on fundamental principles and concrete action. Our cooperation with various environmental organizations has intensified over the past few years, particularly with the Green Economy Network and the Work and Labour Studies Department of York University, as part of the “Working in a Warming World (W3)” project.

CUPW members from across the country took part in two international conferences that were held in November and December 2013 in Toronto. Brother Philip Jennings, Secretary-General of UNI Global Union, was a keynote speaker at one of the conferences. The Union is also a member of Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED). It actively participated in the activities sponsored by Power Shift, an organization that seeks to promote climate justice awareness among youth. In addition, we have used every opportunity to educate Canada Post about its climate change responsibilities. Finally, CUPW presented environmental resolutions to UNI’s World Congress that took place in December 2014.

We are currently working on another project with York University and Professor Carla Lipsig-Mumme. This project will span seven years and is designed to analyze and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the workplace. It is funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and will give us an opportunity to work with environmental experts to study the impact of service cuts at Canada Post, such as the elimination of door-to-door delivery. Both organizations and individuals must take part in the fight to save the planet, and CUPW must be at the forefront internationally and nationally.

## **(VI) The Current Situation**

Understanding the current situation with respect to the employer's plan will enable us to make informed decisions at Convention, particularly in terms of our own action plan.

With the construction and rollout of the new Pacific Processing Center (PPC) in Vancouver, the employer has completed the implementation of what we can call the first phase of Modern Post/Postal Transformation. As was the case for all other facilities, this was a difficult situation, which required many meetings with the employer. In addition, the employer expanded postal transformation to other facilities not initially listed. This has been referred to as postal transformation "lite."

Although the initial figure put forth by Moya Greene, i.e. the elimination of 10,000 jobs has not been reached, we have still, unfortunately, lost 3,500 jobs. Early in 2014, the employer had already confirmed that it had reached its \$250 million per year cost savings objective.

As for the five-point plan, it is clear that the employer is doing everything it can to guarantee its implementation. In the fall of 2014, it converted the first 100,000 points of call from door-to-door delivery to Community Mail Boxes (CMB). Nearly 1,000,000 more are scheduled to be converted in 2015. Our "Save Canada Post" campaign is moving along and gaining momentum from month to month. However, we know that the next federal elections will be a determining factor. To increase our chances of saving the public postal service, it is crucial that we get rid of the Harper government in 2015.

It now appears that the Corporation will show a profit for 2014. However, as we know, the employer will still argue that lettermail volumes are dropping, that direct marketing is stagnating, and that parcels are increasing, but not enough to compensate for lower volumes. It will also argue that the pension plan is a burden, and that its five-point plan must go on. We have heard it all before. Canada Post's positive financial results are on our side, and we must make sure to fully exploit this advantage.

We also have to look at the current economic and political context. No one can predict where the economy is headed given the sudden and sharp decline in oil prices. Some say this will be to the benefit of companies like Canada Post, which has a fleet of thousands of vehicles. Others say the recession will hit all sectors of the economy and that there will be even more layoffs across the country. What we do know however is that the Harper government will take advantage of the situation to strengthen its hold on a portion of the electorate through fear mongering and advocating protective policies to counter terrorism, and that it will continue to cut social programs to protect its big business friends.

We also need to understand what is happening on the work floor. We know from talking to our brothers and sisters that they are having a hard time. The employer stubbornly continues to discipline employees rather than manage. The new work methods are affecting everyone, both inside and outside postal facilities. The number of grievances is concrete evidence that the psychological pressure is increasing and will continue to do so with the upcoming negotiations.

Finally, we must understand our strengths. Occasionally, we hear people say that there is nothing we can do; that we are dealing with a majority government and that employers control the economy and politics as they see fit. The entire NEB rejects this position. Our objective has always been to organize the struggle, and we have done so throughout the past term. But what are the tools at our disposal? First, we have our vision for the future of the universal, public postal service. Knowing what we want is fundamental. During the past term, we updated our vision, which is outlined in Appendix 1.

We are proposing an alternative solution: expanding services and creating a postal bank. We have always been on the side of the down-trodden. A postal bank is a tremendous idea – a people’s bank, a bank for workers and those without a voice. We are not going to our fellow citizens without solutions. We have a proposal that is realistic and feasible. So let’s go forward!

Another way our Union carries out the struggle is through direct action. We know that the only way to expose the employer and the government is through nation-wide action. We must organize events and make the news, as we have been doing in spades since December 2013, and we must persevere. We know that the employer assumes that, in time, we will get tired and give up, but determination is the only way to win over our opposition. All we have to do is hold on one minute longer.

Our struggle is political, and we have allies in all segments of society. We are on the move! The labour movement and many civil society organizations are in election mode. The Harper government wants to reduce the size of government and universal programs as much as possible, and we are all working in conjunction with the Canadian Labour Congress. If we want to get rid of the Harper government, we have to start now – and we have with our “Save Canada Post” campaign – by making the postal service an issue in the next elections. We must also ensure this issue stays at the forefront.

It’s important to remember that we have many allies. Everywhere we go, people, groups, community organizations, municipalities, and others all agree with us. Canada Post and the government cannot cut services to the public without first holding a broad public debate.

Finally, we have our collective strength. We are 50,000 across the country. We have the right to speak, the right to say what kind of postal service we want, the right to vote and the right to influence the vote. Let’s go on the attack.

## **(VII) Our Union Responsibility: Leading the Struggle**

Sisters/Brothers:

If you are reading this report, it is because you will be attending our National Convention as delegates. You have experienced and participated in the events of recent years. You have played a part in the struggle to maintain our public postal service. You are a labour leader, and the NEB would like to thank you for your involvement and determination.

The NEB would also like to thank the entire staff for their support in recent years. It is thanks to all those who work hard across the country that CUPW is an effective organization, one that is capable of appropriately responding to and analyzing urgent political situations to counter arguments put forward by the employer and the right, of quickly informing and mobilizing members, and of responding to situations with one voice across the country. Thank you for your dedication.

Finally, the NEB would like to thank the entire membership. Our situation is not easy; that's a fact. The employer's attacks are relentless and government measures, hard to take. We have not given up! We continue to fight, and we will win. Thank you for your daily involvement in the struggle.

Convention is a highlight of our union life, the time to proclaim loud and clear how proud we are to be part of the working class and of our involvement in the labour and social movements. We don't say it often enough. We must be proud of what we have accomplished and of our role in society. The labour movement is one of the last safeguards against neoliberal ideology and reformist governments like the Harper government.

But the work is not over. In 2011, the NEB report ended as follows: “*Our fight must take place on all these fronts. We are not alone. Everywhere across the country, workers know they will get nothing from the Harper government or from large corporations. The struggle going on is between capital and labour. We must fight against a globalized, deregulated and privatized world with one, unified voice.*”

Convention is a highlight of our union life. It is indeed a unique opportunity to adjust our action plan, reaffirm our commitment to defend our hard-fought rights, and express our pride, unity and solidarity in the struggle.

*Denis Lemelin*  
*National President*

*Gayle Bossenberry*  
*1st National Vice-President*

*George Kuehnbaum*  
*National Secretary-Treasurer*

*Philippe Arbour*  
*National Grievance Officer*

*Cindi Foreman*  
*2<sup>nd</sup> National Vice-President*

*George Floresco*  
*3rd National Vice-President*

*Martin Champagne*  
*4th National Vice-President*

*Jeff Callaghan*  
*National Director, Atlantic Region*

*Christian Martel*  
*National Director, Québec Region*

*Sylvain Lapointe*  
*National Director, Metro-Montréal Region*

*Mark Evard*  
*National Director, Central Region*



*Mark Brown*  
*National Director, Metro-Toronto Region*

*Gerry Deveau*  
*National Director, Ontario Region*

*Gordon Fischer*  
*National Director, Prairie Region*

*Tim Armstrong*  
*National Director, Pacific Region*

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## APPENDIX 1



# A Better Public Postal Service For Everyone! : It's Time.

**Canada Post belongs to all of us - not just the federal politicians and the large corporate mailers, and certainly not just post office management.**

We believe it's time to get back to the basics. We want improvements instead of unnecessary cutbacks. It's time Canada Post redirect itself to meeting the needs of the people.

### **Fair postage rates:**

Recently the Conservatives authorized increases of 35% to 59% for individuals. The increases for business mailers were 15% to 19%. That's not fair. Postage rates should be affordable and equal for everyone.

### **Accessible delivery:**

The Conservative government is supporting Canada Post's plan to eliminate door-to-door delivery to more than 5 million homes. This will cause serious problems for people with restricted mobility. Canada Post should maintain door-to-door delivery and convert to more door-to-door delivery as finances permit. It's time to put people first!

### **Maintaining rural and urban post offices:**

Canada Post management has been closing post offices. It's time to make better use of the largest retail network in the country to provide more services to the public.

### **Re-introducing financial services:**

It's time for Canada Post to follow the example of postal services in countries such as Switzerland, France, the UK and Italy and use its network to provide banking and financial services.

### **Transparency and accountability:**

Back-room meetings and secret studies have to end. We need real consultation. Canada Post's 800-page secret study described postal banking as a "win-win" strategy. It's time for truth instead of cover-ups and spin.

### **A greener post:**

Canada Post is an environmentally positive option for parcels and courier items. It's time to consolidate delivery services for consumers and reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions.

### **Respect and decent working conditions:**

Postal workers deserve safe and healthy working conditions. It's time to make this a priority.

***The Canadian Union of Postal Workers has a better plan for Canada Post. Join us and help us make this happen.***

**SaveCanadaPost.ca  
1-855-878-7111**

Canadian Union of Postal Workers  
Syndicat des travailleurs et travailleuses des postes



## APPENDIX 2

### Our Action Plan

#### 1. Political and parliamentary struggle:

- Working with Opposition parties
- Sustaining the public debate (*Postal Charter* review)
- Meeting with MPs in their ridings
- Getting the petition signed and letters to MPs sent
- Preparing for the next federal elections

#### 2. Working with municipalities:

- Meeting with municipalities (Town Hall meetings)
- Meeting with municipal councillors
- Preparing a resolution for municipalities to adopt
- Developing a network of individuals involved in their municipalities
- Preparing for the annual meeting of the Canadian Federation of Municipalities (CFM)

#### 3. Working with allies:

- Labour movement: CLC, labour federations and councils
- Natural allies: seniors, differently-abled, community groups, etc.
- New allies: small and medium businesses that use the postal service
- Letter to the Minister responsible for Canada Post

#### 4. Working with members and retirees

- Meeting with Local Executive Committees and members (one on one)
- Tying this work in with the Fairness Works campaign.
- Involving them in the campaign – everyone has a role to play.
- Involving our retired brothers and sisters.

#### 5. Canvassing

- Meeting with our relatives, neighbours and the general public
- Focusing our work, taking into account the locations that will first be affected by the loss of door-to-door delivery.

APPENDIX 3

**TOTAL MEETINGS FROM SEPTEMBER 2012 TO MARCH 2014**

GRAND TOTAL COSTS OF ALL MEETINGS HELD	<u>\$431,202.02</u>
<b><u>GRAND TOTAL SAVINGS VIDEOCONFERENCE</u></b>	
TOTAL COST OF VIDEOCONFERENCE UP TO MARCH 2014 TO COMPARE WITH SAME TIME MEETINGS (\$416,664 OVER 2 YEARS & 9 MONTHS):	\$286,457.00
COST OF ADDITIONAL BANDWIDTH (\$1000/MTH):	\$33,000.00
MONTHLY MAINTENANCE COST (\$1243 X 33 MONTHS):	<u>\$41,019.00</u>
Includes support, licence, switching in a cloud...	<u>\$360,476.00</u>
<b><u>NET SAVINGS VIDEOCONFERENCE</u></b>	<u>\$70,726.02</u>

**TOTAL MEETINGS FROM SEPTEMBER 2012 TO MARCH 2014**

GRAND TOTAL COSTS OF ALL MEETINGS HELD	<u>\$431,202.02</u>
<b><u>GRAND TOTAL SAVINGS VIDEOCONFERENCE</u></b>	
TOTAL COST OF VIDEOCONFERENCE AMORTIZED OVER A 4 YEAR PERIOD	\$416,664.00
COST OF ADDITIONAL BANDWIDTH (\$1000/MTH):	\$48,000.00
MONTHLY MAINTENANCE COST (\$1243 X 48 MONTHS):	<u>\$59,664.00</u>
Includes support, licence, switching in a cloud...	<u>\$524,328.00</u>
<b><u>NET COSTS VIDEOCONFERENCE</u></b>	<u>-\$93,125.98</u>

**TOTAL MEETINGS FROM SEPTEMBER 2012 TO SEPT 2013**

GRAND TOTAL COST ALL MEETING SAVINGS ONE YEAR	\$215,427.09
COST OF ADDITIONAL BANDWITH (\$1000/MTH):	\$12,000.00
MONTHLY MAINTENANCE COST	
(\$1243 X 12 MONTHS):	\$14,916.00
Includes support, licence, switching in a cloud...	<u>\$188,511.09</u>

**NEB MEETINGS FROM SEPTEMBER 2012 TO MARCH 2014**

GRAND TOTAL COSTS OF NEB MEETINGS HELD	\$216,154.55	Extrapolating 2.9 years to 4 years \$298,144.21
<b><u>GRAND TOTAL SAVINGS VIDEOCONFERENCE</u></b>		
TOTAL COST OF VIDEOCONFERENCE UP TO MARCH 2014 TO COMPARE WITH SAME TIME MEETINGS		
(\$416,664 OVER <b><u>2 YEARS &amp; 9 MONTHS</u></b> ):	\$286,457.00	\$416,664.00
COST OF ADDITIONAL BANDWITH (\$1000/MTH):	\$33,000.00	\$48,000.00
MONTHLY MAINTENANCE COST		
(\$1243 X 33 MONTHS):	\$41,019.00	\$59,664.00
Includes support, licence, switching in a cloud...	<u>\$360,476.00</u>	<u>\$524,328.00</u>
<b><u>NET SAVINGS VIDEOCONFERENCE</u></b>	<u>-\$144,321.45</u>	<u>-\$226,183.79</u>

This calculation compares a period of NEB meetings to an equal period for expenses on the video conf. Column next to it extrapolates the #'s and make an assumption based on the known factors and applies it to 4 year timeframe.

**TOTAL MEETINGS FROM SEPTEMBER 2012 TO MARCH 2014**

GRAND TOTAL COSTS OF NEB MEETINGS HELD \$216,154.55

**GRAND TOTAL SAVINGS VIDEOCONFERENCE**

TOTAL COST OF VIDEOCONFERENCE AMORTIZED  
OVER A **4 YEAR PERIOD** \$416,664.00

COST OF ADDITIONAL BANDWIDTH (\$1000/MTH): \$48,000.00

MONTHLY MAINTENANCE COST  
(\$1243 X 48 MONTHS): \$59,664.00

Includes support, licence, switching in a cloud... \$524,328.00

**NET COSTS VIDEOCONFERENCE** -\$308,173.45

This calculation compared a period of NEB meetings to the full cost of the video conf. It has a life of 4 years and we compare savings on meetings over a period of 2 years and 9 months.

**TOTAL MEETINGS FROM SEPTEMBER 2012 TO SEPT 2013 (1 year no other costs)**

GRAND TOTAL COST NEB MEETING SAVINGS 1  
YEAR \$101,697.90

COST OF ADDITIONAL BANDWIDTH (\$1000/MTH): \$12,000.00

MONTHLY MAINTENANCE COST  
(\$1243 X 12 MONTHS): \$14,916.00

Includes support, licence, switching in a cloud... \$74,781.90

APPENDIX 4

Local Executive Committees, as of February 2015

Local Presidents

Female: 95  
Male: 120  
Unknown: 0  
Percentage of women: 44%

Local Secretary-Treasurers

Female: 130  
Male: 72  
Unknown: 1  
Total: 203  
Percentage of women: 64%

Urban unit:

Female: 14,837  
Male: 22,930  
Unknown: 3,763  
Total: 41,530  
Percentage of women: 39%

RSMC unit:

Female: 4,712  
Male: 2,260  
Unknown: 1,045  
Total: 8,017  
Percentage of women: 68%

Private sector bargaining units:

Female: 146  
Male: 532  
Unknown: 90  
Total: 768  
Percentage of women: 22%