



Reports of the National Directors

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REPORT
OF THE
NATIONAL DIRECTOR
ATLANTIC REGION

SUBMITTED TO THE
TWENTY-FIFTH QUADRENNIAL
NATIONAL CONVENTION

MAY 2015

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

This report, my second as National Director for the Atlantic Region, is submitted for your consideration in accordance with Article 3.04 of our National Constitution.

As this report is being prepared several months prior to our May 2015 National Convention, I will outline the many events which have occurred in the Region over the past thirty-nine months as well as provide my views on some of the serious challenges we will face as workers over the coming months. Due to the sheer volume of work undertaken during this mandate and the constraints of this report, it is not possible for me to report on every issue or devote as much time in this report as some truly deserve.

Ratification of Urban Operations and Rural and Suburban Mail Carrier Collective Agreements – A Missed Opportunity to Mobilize and Resist

I want to start this report by dealing with the decisions of the National Executive Board to recommend acceptance of both the UPO and RSMC tentative agreements. Despite what some may think, my decisions to oppose both these agreements were incredibly hard decisions; ones that were not taken lightly and without immense consideration given to the work of the Negotiations Committees, the wellbeing of the membership and to the short and long term impacts on the members and the Union.

The 2011 strike vote and subsequent lockout by the employer of UPO members had truly galvanized and mobilized the membership to a level not seen in CUPW for decades. Even after the Harper Conservative government stripped away our constitution rights to bargain freely and to take further strike action, members returned to their workplaces with their heads high and with a renewed sense of militancy. Throughout the following months, the Conservative's plan to simply wipe CUPW from existence continued to unravel as government appointed arbitrator after government appointed arbitrator fell by the wayside. While their unjust legislation with "final offer selection" was still hanging over our heads, there was a strong sense that we, as workers, were still in a strong position to push back and to achieve demands which we had fought so long and hard to win.

Although I, along with the entire NEB, supported the resumption of negotiations, it was then that something seemed to change. Suddenly the tone had switched and instead of pushing harder for our demands, for the issues our members had given the Union an historical strike mandate to achieve, discussions turned and we seemed to focus solely on the employer's demands. It was as if all the fear mongering and misinformation Canada Post and the federal government had been working so hard to have Canadians believe about the future of the Post Office, was somehow now seeping through to the Board.

We all know what happened in the days and weeks to follow: by the fall of 2012, without the Urban Operations unit taking another direct step to fightback or the RSMC unit ever flexing their collective strength which they had long waited for, the majority of the National Executive Board voted to recommend acceptance of both tentative agreements.

The ratification votes took place between November and December. While the NEB prepared many bulletins supporting their position, outlining all the reasons members should accept their recommendations to vote "Yes", Atlantic Regional officers, Union Representatives and many locals worked just as diligently to explain to the membership why they should consider rejecting the tentative deals.

I think it is important to recognize the work undertaken during these ratification votes to show the government and our employer that we were not prepared to simply give up rights that so many had fought to achieve for us; that we would never agree to regional bargaining, two-tiered wages and other divisive employer tactics.

Another disappointing decision taken by the Board was to deny my request to be provided with the services of bilingual interpreter during ratification votes in New Brunswick in order to allow me to communicate my position on the tentative agreements. It was vital for me to be able to communicate with all members so that they could fully understand why I, along with the whole Regional office, was recommending the tentative agreements be rejected. As none of us are bilingual, this decision seriously hampered the ability to do just that.

Upon hearing of the Board's decision, locals throughout New Brunswick took action and agreed to pool their financial resources to allow Sister Line Doucet to accompany us in order to interpret our presentations and assist with questions from the members. The Union did have a bilingual officer attend and present the "Yes" positions for the votes held in New Brunswick, with the exception of votes held in Acadie-Bathurst where the Region and Sister Doucet presented the "Yes" and "No" recommendations in both official languages. On behalf of the Regional Office, I want to personally thank Sister Doucet and the executive of the Moncton Local for translating our bulletins, as well as the Acadie-Bathurst, Campbellton and Edmundston local executives for their decisive action supporting an informed membership.

At the end of the day, the membership nationally voted to ratify both collective agreements and the will of the members must always be respected. I cannot help but imagine what if the members had heard presentations for both recommendations of acceptance and rejection of the deals prior to exercising their right to vote, would the membership have voted differently? Unless individual Local Executive Committees were recommending the deals be rejected (and there were quite a number across the country), as only Brother Gerry Deveau (Ontario Region) and I were the only National Directors to dissent on the Board's decision, a small percentage of the members attending ratification votes actually heard why they should vote "No" (2nd National Vice President, Sister Cindi Foreman, also dissented on the acceptance of the Urban Operations agreement).

Since the ratification of both collective agreements, the attacks from both the federal government and the employer have been relentless: from attacks on our pensions to the shocking details of the December 11, 2013 Canada Post new "Five Point Business Plan", our rights and benefits are being targeted like never before. It's as if those conspiring against us now sense that the timing is right to finally achieve the cuts to jobs and services they were never able to achieve before. That by the Union settling for these collective agreements, agreeing to give up long standing benefits like paid sick leave in favour of a Short Term Disability plan, that our resolve to militantly defend ourselves was somehow weakened. This is a perception, both with the employer and more importantly with the membership, that we must fight hard to overcome or the setbacks we realized in 2012 will pale in significance to those we risk losing in 2016.

Postal Transformation, Network Changes and Other Cuts in Services

Postal Transformation

Canada Post continued to implement its Postal Transformation plans in cities right across Canada and Quebec, including in the Atlantic. While PT was largely already implemented in Halifax, both the HMPP and LCD 1 and 2, by late 2011 and early 2012, Article 29 negotiations got underway in Saint John, St. John's and Dartmouth. As with previous PT notices, the ones for Fundy and St. John's Locals included the introduction of new machinery, dramatic changes to work methods and major reductions in positions for both plants and depots.

In Saint John, as was the case in Halifax, the Local Executive worked tirelessly to ensure that information on the changes being proposed was regularly communicated with the workers in order to determine what negative effects could be anticipated. With Canada Post regularly eliminating Group 1 positions and claiming this was due to ever declining lettermail volumes and unrelated to PT, just trying to determine accurate staffing levels was like trying to hit a moving target.

Through the efforts of the Fundy Local, the Union was able to maximize the number of Letter Carrier routes on the first "wave", to creation of an addition LCA assignment, and preserve seniority protections. Thanks to all involved: President Wally Moore, 1st Vice President Don Watson, Union Observer Kevin Murphy and the members of the Local Joint Health and Safety Committee.

The situation in St. John's was not the same. The employer was often unavailable to meet and refused to provide much needed information to the Union that would allow any kind of meaningful discussions. Proposals drafted on the experiences of PT in both Halifax and Saint John to eliminate many of the known adverse effects on workers, were ignored. As a result the Union was left with no alternative but to file numerous grievances as the employer proceeded to violate staffing and seniority provisions.

In late October 2012, after months of unsuccessful attempts by the Union to have the employer start the 29 process, the parties entered negotiations for the Tech Change notices provided for the Dartmouth Delivery Centre. This was the first time we had to deal with a LCRMS Chapter 16 restructure; Chapter 16 permits the employer to use a volume count for a restructure exercise which was up to 3 years old and to use estimates of the percentage of machine sequences S/L mail for each Letter Carrier route in the unit being restructured.

Six months into the 29 process, the employer provided notice to create another Group 1 section in the Halifax plant which would have sortation work performed in the HMPP instead of the DDC. The Article 29 “negotiations” dragged on for over seven months, largely due to the employer’s intransigence and incompetence. Much appreciation for the incredible patience and perseverance goes out to all those involved: Local President Tony Rogers, 2nd Vice President Elise Leblanc, Secretary-Treasurer Gina Miller, Grievance Officer Jeff Woods, Union Observers Angela Green and Vaughn Venoit and the members of the Local Joint Health and Safety Committee.

Local Mail and Network Changes

Not satisfied with the cuts to jobs and services achieved through Postal Transformation, in October 2012 Canada Post announced it was implementing major changes to its delivery network and implementing further service cuts. In the Atlantic, Canada Post started by having all originating mail, normally processed in local offices throughout Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, on Fridays that mail would be transported to both Halifax and Saint John’s plants for processing. Canada Post also announced that it was ending VES Coding in Atlantic plants and sending that work to plants in Ontario and Quebec.

As all phases of the Network Changes were implemented across the Region, all originating mail in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and most of New Brunswick was sent to Halifax for processing and some offices in Newfoundland and Labrador saw their originating mail trucked to St. John’s. In addition to the job losses in most offices, these changes have had a drastically negative impact on the services we provide to the public: mail that was previously sorted and delivered locally the next day is now being trucked across the region for processing and delivery is taking upwards of a week or more!

From later October 2012 to the fall of 2013, the Region participating with local executives in countless Group 1 schedule change consultations, due largely to positions being deletions and Rest Day rotations being moved. In some instances the employer did not even bother advising the Union that it was changing schedules and simply implemented new schedules of work!

I want to acknowledge the efforts of all Atlantic locals for their efforts opposing these cuts to jobs and services and for their participation in the consultation process. While we were not always successful, locals certainly raised the public's awareness to the erosion of public services and loss of good jobs in local communities around the Region.

I also want to make special mention of a group of friends, allies and concerned New Brunswickers who, to draw attention to public dissatisfaction with the Corporation's decision to send all originating mail out of the province for processing, took direct action and shut down all transportation in and out of the Dieppe Mail Processing Plant on the first day the new "network changes" went into effect. The plant was shut for a considerable amount of time until police intervened. A big thank you to the local organizers (you know who you are), our sisters and brothers from the Moncton and District Labour Council and New Brunswick Federation of Labour President Brother Patrick Colford.

Organizing and Bargaining in the Private Sector

As with the previous mandates, during this term the Region we seem to be in constant "bargaining" mode with collective agreements expiring in all Private Sector Bargaining units: Canada Post Combined Urban Services: RMS Pope Inc. (Maritime Provinces), Eazy Express Inc. (Fredericton NB); and the Emergency Health Services unit at Emergency Medical Care Inc. (Dartmouth, NS). We also successfully organized two new units: Pro-Ex Transportation (Atlantic) and Medacom Atlantic Inc. (Charlottetown PE).

Emergency Medical Care Incorporated

Within weeks of the Union providing the notice to the employer, the newly elected provincial Liberal government introduced legislation that imposed essential services restrictions on every health care worker in the province, including the membership in the Nova Scotia Medical communications Local (formerly the Bedford Local). While not removing the right to strike, the legislation imposed an obligation for both unions and employers to agree on numbers of workers who would be designated as “essential services” prior to either party taking strike or lock-out actions. The legislation was so skewed that it meant that there would be more workers designated “essential” at the Communications Centre than would at work during regular operations.

Both the membership and the Negotiations Committee were determined not to have the legislation negatively impact their right to bargaining freely. The Committee took the position that the Union and EMC Inc. had previously negotiated four collective agreements and rather than spend considerable time and energies negotiating an Essential Services agreement, the parties should focus on bargaining a new contract.

As a result of the membership’s solidarity and the Negotiations Committee’s dedication, after a few short months of bargaining, CUPW successfully negotiated a new five year collective agreement which was largely ratified by the membership. Key improvements included:

- The conversion from the current Defined Contribution pension plan to a Defined Benefit pension plan (Nova Scotia Health Employees’ Pension Plan),
- Wage increase of 2.0%, 2.5%, 3.0% for the first 3 years (4th and 5th years’ wage increases based on the Acute Care Paramedic wage increases negotiated in the field);
- The establishment of shift premiums ranging from \$0.65 per hour worked (2014) to \$1.50 an hour beginning April 2015;
- The establishment of weekend premium of \$1.50 an hour;
- Beginning February 2015, an additional paid statutory holiday (Family Day);
- Ability to utilize paid sick leave to transition onto third party benefit plans.

The contentious issue of wages for a new classification, Transfer Administrator, was also resolved during bargaining.

Congratulations to the membership, Local Executive and Negotiations committees for achieving what many thought would be unachievable given the political interference into the collective bargaining process by the provincial Liberal government. Special thanks to NSMC President Elysha Lavin, Secretary-Treasurer Trenton Garde and negotiators Sister Lorelei MacIntosh and Brothers Matt Lent and George Nickerson.

Medacom Atlantic Inc.

In December 2012 CUPW Atlantic representatives met with workers at Medacom Atlantic Inc., a subsidiary of Medavie Blue Cross, who also operate Emergency Medical Inc. (EMC) in Dartmouth. Workers there, having regular communications with their sisters and brother at EMC in Nova Scotia, were anxious to join CUPW and have a union deal with a long list of workplace issues. On May 10, 2013 the Union finally received the decision from the Prince Edward Island Labour Board that CUPW was the certified bargaining agent for all workers at Medacom Atlantic.

Although the Union had signed up an overwhelming percentage of workers, the employer consistently challenged our applications for certification. Exhausting every avenue, the employer's final argument before the Labour Board was that CUPW was not a "trade union" under the Labour Act of Prince Edward Island; the Board's decision to recognize the Union was eventually upheld by the PEI Supreme Court.

The Union turned its attention to meeting with the workers to formulate their demands and to provide the employer with notice to bargain. The challenges in negotiating a just and fair first collective agreement for these workers were considerable given that workers in the Health Care sector, along with most of the public sector in Prince Edward Island, do not have the right to strike. Appalling wages and inadequate staffing levels, resulting in the inability for workers to access any type of leave (paid and unpaid), were major issues for the membership.

As the parties were unable to reach a tentative agreement, it was necessary to go to interest arbitration in order to achieve a first contract. In December 2014, Arbitrator Bruce Outhouse rendered his decision and workers at Medacom finally had a contract that addressed many of the concerns for which they had initially reached out to CUPW. The five year agreement included significant wage increases, seniority protections and an increase of four additional statutory holidays.

Throughout the last two years of organizing and bargaining, the membership at Medacom Atlantic displayed a remarkable perseverance and solidarity in their efforts to gain respect from their employer. Special thanks to our negotiators: Brothers Sean Conahan, George Nickerson and Matt Gaudet.

Eazy Express Incorporated

Following the loss by Super Express of its Fredericton CUS contract, CUPW quickly organized the drivers, most of whom had been employed with the former contractor, and filed for certification with the new contractor, Eazy Express. While Eazy Express had held several CUS contracts in Ontario, it was a new contractor in Atlantic Canada.

As with most CUS contractors, obtaining the bargaining certificate was fairly straight-forward, but when it came to bargaining a collective agreement, the employer became allusive and obtaining dates to bargain was near impossible. Such was the case for Mr. Brooks and Eazy Express.

The Negotiating Committee worked extremely hard and through their dedication, determination, and thinking outside the box, a collective agreement was finally reached. In October 2012 the parties signed a four-year collective agreement which includes increased wages and improved benefits such as: Per piece payment with a guaranteed monthly wage of \$15 per hour, 7% increase to per piece payment and monthly wages, uniforms and boot allowance, increased health and safety protections, seniority recognition, a procedure for staffing, the contracting in all CUS work performed in the Fredericton area, the introduction of lead hand classification and Lay-off protections.

The collective agreement was the result of a Negotiating Committee who fought hard with an intransigent employer to achieve increased rights and protections for a group of workers traditionally exploited by their employer and Canada Post. Thanks to Sisters Diane Akerley (Fredericton Local) and Toni MacAfee and Brothers Blaine Long (Eazy Express Bargaining Unit) and Jim Gallant.

RMS Pope Incorporated

Throughout the term, workplace issues continued to escalate with RMS Pope Inc., which in 2011 held Combined Urban Services and Highway services contracts with Canada Post in cities and towns throughout the Maritime Provinces (Sydney NS HRM, Antigonish NS, New Glasgow NS, Charlottetown PE, Bathurst NB and Campbellton NB). Each time a grievance was filed or a workplace issue was raised with the employer, Pope's response was always the same; that if the Union did not relent, RMS Pope would simply provide Canada Post with a 90 day notice and terminate its contract. While Pope failed to ever follow through with its idle threats, it continued to lose contracts to other "lower bidders". Time after time RMS Pope would blame its losses on the fact it had to tender for contracts using union wages.

With the expiry of our contract in late 2013, the membership ratified a package of demands and CUPW provided notice to the employer to bargain a new collective agreement. True to form, RMS Pope refused to negotiate with the Union.

As RMS Pope continued its blatant violations of the agreement, the grievances accumulated. Despite many attempts by the Grievance Officer and Union Representatives to work with RMS Pope to resolve grievances and secure agreement on arbitration dates, the employer continuously ignored the Union. Justice for the membership is being denied as dozens of grievances remain unresolved.

As the time this report is being written, CUPW is proceeding to take legal action in the Federal Court in order to compel this employer to comply with the Canada Labour Code, adhere to Canada Industrial Relations Board decisions and honour our collective agreement. Although this employer is doing everything it can to shirk its obligations, we will relentlessly pursue every available avenue in order to achieve justice for the membership.

Pro-Ex Transportation

As this report is being written, CUPW has obtained the bargaining certificate for Pro-Ex drivers performing CUS duties throughout the Atlantic Provinces. The membership has ratified a package of demands and the National Executive Board appointed Brother Jim Gallant and Sister Toni MacAfee to the Negotiations Committee.

As the employer failed to bargain in any real sense, CUPW applied for conciliation. In January 2015 a Conciliations Officer was appointed and the parties are presently providing availability to meet.

International Solidarity

This mandate the Region continued its International Solidarity work, largely through the Region's International Solidarity Fund. The AISF was created by Atlantic locals with the objectives of promoting a better membership understanding of the need for international Trade Union solidarity and worker-to-worker solidarity between postal workers and workers in other countries. The AISF is largely funded by contributions from Atlantic locals and proceeds from International Solidarity auctions held during Spring and Fall Educations and other constitutionally mandated meetings.

The following were adopted by the Resolutions Committee which oversees the administration of the AISF between constitutional meetings:

- Sisters Beatrice Douglas-Simmons (Nova) and Anita Bock (Charlottetown) participated in the People's Tribunal and Assembly for the Release of the Cuban Five held in Toronto (2012);
- Sister Dawn Robertson (Fundy) participated in Habitat for Humanity – Nepal Global Village Program (2012);
- Sisters Ruth Breen (Fredericton-Oromocto) and Marilyn Cheek Totten (Truro) participated in a delegation to the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAD) In-Depth Study Tour of Occupied Palestinian Territories. Sister Toni MacAfee also attended as part of the CUPW national delegation (2012);
- Brother Eoin Dewar (New Glasgow) participated in the Breaking the Silence - Mining, Labour and Sustainable Futures Tour to Guatemala (2013);
- Brothers Chris Clay (Charlottetown) and Mike McDonald (St. John's) joined members of the National Human Rights Committee, Brother Richard Hopper (Moncton), Sisters Annette Davis (Happy Valley-Goose Bay) and Anita Bock, and thousands of activists from Canada and Quebec at the Peoples Social Forum held in Ottawa (2014);

- Brother Scott Gaudet (Summerside) and Sister Beatrice Douglas-Simmons (Nova) attended the 10th Colloquium for the Release of the Cuban Five held in Havana Cuba. The CUPW delegation also met with representatives of the Cuban Workers Central (CTC), the Communications Workers Union and Cuban postal workers (2014).

Postal Workers from the Atlantic also participated in a number of nationally funded Union delegations:

In 2012, Sister Ruth Breen (Fredericton-Oromocto), along with 3rd National Vice President Brother Donald Lafleur, represented CUPW at the World Climate Change Conference held in Durban, South Africa. While in Durban, CUPW and PSAC delegations met with representatives of the South African Communications Workers Union to monitor a jointly funded project there.

In that same year, Sister Toni MacAfee joined Sisters Bobbi Jo Brown (Truro) and Ruth Breen (Fredericton-Oromocto) in participating in the Labour Solidarity with Palestine Strategy meeting held in Montreal. Delegates at this meeting analyzed the on-going situation in the Middle-East and Palestine and discussed labour's participation.

Also in September 2012, Sister Krista Ricketts (Corner Brook) joined other youth delegates from Canada and Quebec in attending the International Transport Workers Federation's (ITF) first Global Young Transport Workers Conference, held in Montreal.

In late 2012 Sister Anita Bock (Charlottetown) and Brother Scott Gaudet (Summerside), along with other CUPW members, traveled to Porto Alegre, Brazil to attend the World Social Forum. The WSF brings together activists from the trade union and civil society movements worldwide to oppose global neo-liberalism in order to build a better society for all people.

In 2013, Sister Beatrice Douglas-Simmons, along with Brothers Denis Lemelin and Don Foreman, attended "Five Days for the Five" event in Washington, DC. The event was organized by the International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban Five to bring public attention to the plight of the five Cuban heroes languishing in US federal prisons and for their immediate release.

Work With Labour Movement and Allies

Throughout this mandate, postal workers have continued our active participation within the labour movement, working closely with our allies, labour councils, the Canadian Labour Congress and the four Federations of Labour on fundamental issues affecting workers and the public at large. As in the past, CUPW continues to be well represented on Federation of Labour Executive Councils: Brother Carl Pursey (past President Charlottetown Local) is the President of the Prince Edward Island Federation of Labour; Brother Eric Gauthier (past President Charlottetown Local) represents CUPW on the PEI Federation of Labour's Executive council; Brother Kevin Suttie (newly elected President Fundy Local) represents CUPW on the New Brunswick Federation of Labour's Executive Committee and Brother Gordie MacDonald (President Breton Local and Cape Breton and District Labour Council) represents postal workers as the General Vice President on the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour's Executive.

During the past three and a half year CUPW has worked with allies, our brothers and sisters in the trade union movement and community activists to consistently challenge attacks from right-wing governments of all stripes. In Nova Scotia, CUPW actively supported the International Union of Operating Engineers (which subsequently joined with Emergency Medical Care Inc. in attacking our bargaining certificate at the communications Centre in Dartmouth) when then NDP provincial government stripped the right to strike away from the province's EHS paramedics.

In 2014 Postal Workers joined with other Health Care Sector unions (Nova Scotia Government Employees Union, Service Employees International Union, UNIFOR, Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Nova Scotia Nurses Union) to launch a constitution challenge of the newly elected Liberal government's Bill 37. Through a coalition organized by the Federation of Labour, the unions filed a claim in the Nova Scotia Supreme Court that the Bill contravened the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and international law by directly interfering with the right to strike by all health and community services workers.

Under Bill 37, the Essential Health and Community Service Act, unions and employers in the health care sector are required to have an “essential services agreement” in place before any strike or lockout action could be taken. Bill 37, one of the most regressive pieces of legislation imposed on workers anywhere in the country, essentially stripped workers and their unions of their constitutional right to bargain collectively. Members in the Nova Scotia Medical Communications Local were among the 40,000 health care and community service workers in Nova Scotia impacted by the legislation.

In 2014, Postal Workers joined the broader labour movement in Newfoundland and Labrador to actively oppose new provincial legislation that wiped out improvements to the province’s labour law amendments that unions had fought hard to achieve in 2012. Bill 22, introduced by the Tories and supported by the Liberals, included provisions that would see certification votes in which there was less than a 70% turnout, anyone who did not vote would be deemed to have voted against the union!

Throughout this term, CUPW increased its participation in labour councils around the Region. While there still remains a small percentage of locals who are not regularly sending delegates and simply paying their per capita, most locals (where there are labour councils) are involved and playing an active role in the important work being done in their communities.

The Region also continued its coalition support by working closely with a number of coalitions and social partners such as:

- Nova Scotia Cuba Association and the Canadian Network on Cuba
- Canadian Federation of Students – National Days of Action
- Elsipogtog First Nations – defending Indigenous rights and fighting to oppose Fracking in New Brunswick
- Students Against Israeli Apartheid
- Halifax and New Brunswick Media Co-ops
- Maquila Solidarity Network
- Acorn Nova Scotia

Save Canada Post Campaign

Within weeks of the December 11th bombshell that Canada Post was implementing a new Five Point Business Plan, Atlantic locals met collectively to strategize on how to best mobilize to defeat this attack on workers and our public post office. Close to fifty representatives attended representing most Atlantic locals. With some financial assistance from the National Union, locals paid for their representatives to come to Halifax in order to discuss what concrete actions locals and members could take to fight back. Instead of simply hanging our heads and lamenting the cuts that were announced, members were as defiant as ever. It was a fantastic weekend filled with great discussions and innovative ideas. The strategy session focussed our efforts and gave the entire Region a jump start.

On January 25 and 26, 2014 we all met in Halifax and spent the two days discussing what specific tools and resources we would need, what actions would be required and strategies to implement for a successful fight back campaign. We were very grateful to have Halifax NDP MP Megan Leslie and Council of Canadian's Healthcare Co-ordinator, Adrienne Silnicki, join us to provide tips (and tricks) on lobbying various levels of government, and CLC Nova Scotia rep Brother Tony Tracy facilitated a session on how to effectively use social media in our campaign. We were also very fortunate to have Brother Geof Bickerton present on Postal Banking, to a meeting open to the public, and former National President Jean-Claude Parrot joined us by Skype. Brother Parrot's knowledge and guidance were very inspirational.

The Region also used teleconferencing to hold door-to-door canvassing training for local executives involved in the campaign. Many thanks to Aalya Ahmad from the National Union's Communications Department, and Brother Dave Bleakney (National Union Representative) for their assistance facilitating this training session.

In June of 2014 the National Union proceeded to hire Campaign Co-ordinators at the national and regional levels. Following a national call-out of the membership, the National Executive Board approved two national co-ordinators and three regional: one co-ordinator for Atlantic, Ontario, Metro Toronto and Central regions (Eastern); one for Quebec and Metro Montreal regions; and one for Prairie and Pacific regions. In the fall of 2014 Brother George Nickerson was appointed the Eastern Co-ordinator and continued to work out of the Atlantic Regional Office in his new role.

I also want to thank Sister Kristen MacEachern (Antigonish) for stepping forward to assist in the National campaign. In 2014 Sister MacEachern was appointed Eastern Co-ordinator and has been working tirelessly on behalf of the membership out of the National Office.

Atlantic locals have been incredibly active throughout the “Save Canada Post” campaign. With a very few exceptions Atlantic Locals have been out in full force in their communities collecting signatures, meeting the public through tables at farmer’s markets, malls, hockey rinks, and going door to door to talk with to the public. Locals organized meetings with their MP’s and made presentations to city, town and municipal councils and worked hard to get resolutions adopted and to counter the mountains of misinformation spewed by Canada Post, Conservative lackeys and the mainstream media. Many locals held successful town hall meetings which garnered huge public support.

The campaign has had the overwhelming support from the broader labour movement: Labour Councils, Federations of Labour, and Canadian Labour Congress. CUPW was invited and presented to delegates at three of the four CLC Election Preparation Conferences held in the Atlantic Provinces.

As with any long term campaign, there have been some setbacks along the way. There have been some locals where the campaign has not taken off and others where the membership has not been engaged. From the onset of the national campaign, the focus was primarily on the elimination of door-to-door delivery. The fact the Federation of Canadian Municipalities defeated a resolution solely focusing on the preservation of door-to-door delivery, ignoring the other negative aspects of the Corporation’s Five Point plan, has been a major problem as many city/town and municipality resolutions opposing the cuts, already had centralized delivery.

Special Acknowledgements

As I reflect back over the past term, I cannot help but feel that we are very truly fortunate here in the Atlantic Region to have such an amazing number of members who always step forward, never shying away from the challenges and who are consistently and militantly passionate in their defense of the membership.

I want to take this opportunity to recognize and thank a number of individual members who, throughout this mandate, have worked tirelessly and sacrificed countless hours away from friends, families and loved ones. On behalf of the Atlantic membership, the Regional Officers and Union Representatives, I want to thank all the Local Executive Committees, Committee members, Shop Stewards, Labour Council delegates, Worker Facilitators, Worker Advocates and shop floor and community activists for their dedication and without all their hard work, our union work would not be possible.

I also want to acknowledge the work of the Region's National committee members. As in past mandates, these members have volunteered their time and efforts ensuring great representation for the membership: National Board of Trustees member Kevin Peterson (New Glasgow) and alternate Scott Gaudet (Summerside); National Women's Committee member Ruth Breen (Fredericton-Oromocto) and alternates Nancy Rogers (Bridgewater) and Jackie Robichaud (Miramichi); National Human Rights Committee members Anita Bock (Charlottetown), Donna Mendes (Nova), Dwayne Corner (Nova), Annette Davis (Happy Valley-Goose Bay) and alternates Marty Davidson (Cumberland), Debbie Watson (Fundy), Richard Hopper (Moncton) and Carlynn Leblanc (Moncton); National Work Measurement Committee members Nicola Boone (New Glasgow) and Tony Rogers (Nova); National Health and Safety Committee member Debbie Hollis (Moncton); National Appeal Board member Anita Bock (Charlottetown) and alternate Krista Ricketts (Corner Brook); and National Disciplinary Committee member Bobbi Jo Brown (Truro) and alternate Jackie Robichaud (Miramichi).

I also want to acknowledge the work of the members who served during the mandate on the Region's Resolutions Committee which, in addition to their duties associated with Regional Conferences, also administer the Region's International Solidarity Fund: Sisters Sue Gauthier (Charlottetown), Debbie Legge (Moncton), Jackie Robichaud (Miramichi), Krista Ricketts (Corner Brook), Jamie Patterson (Labrador City-Wabush), Gina Miller (Nova), Edith Macdonald (Woodstock), Ruth Breen (Fredericton-Oromocto), Kristen MacEachern (Antigonish) and Anita Bock (Charlottetown); and Brothers Gordie MacDonald (Breton), Mike McDonald (St. John's), Craig Dyer (St. John's), Don Watson (Fundy), Tony Rogers (Nova), Jeff Woods (Nova).

As always, the membership have benefitted immensely from the knowledgeable, dedicated and hardworking staff at our National Office, members of the Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union Local 225 and the Canadian Union of Public Employees Union Local 1979. Here in the Atlantic, COPE 225 Administrative Assistants Delores Smith and Valerie Richardson are no exception. We are very appreciative that both Dee and Val decided to delay their “early retirement plans” and stay with us for one more term! Special thanks to Martha Newcombe for her efforts. Martha came to work at Regional Office in 2013 to fill in during Dee’s absence.

Finally, I want to say that it has truly been my honour to have worked alongside members who, on a daily basis, have never strayed from their shop floor orientation and have always been passionate and militant in their defense of the membership: Sister Anita Bock, who answered the call to come to the Region to replace George when he assumed his Regional Campaign Co-ordinator duties, Regional Union Representatives Brothers Robert Garnier and George Nickerson, Regional Education and Organization Officer Sister Toni MacAfee, and Regional Grievance Officer Brother Jim Gallant.

Conclusion

Delegates at this 2015 National Convention will set the course for the Union for the next four years and so will have many important decisions to make; from deciding on elements of the Union’s structure to electing our leadership, both at the National and Regional levels.

Convention delegates will be tasked with electing a new National President. With Brother Lemelin’s recent announcement that he will not be reoffering, I want to take this opportunity to thank Brother Lemelin for his years of tireless service to the membership. While we did not always agree on the direction the Union should take, Brother Lemelin’s dedication and commitment to the membership must be acknowledged and appreciated.

I wish all delegates safe travel to Toronto and I look forward to a positive and productive National Convention.

Respectfully Submitted In Solidarity

Jeff Callaghan
National Director,
Atlantic Region.

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REPORT

OF THE

NATIONAL DIRECTOR

QUEBEC REGION

SUBMITTED TO THE

TWENTY-FIFTH QUADRENNIAL

NATIONAL CONVENTION

MAY 2015

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Sisters and Brothers:

In accordance with the National Constitution, I am very pleased to submit my second and final report as National Director, Quebec Region.

It has been an honour for me to sit on the National Executive Board and represent all members of the Quebec Region.

Introduction

The past three and a half years have been difficult and demanding, particularly with all of the announcements made by Canada Post and most notably, on December 11, 2013, when the employer savagely announced its plan to eliminate letter carrier door-to-door delivery.

The National Executive Board quickly adopted a new strategy to counter Canada Post's decision with the help of Local Executive Committees. The regional office held multiple discussions with the membership and at public meetings conducted in cooperation with the New Democratic Party (NDP), which has been a strong ally in our fight.

We have seen that the public is against the elimination of door-to-door delivery. A vast majority of municipalities have adopted resolutions stating their opposition to Canada Post's decision; a decision that could lead to the elimination of nearly 9,000 full-time jobs. The regional office organized various activities. Most locals found ways to show the public that Canada Post's decision is wrong. I would like to congratulate them for their initiative.

Political Context

The next federal election will be crucial for postal workers, the postal service and the labour movement. The new National Executive Board, with the help of all locals, will have to work hard to show the public that the Conservative Party is an anti-union and anti-worker party. It's important to remember that this party supports the elimination of door-to-door delivery. 2015 will be a decisive year for the future of our Union. During the next election campaign, members will have to work to convince the public that we need to get rid of this Conservative government.

The postal service belongs to all Canadians and must remain a universal public service. It is profitable, but often poorly managed.

The Union's Structure

I may appear pessimistic, but I am convinced that our current situation is such that we can no longer financially sustain all of the Union's activities (education, arbitration, member services), and that we must make drastic cuts if we are to maintain the level of service members have the right to expect.

With the potential loss of 9,000 members over the next few years, members will have difficult choices to make, at all levels of the Union.

Education

The very foundation of our Union has always been membership defence and education. We must continue to operate under this principle if we are to guarantee the survival of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers.

Over the past term, the Regional Office, with the help of facilitators, enabled 500 members to attend various courses, which are all extremely important:

- Conflict Resolution, Levels I and II;
- Retirement;
- Grievance Investigation and Preparation;
- Know your Rights;
- Pleading Cases;
- Introduction to Union Life;
- Facilitating;
- CUPW and Media;
- Local Administration;
- Union Stewards;
- Letter Carrier Route Measurement System (LCRMS);
- Local Secretary-Treasurers;
- Understanding the Urban Operations Collective Agreement;
- Occupational Health and Safety;
- Bar Charts;
- Harassment and Workplace Violence Awareness;
- WCB Claims.

You are probably aware of my position regarding membership training and education. Since I have been at the regional office, I have always favoured this approach, and we must continue to provide courses, no matter what. I would like to thank all the facilitators for their expertise and passion.

Article 54

During the past term, I have had to meet with the employer about 40 times to represent one hundred or so members in need of accommodation.

The employer often tries to place members in various assignments without abiding by Article 54 of the collective agreement. In light of the employer's attitude in these cases, we must remain very vigilant.

Article 56

A slight reduction in the number of harassment-related incidents seems to have occurred since my last report. Nevertheless, workplace violence continues to be a problem, and it is clear that the employer does not always do the right thing. Often, supervisors turn a blind eye, thinking "it's not a big deal." It's important to remember that members have the right to a working environment that is free of harassment and violence. Zero tolerance is essential!

Work Rules

At the risk of repeating myself, I am convinced that work rules must be respected if we want to keep them. Some people seem to forget that others before us fought to obtain proper working conditions.

I am convinced that Canada Post would stop cutting back on our working conditions if each and every one of us were more conscious of that fact.

Consultation with Canada Post

Following the employer's decision to end door-to-door delivery, there have been a much greater number of meetings with the employer. As usual, announcements are made at the last minute.

We constantly have to hold discussions with Canada Post management to have any number of situations restored. Managers wrongly believe that they can do whatever they want, and use the fact that there are surplus employees as an excuse. We always have to correct their positions to protect our members and enforce the collective agreement.

Moreover, the employer is regularly changing work schedules, particularly for Group 1; either the post offices' opening hours get reduced, or a position is abolished following a retirement or transfer to another office.

Negotiations

As soon as the 2015 Convention is over, the new National Executive Board will have to start negotiations for both the urban and rural units. Members will have to continue to show solidarity.

In the last round of negotiations, we lost many acquired rights, such as sick leave, and saw a reduction in the hourly rate for new employees, as well as an increase in insurance costs. The employer will be coming after our job security, will try to change our pension plan and eliminate some work standards. We will have to show Canada Post that we are a combative union, which has the strong support of its membership.

Conclusion

I have been a proud member of CUPW for 38 years. I am also proud to have been able to play a role in its activities. This Union has given me a lot and has taught me that solidarity can move mountains. I leave with the belief that I did the best I could to represent members with honesty.

Thank you to all those I worked with at the region. Despite some differences of opinion, the entire team had one common objective: defending acquired rights and the membership's well-being.

Thank you also to the members of the various local executive committees I have met with since 1976, as president of my local, and since 1993, for their support in my work, first as Alternate Union Representative, then Union Representative, then Regional Grievance Officer and, finally, as National Director.

Thank you to the National Executive Board, particularly to our National President, Brother Denis Lemelin, for his constant support at sometimes difficult periods.

Thank you to the National Union Representatives I had the opportunity to work with.

Thank you also to the administrative assistants at the Quebec Region (Joanne and Léopoldine) for their professionalism, as well as the administrative assistants at National Office.

A special thank you to the Convention delegates who, since 1993, have continued to re-elect me to represent them.

Lastly, my thanks go to Ginette, my spouse, for her unconditional support throughout all my years of involvement in the labour movement. She has always provided me with encouragement and understanding, despite my frequent absences from home. I am sure that we will be able to fully enjoy my retirement together.

The struggle continues!

In Solidarity,

Christian Martel,
National Director,
Quebec Region.

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| <p>“Any man who leads, who does something, has against him those who would want to do the same thing, those who do exactly the opposite and, especially, the vast throngs of even more critical people who do nothing at all.” (Jules Claretie)</p> |
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REPORT

OF THE

NATIONAL DIRECTOR

METRO-MONTREAL REGION

SUBMITTED TO THE

TWENTY-FIFTH QUADRENNIAL

NATIONAL CONVENTION

MAY 2015

Sisters:

Brothers:

I can't help but start off by saying: "2015, already!" The past term was one filled with action and unprecedented attacks. This report will therefore highlight its most significant aspects or, at least, those that required considerable energy and/or resources. I should specify, and that is stating the obvious, that all of the work that has been accomplished is the result of our collective efforts. No one person can take the credit for such work.

“Modern Post”

Introduced at the start of the 2008-2011 term, the Modern Post continued to wreak havoc during this term. The number of jobs lost to technology is high. Wherever it is implemented, the Modern Post continues to result in unacceptable working conditions in a vast majority of cases.

As soon as the Modern Post was implemented, the Union took measures to minimize its negative impact on members and put an end to those aspects that violated the collective agreement. There is no need for me to go over these measures; I will rather leave this up to the National Grievance Officer in his report. However, I will mention two important arbitration cases, which are still underway. The first is before grievance Arbitrator Burkett, while the second is the interest arbitration before Arbitrator Keller (under Article 29 of the urban collective agreement).

Although, unfortunately, these arbitrations have yet to be completed, we have made significant progress. Arbitrator Burkett has ruled that the multiple bundle delivery method initially introduced is unsafe. However, this required the Union going back before the arbitrator on several occasions because the employer was doing everything it could to delay this case. As for Arbitrator Keller, he rendered a decision that forced the employer to conduct ergonomic studies of a number of new pieces of equipment.

Why am I mentioning these two cases? The reason is that these issues were part of our main demands in the 2010-2012 negotiations. At the time, the Union had decided not to include these demands in the final offer arbitration imposed by Harper's conservative government. In light of the results achieved before the arbitrators so far, it is clear that this decision was the right one.

Considering what these cases mean for the membership, we cannot slow down in our efforts to bring them to a successful conclusion.

December 11, 2013 announcement

As if the Modern Post weren't enough! Besides, it's easy to see that this announcement, which promises to end door-to-door delivery (and led to a very significant increase in the price of stamps), is part of the Harper government's mid and long-term plan. First, modernization reduces the need for staff. Second, delivery to centralized locations makes it much easier to deliver the mail. And third ... the privatization of Canada Post.

In February 2014, Canada Post announced that 11 municipalities would lose door-to-door mail delivery by that fall. Five of these 11 municipalities are located in Quebec, on Montreal's North shore. At the time of writing this report, these 11 municipalities had lost door-to-door delivery on October 20, 2014, and more than one million households were slated to lose door-to-door delivery by the end of 2015, based on Canada Post's announcements.

In the past, we've often said that our future is at stake! This time, that's really the case. We must continue to get mobilized and to mobilize the public. To ensure we are successful in maintaining our universal public postal service, we need the support of our labour allies across the country and abroad, of our community group allies and of the public. That being said, and even though the above seems so obvious, we will not be able to mobilize all of these allies if we ourselves, as CUPW members, are not mobilized. That is why it is imperative that in the months and years to come we increase our efforts to get closer to the membership in the workplace. Yes, we already have so much work to do, but we can do this too.

“Save Canada Post” campaign

The goal of this campaign is to save our universal public postal service. Obviously, saving Canada Post will require taking the political power away from Harper and his henchmen.

Reviewing all of the activities that have been conducted across the country and, more specifically in the Metro-Montreal Region, would take too long, but it is clear that this campaign has been very successful.

With the help of members from many work locations, and even from several other locals, we delivered thousands of postcards to the public over many weekends. The public's reaction has been and continues to be in favour of maintaining door-to-door delivery.

The mayor of Montreal and mayors from the boroughs and the unmerged cities have voiced their unequivocal opposition to the Canada Post and Harper government decision to end door-to-door delivery. The City of Montreal even set up a public consultation commission, where our National President, Denis Lemelin, presented a national submission. Similarly, Montreal Local President Alain Duguay presented a brief on behalf of the Montreal Local.

A great many cities have adopted resolutions in support of maintaining the postal service and of introducing new revenue-generating services, such as banking and financial services.

We can only commend the tremendous amount of quality work accomplished by our staff at national office, the campaign coordinators, the regions, the locals and the membership throughout this campaign.

Our campaign is successful because it is for a just cause. We are fighting for thousands of well-paid jobs for our membership and for society in general. Our goal is also to protect services to the public, particularly the most vulnerable. Our campaign also raises a fundamental debate about the type of society we want: one filled with precarious jobs and starvation wages, or one where workers' dignity is respected through the preservation and creation of decent jobs – in short, a just and fair society.

Negotiations and back-to-work legislation (urban unit)

Who could forget! Yes, this legislation was largely mentioned in the reports to the 2011 National Convention. That being said, and considering that this saga ended on December 21, 2012 and that we will soon enter into a new round of negotiations, it's impossible not to look back.

On the morning of May 3, 2011, i.e. the day following the federal election that resulted in a majority Conservative government, the Negotiating Committee firmly believed that the employer would harden its positions. We did not have to wait long to realize we were right.

In the days and weeks that followed, the employer informed us that it was reneging on agreements in principle we had already reached. As a rule, this doesn't happen. The Harper government's influence was obviously at play.

The back-to-work legislation, the most reactionary ever seen (similar to the one imposed on Air Canada employees), set up a "final offer" arbitration process that was totally biased towards the employer.

Knowing full well that the law was biased in its favour, the employer took the position that no agreement had been reached and that the entire collective agreement was open to changes. The government appointed a retired judge, Coulter Osborne, as arbitrator. Justice Osborne had no labour law experience and was unilingual. We challenged his appointment before the Federal Court and won our case, which led to his resignation. The government then appointed Arbitrator Dufort. After his appointment, it became known that he had been active in the Conservative Party for many years. Later, we also learned that his Facebook friends included members of the Harper government, including Minister Lisa Raitt and Minister Fletcher, who both headed departments responsible for Canada Post (Labour and Transportation).

We challenged this appointment as well on the basis of the appearance of a conflict of interest. We again won our case.

This unfair law forced us into making compromises we would never have contemplated in the context of free collective bargaining. Conservatives argue that Canada Post is an independent corporation that makes its own decisions! Don't laugh, this is a serious matter! However, if that were the case, why would the Conservatives adopt Bill C-60, which gives them the right to be a stakeholder in the negotiations of Crown corporations? The fact is that from now on, the puppeteer will be front and centre.

Even though we all remember this dark period, it's important that we recall it and, above all, make sure Canada Post understands, in the upcoming round of negotiations, that we have not forgotten!

We will also have an opportunity, on October 19, 2015 (or earlier if Harper's Conservatives decide otherwise), to oust this anti-worker government.

Negotiations (Rural and Suburban Mail Carrier unit)

These negotiations took place in a context similar to the urban unit negotiations. The threat of back-to-work legislation was looming large. The initial reaction to such a threat is "What do RSMCs have to lose since their working conditions are inferior to those of the urban unit?"

We could debate this, but the answer to this question requires asking the following question: "How far is Harper's majority government prepared to go to crush workers?"

That being said, we had to assess not only this threat, but also the gains that could be obtained. Everyone agrees that RSMCs did not achieve parity with the urban unit. However, this collective agreement puts us in a better position to have hope for the next round of negotiations.

Finances

The Union's finances have always been a source of considerable, sometimes heated, debate.

Although our financial situation has been problematic for more than 25 years, it has become more critical since the implementation of the Modern Post in 2008. The announcement of the loss of thousands of jobs made us fear the worst and forced us to review our union structure, once again, to remedy the eventual reduction in our revenue source, union dues. Unfortunately, the 2011 Convention did not address this matter.

At the time, the writing was on the wall: additional revenue would be required to avoid a deficit or at least reduce its size. The National Executive Board voted in favour, by the required two-thirds majority, to implement section 7.09 of the National Constitution. It was argued that this additional revenue would be used to pay a portion of the 2015 National Convention costs.

The Metro-Montreal Region voted against this decision and recorded its dissent. The reason for our dissent was that the delegates at the 2011 National Convention had clearly voiced their opposition to even a minimal increase in union dues.

Then came December 11, 2013! The National Executive Board had to free up funds to conduct a campaign to protect our future. The additional revenue generated by the special assessment became very significant. In a context where this fight could not be neglected, which meant allocating large sums of money, the special dues assessment greatly helped us achieve balanced budgets.

However, this additional revenue is not the only reason for our positive financial situation (despite the large amounts allocated to the "Save Canada Post" campaign). Considerable efforts were made to "better" manage our finances. Can we do even better? Certainly, but we are on the right track. We need more discussions on possible cost-saving measures in various areas. The use of lawyers is one example.

Sticking with old ways of doing things that have been in place for decades is easy. So we all have to review the organization's overall work and approaches. For example, our administrative processes around grievances include certain aspects that could be done differently.

The transfer of grievance files is one such aspect.

We spend a fortune on photocopying, paper, storage space and administrative time at the regional and national levels. Under the current process, grievance files are photocopied and sent to the national office, where administrative staff gather the documents, put them in file folders, then in a filing cabinet, and, when the region advises them that a grievance has been settled, they take the documents out of the filing cabinet and, finally, throw them out.

Therefore, we have set up a grievance file transfer system designed to eliminate these steps. We will be conducting a review of this new process in the upcoming months to determine if it can be applied to all regions.

Videoconferencing was implemented as a result of the last National Convention. The National Executive Board conducts two out of three meetings using this system. However, we should expand videoconferencing to other meetings that normally take place in Ottawa.

These are only two examples to illustrate the need to review all of our processes and approaches, in all areas.

Education

Each day, we face attacks, organizational changes, threats of massive job losses and a multitude of grievances and situations that make our work very difficult.

Education allows us to step out of this daily reality so we can focus on building the future, as well as secondary leadership. This is not a responsibility that should be taken lightly, quite the contrary. When it is well-structured and well-prepared, education allows members to get to know THEIR union, in addition to learning skills that will help them deal with the employer. Education also allows facilitators to get re-energized and better understand what members are experiencing in the workplace.

The goal of this past term, and of the few previous ones, was to ensure we develop secondary leadership. This objective, in the context where many people are leaving for a well-deserved retirement, is crucial. More than 600 members took part in in-residence training, whether for a weekend three-day course or a weekly five-day course. For the most part, these courses dealt with knowledge of the organization, contractual rights, work measurement and the role of the union steward. In short, learning about direct membership defence was at the forefront.

We must continue our efforts in this area, but we can see that promising people are coming up and developing.

We also held joint education sessions with the Quebec Region. The members from our region who took part in this session really appreciated this experience. In fact, another such session is being planned.

The report of the Regional Education and Organization Officer will include a more thorough analysis of education.

Grievances and arbitration

Going into more detail is tempting, but these will be addressed in the report of the Regional (and National) Grievance Officers. We should however point out that the workload in this area is very heavy. A review of the thousands of grievances that go through the regional office during each term (not to mention the workload at the local level) demands patience and tremendous determination. These files require an initial review to determine if, at first glance, referral to arbitration is warranted. Then, when pre-arbitration occurs, the Grievance Department must review it a second time and develop its approach.

Then, if the grievance is not settled, the file has to be prepared for arbitration. The Regional Union Representatives and Regional Grievance Officer argue all cases that go before the arbitrators. They also deal with the vast majority of discharge cases (formal arbitration procedure). This is no easy task!

These individuals do not only perform grievance and arbitration-related work. They also help with administrative tasks, preparing training, even developing or improving courses, and serving as facilitators, to name but a few of these tasks.

National Executive Board

This part of the report will be very short! If we were to choose one main qualifier to describe how the National Executive Board operated this past term, it would be RESPECT. The NEB had to deal with many hot topics, such as negotiations, final offer arbitration, Modern Post, finances, the employer's five-point plan and many more important, and sometimes contentious, issues. However, despite differences of opinion, which at times were quite serious, our discussions always took place in an atmosphere of respect (albeit very lively on occasion).

The National Executive Board operated by consensus. Even though it is sometimes very tempting to call the question so as to force an end to the debate, we must continue seeking to achieve consensus.

STDP and accommodation

In terms of impact on the individual, very few situations (if any) have a greater impact. In fact, this impact turns tragic when, for whatever reason, access to the STDP is denied and there is no accommodation. Those who are affected are left in a sometimes disastrous situation.

The change to the STDP is huge when compared with the provisions that existed in the previous collective agreement. Considering that we did not freely negotiate the details of this program, we have had to learn quickly and continuously about the application and impact of these new provisions. We will need to debate what our position will be in the upcoming round of negotiations regarding the provisions around absences due to illness.

In terms of accommodation, i.e. access to meaningful paid work for those with disabilities, the situation has changed drastically. Operational changes stemming from the Modern Post have had a significant impact on the deterioration of employment opportunities. The employer has put an end to transition assignments that enabled employees to obtain a position and assignment while waiting for another position or assignment based on seniority. The employer's elimination of these assignments at the Léo-Blanchette plant, combined with the elimination of many assistant letter carrier assignments and Decentralized Redirection Service (DRS) positions has had a major impact on the ability to obtain appropriate assignments for employees in need of accommodation.

Regional grievances have been filed regarding the elimination of these positions.

There is so much work around accommodation that it requires the ongoing use of considerable resources. It's essential that we assign these resources; not doing so would have a major impact on the life of our members.

Organizing

Organizing efforts in the Metro-Montreal Region were successful in the past. We had obtained certification for several groups of bicycle and motorized couriers, but the employers granted voluntary recognition to another union and reached collective agreements. All our efforts on the ground were lost to the benefit of this other union.

Courier Local 355 was reduced to nothing. Recently, one these groups of workers (approximately eight people) approached us asking to again be certified with CUPW, since the other union is no longer certified. We agreed and were successful in obtaining this certification. We served notice to bargain in January 2015.

The Union invests large sums of money into organizing. Considering the current situation at Canada Post, we should be mindful of the results versus expenses. This does not mean that we shouldn't be organizing, quite the contrary. This work is essential. However, a thorough review of organizing potential and short, middle and long-term plans would be beneficial.

International Work

Many criticize this aspect of the Union's work. Sometimes, such criticism stems from a lack of knowledge about what is being accomplished.

Employers, including Canada Post, do not operate in a vacuum. They consult each other and often adopt concerted actions (without making them public of course). There are too many similarities between approaches adopted by postal administrations, particularly when a right-wing government is in place, for it to be a coincidence. These administrations are well organized and maintain close contact.

Without neglecting our efforts in the "internal" struggle, we must continue to develop ties internationally so pressure can be exerted on Canada Post, both here and abroad. To do otherwise would be to isolate ourselves in this very important struggle for our future.

As well, not only can our union experience benefit unions in other countries, but the reverse is also true.

Consultation

Consultation is an important part of our organization's work. The employer's many operational changes have required significant resources. We conducted this work in conjunction with representatives from the Montreal Local. Consultation work is more than direct consultation with the employer; it also involves following up on the various issues.

We have dealt with too many issues to list them all, but these varied from schedule changes to surplus situations (such as in Repentigny). The surplus situation in Repentigny was a first for the Montreal Local. The conversion to Community Mail Box (CMB) delivery caused a 50% reduction in letter carrier positions in that facility. We have some serious thinking to do. What would have happened to people (and their families) if we hadn't had contractual provisions that prevent layoffs? The answer is obvious.

Let's get back to consultation. Often, there are more employer representatives present than there are issues to deal with. In fact, each management department or area of responsibility sends representatives. Union representatives must be very versatile in their knowledge of operations and the collective agreement. We also called on stewards to assist us at specific consultation meetings to ensure we fully understood the impact and realities in some areas of work.

Local consultation work required the cooperation of each and every one and we have to continue doing the same.

Pilot projects on unaddressed householders and parcels

We are aware of the workload problems associated with some letter carrier duties having very few or no time values.

That is why we agreed to conduct two pilot projects in Montreal. The first relates to householders. This project will be implemented at the Marseille Depot on March 16, 2015. Basically, the goal of this project is to convert per-piece payments for these items into time values, while allowing for the delivery of items of up to 11 inches by 14 inches and 115 grams.

At the time of writing this report, the results of the restructuring confirm that 20 full-time routes and two part-time routes will be created (Marseille had 106 full-time routes and four part-time routes prior to the restructuring). While some routes are being created as a result of updates, the vast majority stem from the introduction of householder time values.

This one-year project will enable us to assess the impact – whether positive or negative – of introducing such values.

As for the parcel project, no agreement has been reached at the time of writing this report. For the Union, this is an opportunity. The problem with parcel delivery in a letter carrier system is that, in our opinion, it does not allow for managing volume fluctuations and for expansion of this product.

At this stage, it's impossible to know whether this project will go ahead. All will depend on whether the solutions being considered by the employer can be reconciled with our proposals. If we fail to reach an agreement, we will have to propose solutions for the upcoming round of negotiations that will address the overburdening problem caused in part by parcel delivery.

Administrative work

Our administrative work also takes up a large portion of our time. Not only do we have to deal with grievances with the employer, but we also have to issue reports to the national office, keep up-to-date lists and ensure follow up, to name but a few. The same is true for files requiring the drafting of memoranda of agreement (reinstatements, etc.). As well, everyone has to draft letters on an almost daily basis.

As previously indicated, we had to review how we operate at all levels. As such, the administrative work could not be ignored. The transfer of grievance files will not only enable us to realize cost savings in terms of paper and photocopies (see section on finances), but also in terms of the number of hours of work of administrative assistants. This, coupled with better planning, has enabled us to reduce the time spent on administrative work by more than 30%. Our gratitude to those who perform this work is expressed in the "acknowledgments" section of this report.

Team Work

The above is a brief summary of our work. It would be impossible to list all the files, disputes or other issues that we have had to deal with in the last three and a half years. While there are challenges and a lot of work involved in every mandate, this no doubt has been the most difficult we've ever experienced. The next four-year term will not be any easier, particularly if history repeats itself in the next federal election and Harper's Conservatives are re-elected. That is not to say things will be easy if another party comes to power, if the past is any indication.

It would have been impossible to face all of these challenges and keep such pace without team work at all levels of the Union, from stewards and activists to local, regional and national representatives.

Acknowledgements

As my predecessor, Jacques Valiquette, said so well in his report to the 2011 Convention, thanking people without forgetting anyone is an impossible task. So know that if I fail to mention you in this section, this in no way diminishes your contribution and my gratitude.

First, I would like to thank those who work behind the scenes, supporting our daily work.

Our regional office experienced major changes over the past term, with regard to our administrative assistants. Francine, Michèle and Lucie left us for a well-deserved retirement. I would like to thank them for their dedication throughout their career with us.

Two new assistants joined us, Nathalie and Francine. I would like to thank them for their excellent work and efficiency.

Special thanks to Nathalie, who held down the fort many times until we hired Francine and who also, helped us with the hiring process.

In the last round of negotiations, I sat on the Negotiating Committee and worked with three administrative assistants at various stages: Béa, Rachel and Jackie. What tremendous work you accomplished! Thank you!

Thank you to the specialists at National Office for your excellent work, particularly Geoff and Kathie who have been with us for so many years and are completely devoted to our cause. Thank you for continuing the struggle with us.

Thank you also to the Translation Department for your efficiency! In fact, I would like to thank all national office staff, no matter what work they perform, but special thanks to two administrative assistants I have had the opportunity to work with for many years, and particularly in the last three years, as a member of the National Executive Board. They are Claire (who has now retired after 46 years with CUPW) and Angèle, who are always smiling, efficient and dedicated. Thanks to you both.

Thank you to the Local Executive Committee for your work and trust. Despite many attacks and the cut and thrust of direct membership services, you held down the fort and represented them well.

Thank you to the National Executive Board members for frank and honest debates.

And special thanks to someone who gave me, and many others, my first union education course. I refuse to say what year that was! On a more serious note, Francis, a hard worker with exemplary ethics, you will be missed. Everyone will remember your interventions at National Conventions. Thank you for all that you have done and for the passion you have imparted to so many people. Enjoy your retirement, my friend.

Of course, I cannot fail to mention the extraordinary work accomplished by the regional office team.

Yannick! He had very big shoes to fill after Jacques Valiquette left. Members in our region continued to benefit from an outstanding Education Department. Thank you, Yannick!

Anny! She is filled with passion, but disconcertingly calm. Behind her “angelic” face is a strong and determined individual. She has an “interesting” sense of humour, but is also filled with good advice. Thank you, Anny!

Nancy! Always ready to argue before arbitrators, regardless of the collective agreement. A real go-getter! She also agreed to put her personal life on the sidelines to sit on the RSMC Negotiating Committee (for a second time). Thank you, Nancy!

Alain (affectionately called Robi)! Although he coordinates the campaign for the entire province of Quebec, he is part of us. I am amazed by his dedication to the “Save Canada Post” campaign and precision in his work. He’s always ready to give up his time (weekends included) to go help locals in Quebec. What an asset for the members. Thank you, Robi!

Marc-Édouard, the newcomer! Having seen him in action during the worker advocate course, I am convinced he will be able to represent members effectively before grievance arbitrators.

Mélanie chose to continue the struggle with another union. I would like to acknowledge Mélanie’s work during over nine years on behalf of members in our region. I wish her well in her new position (and I know she will do well). Thank you, Mélanie!

Finally, Yves! We’ve been friends for over than three decades, but that did not prevent us from having sometimes heated discussions, but always motivated by the desire to do better for the members. Yves took over the reins of the grievance and arbitration department brilliantly. He has become a brilliant worker advocate. If I were to be dismissed, I would not hesitate one second in having him argue my case. Thank you, Yves, for your excellent work, the great discussions, your listening skills and your friendship!

Jacques Valiquette! While I was sitting on the Negotiating Committee, whose work continued until December 2012, Jacques agreed to keep working at the regional office for several months, despite desperately wanting to go back to the work floor. Jacques could never be accused of being ambiguous about his opinions. However, he always had the interests of the CUPW members in mind. His candour, honesty, joviality, skills, among other qualities will be terribly missed. Thank you my friend from those early days and my friend always!

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge one brother I have had the privilege of working with for several years within the National Executive Board and the Negotiating Committee, Denis Lemelin. Being National President is not an easy task, and neither is being Chief Negotiator, particularly when dealing with a government like the Harper Conservatives. He kept his composure and showed outstanding energy. Denis embodies respect. I want to thank him for all his work and dedication. Thank you, Denis!

Representing Metro-Montreal within the National Executive Board is not an easy task but, without a doubt, an honour and a privilege. I would like to thank the delegates who elected me as National Director of our proud region. I thank the members for their support throughout this most difficult term.

Closing Remarks

One of our objectives is to train secondary leadership. I would say we are definitely on the right track. However, we will have to keep building this secondary leadership, which is essential for the future of our members. It must remain a top priority.

We are under attack from all sides. Postal workers are fighters and have already faced hostile governments who supported our employer. I know in my heart of hearts that, in the end, we will overcome. Our solidarity has always been our most effective weapon and it will once again lead us to victory.

The struggle continues.

Sylvain Lapointe
National Director
CUPW – Metro-Montreal Region

REPORT
OF THE
NATIONAL DIRECTOR
CENTRAL REGION

SUBMITTED TO THE
TWENTY-FIFTH QUADRENNIAL
NATIONAL CONVENTION

MAY 2015

Sisters and Brothers,

This report is submitted for your review and consideration as provided for under article 3.04 of the CUPW National Constitution.

Introduction

This mandate has been a difficult one for postal workers and the landscape ahead for workers in Canada will be bleak if Canadians elect another Conservative Government; which through legislation has attacked worker's rights at every opportunity. In view of these attacks the Canadian Labour Congress has launched the campaign "Fairness Works" to show that unions are fighting for fairness for all workers, as well as the campaign "Retirement Security for Everyone!" which calls on the Government to raise the Canada Pension benefits for the over 90% of Canadians eligible.

Postal workers will recall that with no warning, on December 11, 2013, Canada Post announced its Five-Point Plan which they have vigorously rolled out during the past year. The five points are: a substantial rate increase, elimination of to the door mail delivery, consolidation of mail processing, addressing the cost of labour and more postal franchises.

The Conservative Government fully supports this plan and has stifled debate on the issue in the House of Commons (HoC) with Conservative Members of Parliament (MP's) stating the exact same argument every time a postal issue is brought to the floor by an opposition MP: "Canada Post is an arm's length organization, Canada Post mail volumes are dropping, the taxpayer should not have to shoulder any debt, the forecast is for deficits of \$1Billion a year by 2020; therefore we support the five-point action plan". It is the same answer every time.

All of these cuts were based on the report commissioned by Canada Post and produced by the Conference Board of Canada (CBC) which concluded that if changes such as these did not occur that Canada Post would lose \$1B/year by 2020. Canada Post management, and every Conservative MP that has spoken in the House, have both cited this report as "fact". Unfortunately those predictions have been \$150-500M askew of the actual profits or losses in any given year.

For example in 2014 according to the CBC report Canada Post was supposed to lose \$400M. According to Canada Post management the forecast was a loss of \$274M. In actual fact during the first three financial quarters of 2014 Canada Post has made a profit of \$84M. Christmas, the busiest and most profitable time of year for Canada Post still needs to be added to that tally. One year into the “action plan” and the financial forecasts are far from their “facts”.

This issue has been the main focus of most of the Union’s work over the past 14 months as management at Canada Post enjoys the full support of a “majority” Conservative Government intent on marching in lockstep with all of Stephen Harper’s proposals and visions.

Save Canada Post Campaign

CUPW launched an aggressive campaign against the cuts to Canada Post. Lawn signs have been created to “Save door to door” delivery. There has been debate about this only targeting Group 2 work and that it should be more inclusive of the other Groups including RSMC’s. The reason for this strategy is that it resonates with the public, and they are our primary targets. However at town hall meetings all the topics are discussed including the elimination of internal positions, and the increase in franchises as well as the stagnating delivery times of regular mail due to consolidating mail processing out of local communities and into the large Mail Processing Plants. A lot of Municipalities have complained of their mailings, bills etc, being delayed due to traveling great distances before arriving back where it was mailed.

Across the region locals have been very active in getting lawn signs out, attending town council meetings to have resolutions passed against the changes, and setting up information tables at fairs, malls and community events, and organizing their own town hall meetings. In Central Region 12 municipalities have passed resolutions to reverse the elimination of to the door mail delivery.

The pressure against Conservative Members of Parliament (MP) must be kept up. In the London, ON area the local has put tremendous pressure on the local Conservative MP. They have been knocking on doors and canvassing about our campaign. This direct approach has been working because members of the public are actively calling the MP's office and voicing their displeasure of the cuts to service. This has to be replicated across the country as Federal MP's are sensitive during election time to complaints, and for every phone call or communication the MP's realize that translates into a much larger group of people that are actually unhappy. So 50-100 calls are huge and the MP must take note.

There is material being produced for this type of canvassing and locals are encouraged to contact the Regional Education and Organizing officer to help them get these actions off the ground.

Community Mailbox Conversion

In 2014 twelve letter carrier depots were converted to Community Mailboxes (CMB) which affects less than 200, 000 points of call. In 2015 Canada Post has announced the conversion of up to one million points of call in over 80 letter carrier depots for conversion to CMB's for the 2015 year.

In the Central Region the conversion of to the door mail delivery was implemented in October 2014 at the Kanata letter carrier depot in the Ottawa local. The Kanata Community Association rated Canada Post's performance as barely a C-. The main complaint was the communication with Canada Post to ask for information or to provide input or feedback on mailbox locations was almost impossible. The Association concluded that there was superficial consultation with an unnecessarily flawed outcome. There will be 4 more depots in Ottawa being converted next year, as well as letter carriers depots in Newmarket, Aurora, and Keswick in the Central Region.

In Ottawa they have announced that there will be a predicted loss of 64 letter carrier positions after the conversion. Management has stated that they will not invoke Article 53 due to stockpiling vacancies and upcoming retirements which will leave them with only approximately 9 letter carriers over complement that will be classified as Relief Letter Carriers until attrition takes place.

Pension

At the beginning of this mandate CUPW managed to get back to the bargaining table for Urban negotiations. This was achieved through multiple legal challenges against the Government based on their choice of arbitrators who would have ruled on the Final Selection Process (FOS) that was contained within Bill C-6; which ultimately forced the employer to unlock the doors and let us back to work. But it also contained the FOS arbitration process which the majority of the NEB thought would be a total loss and we therefore agreed to concessions in the Urban unit. This created some division amongst the members but I feel that the presentations that our region gave on the issue presented both sides of the coin. Personally I can totally understand both points of view and everyone in the regional office took part in the ratification votes, even the ones that voted no. These concessions were framed in the knowledge that we had protected our job security clause (article 53) and our defined benefit pension plan.

However with the pension plan being directly tied to interest rates and Canada Post's letter of credit coming to an end the plan took a turn for the worst. Currently the pension plan has a solvency deficit of \$6.3 billion, and a going concern deficit of \$296 million according to their third quarter financial report.

There were meetings at our National office with a pension lawyer and our actuaries in attendance to outline concerns about the plan. We were advised that if the economy does not turn around there will be incredible pressure to restructure our pension plan. It was pointed out that between 2007 and 2011 there were 2700 Group 1 positions deleted. This past year there were 547 positions in all Groups and bargaining units deleted. Next year if all the CMB conversions are implemented, and Group 1 positions continue to be deleted we will lose at least 1000 members in 2015 alone (*my assessment*).

It was noted during these meetings that if interest rates do not go up then trouble will remain. It was also noted that with every 0.25% decrease in interest rates that would create another \$250 million in deficit for the plan. Also despite good returns on investments, which were around 10%, they were characterized as a drop in the bucket given the size of our pension plan which is valued at around \$19 billion. Another effect to the pension plan are that actuarial estimates have increased the mortality age (how long we live) which also puts pressure on the plan as this is estimated to raise the liabilities by 4-5%.

If you have been keeping up with economic projections you will be aware that the Bank of Canada just reduced the interest rate from 1% to 0.75%, and this is linked to the Conservative government basing their entire budget plan on oil, which gas pump prices illustrate have declined greatly in value recently.

In February 2014 Canada Post the Government of Canada introduced the Canada Post Corporation Pension Plan Funding Regulations, which provided relief to Canada Post from the requirement to make special payments into the pension plan for four years (2014-2017). This coincided with the announcement of the 5 Point Plan announced two months earlier. If this relief was not provided it was estimated that Canada Post would have to make payments of \$1 billion per year into the pension plan starting in June 2014. Despite Canada Post and the Conservatives working hand in hand on this issue, they did not advise the Pension Advisory Committee, which represents both unions and management, about their intentions or the Governments.

With this announcement the NEB discussed filing a complaint with the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI) regarding the lack of communication and asked OSFI to remove Canada Post as the administrator of the pension plan. OSFI declined to remove Canada Post as the administrator but did order that a communication and consultation framework committee be established and jointly administered by Canada Post, postal unions, and retirees. This committee is in the process of being set up. Personally I disagreed with sending the letter to OSFI regarding this issue. I still do not know if the letter was a good idea or not. Only time will answer that question.

There may be problems with the solvency aspect of the pension plan, however it should be noted that the Ontario Public Service Pension Plan do not have meet the solvency test. The Union believes that Canada Post should not be subject to the solvency test either. Why? Because they are a public service that will not be going out of business and that is the only time the solvency deficit means anything; when the company becomes insolvent and goes out of business and all pension monies have to be paid out. Despite what the Tories are trying to do to Canada Post by reducing services to the public, Canada Post will not go out of business therefore this solvency test should not apply.

But if the Tories want to privatize the post office the urgency of paying off the solvency deficit takes on a whole new meaning.

Canada-European Union Trade Agreement (CETA)

Overall the Union believes that Canada Post management is unable to recognize what assets exist at Canada Post such as the largest retail network and fleet of vehicles which would suit an expansion of services.

Now the Conservatives have negotiated a new free trade agreement with the European Union (EU) which has placed Canadian postal services in a precarious position.

Some key points in this agreement have been compiled by Kathie Steinhoff from our Communications Department pointing out that the Conservatives have “only partially protected postal services”. The Government, following pressure from the EU, agreed to provide postal services in Canada with an Annex I reservation as opposed to a stronger Annex II reservation.

Kathie writes “An Annex II reservation would have protected existing or future non-conforming measures and allowed for future policy changes. For example, an Annex II reservation would have given our government the policy flexibility to reverse postal deregulation that is not working. Instead of adopting this stronger exclusion, Canada took an Annex I reservation that will protect Canada Post’s existing exclusive privilege to handle letters, but lock in current and future government decisions to deregulate Canada Post”. Therefore the deregulation of outbound international letters will now be locked in place with CETA.

If you recall the 2010 federal omnibus budget bill included legislation to remove international letters from Canada Post’s exclusive privilege eliminating millions of dollars a year from Canada Post’s coffers. To quote Kathie’s report “Canada’s decision to take an Annex I reservation means that current and future governments will not be able to democratically decide to reverse deregulation of international letters. This is not only undemocratic; it is also short-sighted. It is quite possible that a future government may wish to expand services provided by Canada Post, which would be significantly constrained under CETA as drafted”.

Under CETA there is an “Understanding on Courier Services” clause which enables foreign companies to make investor-state claims against Canada. Under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) the courier company UPS made a claim against Canada, which was ultimately lost, but is another reality under CETA and therefore could happen again.

Videoconferencing

At the last convention the membership voted to purchase a videoconferencing system for use by the National Executive Board (NEB). This system is also used by others for various meetings and face to face conversations. For the purposes of the NEB meetings I would say that it serves a purpose; however for many of the discussions and decisions that must be made it is not adequate. The element of face to face debates cannot be underestimated. I believe that more NEB meetings should be done face to face. However, the system is very good for communicating with other regions and for campaign purposes in a very cost efficient manner.

There are still very many technical issues that need to be solved though. For example the audio connection with the Prairie Region is constantly sub-standard. This can effect having a proper debate with full input by the National Director of that region or any region that is experiencing technical difficulties which happens at almost every single Board meeting.

Article 54

With the consolidation of mail processing many internal Group 1 positions are being deleted in the small locals as the mail is trucked to larger centres. This has created a crisis of sorts when it comes to accommodating injured workers. No longer are there places to place everyone into work they can perform if they are unfortunate enough to get injured. Those with injuries that have occurred outside of the workplace, and with no work available in their post office, are now being put onto the Short Term Disability Program (STDP) which lasts for 30 weeks. STDP is available if you cannot perform the functions of your job or anything else that is available. If you are unfortunate enough to have to turn to Long Term Disability (LTD) a worker must have medical conditions that would prevent them from doing any work available in the working world.

The Central Region has filed a formal grievance on the application of Article 54 in the Ottawa Mail Processing Plant. The main aim of this is to have seniority play the role that is outlined in Article 54. Currently local management is unilaterally placing people into vacancies with no attention being paid to seniority at all.

Article 53 – our job security clause

Ottawa management declared surplus employees and turned to the provisions of Article 53. A total of 58 members were forced to change from working in Group 1 to Group 2. While this may not have been the ideal circumstance for every member, everyone in the Ottawa post office benefitted from the provisions of Article 53.01 and could not be moved further than 40km from their current location. Overall the process went smoothly, until the local Director of the plant got involved. The process was unnecessarily extended by an intransigent management team who attempted to jump over a section of Article 53 and combine it with language in article 13 and 14. At the time of writing it appears that they will follow the language and the process will be over by the end of February 2015; totalling 6 months.

At the time of writing this Article 53 is also on the horizon for the Cornwall post office where management wants to displace 5 members from Group 1 to Group 2.

In other areas of the country Article 53 is also being used.

The National office has filed a grievance on how Article 53 has been implemented in Ottawa. Management had stopped staffing letter carrier vacancies 9 months before announcing their intention to use this article. That is the basis of the grievance; that staffing actions under Article 13 must continue until such time that Article 29 or 53 is declared. Until such time it should be business as usual. Currently Canada Post head office is delaying the proceedings stating they are unavailable till May. The Union was hoping for dates during the month of January as proposed by the arbitrator. The outcome of this decision will provide legal case law on whether staffing under article 13 is mandatory, or whether management can stockpile vacancies at will.

Union Structure

Discussions on structure have been commonplace during National Executive Board (NEB) meetings. However despite striking a sub-committee in late 2013, only one meeting occurred just prior the December 11, 2013 announcement of deep cuts to postal services. After this meeting no more sub-committee meetings took place.

At this point in time, and given the lack of resolutions to deal with the matter coming to convention, perhaps the only solution to this matter will be for the incoming NEB to strike another sub-committee of full-time officers and union representatives to come up with a proposal and put that to a referendum vote to the membership. Perhaps this way change can be agreed to prior to the next convention so that any changes can be implemented immediately following it if changes take place during this convention.

Of course all of this must be looked at within the context of all elected officers seriously analyzing their portfolios so see where savings could occur. The bulk of the money that is spent in our organization, no matter how you look at it, is through the grievance and arbitration procedure. It is important to know that this system is not as effective as it should be and that perhaps we need a different method to represent the rights of the members. One suggestion, that would require management to agree at a national level, would be to introduce a complaints stage where the parties at the regional level could speak about impending issues, discipline, and policy breaches in an effort to come to an agreement outside of the arbitration process. While grievances may go down, the work would simply be different for regional representatives trying to negotiate settlements and spending more time in that labour relations role. Also the duplication of the job of referring grievances at the regional level and then again at the national level should be discontinued.

Teleconference Town Hall Meetings

During this mandate there were Town Hall telephone calls. The National office asked for members to provide a telephone number so that they could take part in Town Hall meetings over the telephone. This would involve an automated call being placed to everyone that had provided their phone numbers, at a given time and date. The scenario is much like a radio talk show where a presentation is made, but over the phone, and there are questions asked where you can answer by typing a number on the keypad. Also during the call there are opportunities to ask questions live and have them answered.

Unfortunately the number of members taking part was not overwhelming. This method will be used again and it would help greatly if local union executives could have more members provide their phone numbers for greater participation. If they choose all they have to do is listen, but the opportunity is there for them to take part in the discussion. This is a technology that we must use more; however we need more people to participate to get the Union's message out.

Conclusion

The foregoing does not paint a bright picture for postal workers or workers in general. However compared to a lot of other unions we have a very involved and active membership that knows how to fight for their rights and for an accessible public postal service.

Our first goal is to rid Canada of the Conservative Government that has turned the yearly budget into huge pieces of omnibus legislation which have affected far more than the budget; such as weakening our social safety net, removing environmental protections from lakes and rivers in Canada so that companies can pollute more, to weakening the Canada Labour Code, and altering the Indian Act. These omnibus budgets are hundreds of pages long.

In 1994 Stephen Harper decried the current Liberal Governments use of a 21- page omnibus budget bill stating the bill was “so diverse that a single vote on the content would put members in conflict with their own principles”. He even stated that the House committee could not properly evaluate the bill due to insufficient time and expertise to properly assess all the measures contained in the bill. In Stephen Harper’s world hypocrisy is the greatest luxury.

As when the Mulroney Government declared they would close all corporate retail outlets, and CUPW mounted a strong campaign against those closures and eventually we won when there was a change in government, we need to replicate that with the current attack on postal services. The only way to win this fight is in the political arena, and with a large portion of Canadians not even aware of the changes coming, we need to provide them with information by talking with friends, family and customers to open their eyes to what is coming their way.

Despite our political battles our day to day struggle against the employer not living up to the collective agreement goes on. In this context we need to communicate with each other about what is happening on our work floors so that we can work collectively to defend our rights in the work place.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the other elected representatives Peter Denley, Lori Karas, Don Foreman, Maddie Cleroux and Rick Coffin for the collaborative nature in which our office functions. I would also like to thank our offices administration assistants Lucie Page, Sandra Roy, and Joanne Louisseize for their excellent work throughout the mandate.

I would also like to thank the members of Central Region for their support during the past mandate. We will need to work together in the coming mandate to fight the incredible pressures that will be placed upon postal workers and workers in general. We will also have to work with allies and the broader labour movement who are also under attack by the myopic Conservative Government who's only focus is on destroying the social fabric that has historically tied Canadians together. The solution begins by ousting the Conservatives during this federal election.

It will be a long fight but one that must be waged so that we leave a better future for our children.

The struggle continues....

In solidarity,

Mark Evard
National Director, Central Region

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REPORT

OF THE

NATIONAL DIRECTOR

METRO-TORONTO REGION

SUBMITTED TO THE

TWENTY-FIFTH QUADRENNIAL

NATIONAL CONVENTION

MAY 2015

Disclaimer:

It should be noted that for the vast majority of this mandate I was the REOO for the Metro Toronto Region. At the time of writing this report I had been the National Director for a few months as the election to National Director took place at the November 2014 Regional Conference. As such much of this report will detail what took place while I was in the role of REOO.

ORGANIZING CAMPAIGNS

ADECCO-MAIL MANAGEMENT SERVICES TORONTO, MONTREAL AND VANCOUVER



CUPW was certified to represent these workers on July 6, 2012 after a long legal process in which we argued that Canada Post and Adecco should be considered a common employer for collective bargaining. The Union was ultimately unsuccessful in this case. CUPW then went into bargaining with Adecco as the employer. During negotiations for the first contract, which began in February 2013, the parties have agreed on

most of the non-monetary language including seniority, grievance arbitration, hours of work, discipline and job postings. However, monetary issues remained far from resolved for some time. In 2014 we reached an agreement that gave these workers a substantial raise, vacation and statutory holiday provisions.

Adecco has recently created a new wholly-owned subsidiary, called SQR employment services, to which it is transferring responsibility for its contract with Canada Post. The union was assured that this will not impact the rights of Adecco workers.

SHOPPERS DRUGMART PHARMAPRIX

February 26, 2010, the Metro-Montreal Region filed five applications for certification with the CIRB to represent 140 “postal clerk” employees working in 28 Canada Post franchises within Pharmaprix stores with Canada Post as a single employer.

In hearing dates held from December 2010 – May 2012, Canada Post and the owners of the outlets, with their 28 lawyers, challenged the applications. In its decision, the CIRB ruled that though franchises may form an integral part of the “postal service”, the franchise operators are the actual employers of the retail workers. The board ruled that the work at postal counters represented a tiny portion of the franchises’ activities as a pharmacy. Therefore, they decided the workers fell under provincial jurisdiction, not federal jurisdiction. This meant that the CIRB did not even consider the union’s single employer application. The National Executive Board (NEB) decided to appeal the Decision. In December 2014 the appeal board upheld the original ruling in the employers favor. As a result we are required to organize these workers one store at a time.

QMS-TORONTO

In 2011 CUPW obtained a bargaining certificate for the bike and walking couriers at QMS in Toronto. To date the employer is still refusing to negotiate a first collective agreement these workers.

We are currently in hearings with the Ontario Labour Relations Board to both determine these workers employment status and to obtain first contract arbitration. In order to strengthen our case CUPW helped 22 couriers file employment standards claims in September 2012. Unfortunately, the employment standards investigator issued decisions maintaining independent contractor status. The union has filed appeals in 21 of the cases. To date we remain in hearings with the Ontario Labour Relations Board over these workers employment status and first contract arbitration.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

DIVISIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

ESCALATION MEETINGS

Since the beginning of this mandate working with the two other REOO's in the Province we have been able to establish monthly Joint Divisional Health and Safety escalation meetings. As such we have collectively been successful in resolving many of the items raised to the divisional table. It has been so successful that the employer wanted to cut the divisional meetings to quarterly. The other REOO's and I jointly rejected this change. Some of the items resolved are as follows:

Ford Transit Connect Door Pins

The LJHSC Committee at 66 Ray Avenue identified, on their minutes, a problem with some of the Ford Transit Connect Door Pins. These door pins operate similarly to door hinges in our homes as they keep the door in place and allow the door to pivot. Some of these pins appear to have been installed upside down by the manufacturer. We have raised this matter to the Divisional Health and Safety Escalation meetings and have obtained a commitment from CPC to immediately address this problem. The matter was addressed with both the vehicle manufacturer, through education and vehicle inspection on the work floor. The LJHSC is continuing to monitor this situation.

Upside Down



Right side up



Defibrillators

It was reported to CPC Gateway East (OHS) Occupational Health & Safety Officer, that four (4) out of the total six (6) Defibrillators at the Gateway postal facility, were no longer operational. The batteries in the four units had failed. The discussion of Defibrillators first came up at the SCLPP LJHSC meeting when two of their units also went down due to battery failure. The shelf life of a battery for these units is 5-7 years.



We were able to obtain the information regarding servicing of the unit and were surprised to find there was no standing contract to service the units at any time. The discussion at Gateway East LJHSC was, “if the units were purchased at the same time for the whole GTA, then, is it conceivable that the batteries are all going to fail at approximately the same time as well?” We provided the CPC LJHSC Co-Chair and OHS Officer with contact info for "Rescue 7". Rescue 7 is currently used to train first aid and to train on the Defibrillators for the GTA. They are also capable of selling and servicing all Defibrillator models currently being sold. CPC OHS has contacted Ottawa and is in the process of formulating contracts with Rescue 7 to maintain all units in the GTA.

66 Ray Exit Gate



During the initial inspection at 66 Ray several items were identified. Some of the major health and safety issues found were; the lack of bathrooms in relation to the amount of people working there, and a potential crushing hazard at the exit gate. The crushing hazard relates to the exit gate when the gate is opened as there is no barrier separating the gate from the parking lot. There exists the risk of the gate crushing someone who may be standing in the gates path of travel. The employers solution was to tie ropes around billards near the path of the gate.

The committee saw this as an unacceptable permanent solution and they wanted a fixed barrier. The matter was escalated to the Divisional Health and Safety Committee. I agree with the committee's position. The discussion took place for several months as the employer did not want to spend the money on a permanent fix. I was left with no choice but to escalate this matter to the National Health and Safety Committee. The employer did not want this item on the National table therefore they conceded to conducting a risk assessment of the hazard. The assessment took place in March 2014. The result was that there was a high probability of a crushing hazard. The Regional office was notified shortly after the assessment that 66 Ray would be getting the fixed barrier that the committee was seeking.

66 Ray Bathroom



As stated above the bathroom at 66 Ray was also an outstanding issue. The corporation constructed the building with too few stalls in the men's bathroom. This created a major hazard from the inception of the station. Again the employer was not willing to pay the money to renovate the building and add additional bathrooms. While the employer recognized the hazard they maintained the position that they were within the labour code. After many months of discussion at the Divisional Health and Safety meetings we were successful in the getting additional bathrooms that those workers required.

HRSDC Complaints (Labour Canada)

- During this mandate, the Regional office was informed of a health and safety complaint at the Kestral Drive location. The matter was regarding the sortation of toner cartridges. When these cartridges are sorted, large amounts of toner dust enter the air in the facility. Workers were complaining of rashes and breathing problems. Members of the LJSHC met with the workers and informed them of their rights to refuse unsafe work under both the Collective Agreement and the Canada Labour Code. The workers were encouraged to use the Collective Agreement. After several meetings with these workers and with management, the workers exercised their right to refuse unsafe work under the Canada Labour Code. After meeting with HRSDC and the workers, Labour Canada deemed the toner sortation a hazard and issued a direction. The employer had to utilise new procedures when sorting these cartridges. This matter has also been escalated to the NJOSH as it has national implications.



- The next HRSDC complaint involves violence on a worker inflicted by a supervisor. Section 20 of the labour code states that these matters have to be investigated by a competent and impartial person. Nationally we have filed a HRSDC complaint regarding what constitutes competence and who is impartial. In this situation, the investigation was conducted by the manager of the facility who later gave the worker a five day suspension. Our position is that a manager who is ultimately responsible for the discipline of both the supervisor and the worker cannot be impartial. A complaint was submitted to HRSDC. We received a decision in the workers favor which changed the way the employer investigates violence in the work place nationally and who is considered impartial. While there is still more work to be done on this matter the accomplishment is viewed as a step forward in situations where the aggressor is a member of management.

Appendix DD/HH Training

During this mandate, it was identified that many of our existing Appendix DD/HH trainers were no longer available to train. Some of the trainers had since been elected to full time positions and no longer had the time while others had transferred. As a result, early in the mandate we held an Appendix DD train the trainer session. Shortly thereafter, the new trainers were sent out in the field. As a result, to date we have trained hundreds of workers in DD (Health and Safety) and HH (Human Rights) throughout the Region.

Training of Health and Safety Committees


During the previous mandate, the Corporation did not view the training of Health and Safety committees as a priority. It appears we have been successful in changing the employer's perspective on this matter. At the time of writing this report every Health and Safety committee has had training and further training of committee members are done as the need arises.

Establishing New Health and Safety Committees

During this mandate, we have been able to establish two new Health and Safety committees. The first committee is at South Transportation. These workers were previously transient as the representative would roam from committee to committee in search of somewhere to call their home. The second committee is the Kestral Drive committee. These committees are now meeting on a regular basis.

SHORT TERM DISABILITY PROGRAM

During this mandate we experienced the implementation of the short term disability program. This type of program was new to the urban collective agreement members. As REOO my role was multifaceted. The first was to educate members on how the new process worked. This was done by doing shop floor meetings explaining to workers how the application process worked and how to navigate the appeal process. The second was constructing written submissions for each of the appeals that would later be submitted to an independent medical practitioner (IMP) who would make the final decision to either support or not support the workers appeal. In a local of 7500 members this was a challenging task for one person to manage. Despite the challenges we were able to have a significant amount of claims that were initially ruled non-support changed to support. Since becoming National Director I have dedicated more resources to doing this work.

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| | Submission To |
| | Dr. Mal Practice |
| | By |
| | Mark Brown National Director, CUPW Metro Toronto Region |
| | On behalf of |
| | Mrs. P. Ostalworker Employee #1234567 |
| | December 5, 2015 |

WPIKcode 225

LABOUR MOVEMENT/CAMPAIGNS SAVE CANADA POST

As I am sure you are aware CUPW has been in full campaign mode in regards to preserving door-to-door delivery and the fight against Canada Posts five point plan. We have received a lot of support from labour, City Councils and the general public. I have to been asked to do presentations at various Unions and Labour Councils throughout the GTA as well as throughout parts of the Ontario Region. Recently I had the privilege along with the President of the Peel District Labour Council to lead a deligation to the Brampton City Council to ask for their support in our struggle to preserve door- to-door delivery. The delegation included the Toronto Local President, Local Executives, Unifor members, the Peel District Labour Council President and myself. Both myself and the President of the Peel District Labour Council, Motilall Sarjoo (SARJ), presented to the Council. The Council let us know two things that we were not aware of beforehand:



- The first was that the City has been incurring costs related to cleaning up the litter around the CMB's for years.
- The second was that; Canada Post originally brought in what was once called Super Mail Boxes (in the late 1980's). They approached the Brampton City Council (some of the Councillors present at our meeting were also present at the original CPC Presentation in the 80's). The Councillor went on to say that upon CPC's original presentation in the 80's Council had vigorously opposed the CMB's. They also noted that what was originally presented was not what they have become today. The Councillor went on to say that in the 80's Canada Post assured them that they would only use CMB's in the new developments and would not take door-to-door delivery away from the households that had it presently, therefore the Councillors eventually accepted the CMB's.

After questions and comments the Councillor passed our motion, our resolution and passed a third motion to conduct an assessment of the costs the City has incurred in cleaning up around CMB sites. The Council passed the following Motion:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that The City of Brampton endorse this resolution and forwards it onto the Federation of Canadian Municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities request that the Federal Government direct Canada Post to maintain the current system of residential door-to-door postal delivery in Canada.

The City of Toronto passed a similar motion in January 2014. In April 2013 the Peel District Labour Council President and myself made the same presentation to Mayor Hazel McCallion and the City of Mississauga City Council. The reception we received here was very different than the City of Brampton and Toronto. The Mississauga Mayor made it very clear that she was in favor of Canada Posts decision to eliminate door to door mail delivery. Overall 277 municipalities and 11 municipal bodies or organizations endorsed similar resolutions on our behalf.



On Sunday January 26, 2014 Postal workers from across Ontario and Quebec bore the frigid cold temperatures and boarded buses to the Prime Minister's office in Ottawa. Three buses covered the area between Toronto and Newmarket and many more buses came from the province of Quebec. The demonstrators were protesting Canada Post's decision to eliminate door to door mail delivery across Canada. The demonstrators heard from speakers such as Sid Ryan, President of the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) and Daniel Boyer, President of the Fédération des Travailleurs et Travailleuses du Québec (FTQ). The event was widely covered by the National news media.

Next was a series of town hall style meetings with the public across Canada on the importance of preserving our public postal service. These meetings were well attended throughout Canada and Quebec.

In the summer of 2014 we shifted the campaign into a higher gear. Working with the Toronto and York Region Labour Council we developed a campaign that specifically targets Conservative MP's for not fighting to preserve door to door mail delivery. Step one was to obtain full page ads in the Etobicoke Guardian and Scarborough Mirror newspapers. These papers would be distributed in the riding of the targeted MP's. The ads included the MP's photos and contact information. Then within days Postal Workers and supporters were in those riding with leaflets similar to those ads and petition knocking on doors talking to residents about their MP's position on door to door mail delivery. This was done in Etobicoke and Scarborough and later extended to Port Credit. The support from the public was overwhelming.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper plans to cut YOUR postal service!

**Conservative MPs
Opitz and Trotter must
speak out NOW to save
door-to-door mail delivery!**

Ted Opitz
Etobicoke Centre

Bernard Trotter
Scarborough—Eglinton

People value door-to-door mail delivery. It is an important personal service. Endless trips to a post office box would be a major added chore.

This chore would be particularly difficult for seniors and for people with mobility issues, child care responsibilities, tight schedules and/or a home business.

It is not too late to save door-to-door mail delivery.

Conservative MPs Ted Opitz and Bernard Trotter must act NOW on behalf of the people they represent.

Please tell your MP to speak out clearly and publicly to save door-to-door mail delivery. Please phone, mail or email your MP today.

Conservatively paid Brown: A major speech, a big name in politics as you know, they are the people who will not act. And, they are needed for people.

Find out more: www.SaveCanadaPost.ca • (toll-free) 1-855-878-7111 **cupw-stp** **Save door-to-door**

Getting back to the petitions in the summer of 2014 Postal workers made the second of many anticipated visits to the Milton constituency office of MP Lisa Rait to deliver the petitions along with post cards from Canadians wanting to preserve door to door delivery. The first visit to the office of Lisa Rait was in the spring of that year. At the time over 14000 post cards along with thousands more signatures on petitions were delivered to the Federal Government. Soon after CUPW delivered over 200,000 electronic signatures to Parliament Hill in support of keeping door to door mail delivery.

Continuing in high gear in the summer of 2014 hundreds of postal workers and supporters descended on the



Toronto office of the Federal Minister of Finance Joe Oliver in protest of the Federal Government's decision to eliminate door to door delivery. Simultaneously similar demonstrations were taking place at Conservative MP's offices in Montreal and the Atlantic provinces.



Soon after CUPW reached out to the public by way of billboard ads across the country and video ads at public events such as the various Ribfests across Canada. The CUPW Toronto billboard ad was located on Lakeshore Blvd. between Cockswell and Leasley.



Most recently representatives from senior's groups and organizations for people with disabilities joined the Canadian Union of Postal Workers to launch a major legal challenge to the attempt to end the Federal Government's plan to eliminate home mail delivery. The challenge will be filed in the Federal Court of Canada under Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, asking the court to put a stop to Canada Post's termination of home mail delivery. The challenge will also argue that this decision is beyond Canada Post's authority and should be made by the Parliament of Canada which created Canada Post and defined it.

It should be known that Canada Posts rational for the cuts to service are the losses due to declining mail volumes. What Canada Post is not saying is that in addition to making a significant profit in their latest quarter Canada Post has made a profit each year with the exception of 2011 the year Postal workers were locked out and one quarter after that. Our answer to the losses and now profits is to expand the services offered by Canada Post to include financial services such as Postal Banking. Postal banking is a lucrative part of Postal service through parts of Europe and has existed in Canada up until the 1960's. Much of the laws around Postal banking are still on the books today. The Canadian Union of Postal Workers remains committed to preserving the publicly owned Post Office and maintaining door to door mail delivery across Canada and Quebec.

TORONTO AND YORK LABOUR COUNCIL

MINIMUM WAGE CAMPAIGN



In addition to my duties as REOO (and now as National Director) I represent CUPW on the Executive Board of the Toronto and York Region Labour Council. As such we have been heavily involved in the minimum wage campaign. We have been holding rallies throughout the Toronto area to raise the minimum wage from \$10.25 per hour to \$14.00 per hour.

We believe that a job should lift a family out of poverty not keep families in poverty. We along with the other labour councils in the province were successful in getting the minimum wage raised to \$11.00 per hour and having the minimum wage tied to the rate of inflation. The campaign is not over as \$11.00 per hour is not enough to lift a family out of poverty.

ACTIVIST ASSEMBLY

Over four hundred union members turned out for the Toronto and York Region Labour Council’s Activist Assembly on September 30th 2014. The evening was kicked off by CLC President Hassan Yussuff, followed by Library Workers President Maureen O’Reilly and School Trustee Candidate Ausma Malik who described the importance of city services and public education. Both myself and a Sister from Unifor were asked to host the event. Toronto Mayoral candidate Olivia Chow spoke about her vision of transit and a city that leaves no one behind. Keynote speaker Linda McQuaig exposed the true nature of the Bay Street agenda which would be ushered in by Conservative millionaire John Tory.



HUMAN RIGHTS

In 2013 the National Human Rights committee hounored the memory of Albert Jackson. Albert Jackson was Toronto’s and likely Canada’s 1st black letter carrier. This worker was apointed to work as a letter carrier on May 17, 1882. When he reported to work on the first day the other letter carriers in the station refused to train him because he was black. As a result the management demoted this worker to hall porter. His duties were to open the door for customers when they came into the station. The black community in Toronto rallied around this worker. It was only after the Prime Minister intervened that Albert Jackson was finally trained and permitted to deliver his route.

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers requests the pleasure of your company as we commemorate

Albert Jackson, Toronto's first black letter carrier.

The commemoration and acknowledgement of Albert Jackson's struggle for fairness dignity and respect in the workplace will take place on:

Date: **Sunday March 24, 2013**
Time: **3:00 pm sharp**
Location:
Ontario Federation of Labour Building (OFL)
15 Gervais Drive
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Black History Month
February

Albert Jackson
Sensitizing Date
May 17, 1882
Toronto's First Black Postman

"When Albert Jackson showed up for his first day of work as a mailman on May 17, 1882, the other letter carriers refused to show him the rounds. The reason: He was black."

The postal carrier navigated Jackson to the nearest job of full post, helping to defuse the situation. It didn't.

Toronto's black community was organized into unions and supported Jackson's demand that the other letter carriers who had accepted to Canada along the Underground Railroad.

They were determined to see Jackson working his mail route and took their demands to John A. Macdonald, the prime minister. It was a challenge and they were later. Waiting to please black union, they should have waited."

On June 2, 1882 Albert Jackson was not out with one of the letter carriers to learn his new job. This began his career as the first known Black postman in Toronto. Albert Jackson remained with the post office until his death on January 10th, 1918 -- after 36 years of service.

Photo: The Canadian Union of Postal Workers

cupwesttp Canadian Union of Postal Workers

Directions:

- Hwy 401
- Take exit 375 for Don Valley Parkway
- Merge onto Don Valley Pkwy S
- Take the Eglinton Avenue exit
- Merge onto Eglinton Ave E
- Turn right onto Gervais Dr.
- Destination will be on the right
- 15 Gervais Dr.

Main Intersection:
Don Mills and Eglinton

We are looking forward to seeing you there.

In solidarity
Cindi Foreman
2nd National Vice President

Workers of Colour Working Group
National Human Rights Committee
Canadian Union of Postal Workers

CUPW/CP1079

In 2013 the National Human Rights committee honoured the memory of Albert Jackson with a commemorative poster and presented it to the family some of whom still work for Canada Post and are CUPW members. The event mushroomed beyond our expectations. The national news media in both Canada and the United States ran the story. His saga was later made into a book by a group of grade one students at Clinton Street Public School which we are told is in the process of being published. Apple door productions a theater company is in the process of making this saga into a play entitled “The Postman”. The play is designed to show the importance of door to door mail delivery and is scheduled to be released in conjunction with the 2015 PanAm games.

EDUCATION

During this mandate the Region and the Local would discuss the courses that the Local felt would best benefit the membership before each educational seminar. Out of those discussions we have done the following courses:

- Arbitration
- Basic Shop Steward
- Advance Shop Steward
- Solidarity Skills
- WSIB Medical Orientation
- Health and Safety
- Fight Back
- Union and Politics
- Urban Collective Agreement
- RSMC Collective Agreement, and more

CLOSING

As we continue to face challenges in from both the employer and the Conservative government both education and our work with the overall labour movement will be key factors in mobilizing the membership and preparing our overall fight back strategy. It is important that CUPW-Toronto continues to be viewed as strong and be visible not only in our day to day struggle with the employer but throughout the overall labour movement also.

When CUPW-Toronto members are seen supporting other Unions in there demonstrations and strike on their lines and when other unions are seen doing the same for us, our collective strength and co-operation does not go unnoticed by the employer, the government or the overall Labour Movement.

In solidarity,

Mark Brown,
National Director
Metro-Toronto Region.

REPORT
OF THE
NATIONAL DIRECTOR
ONTARIO REGION

SUBMITTED TO THE
TWENTY-FIFTH QUADRENNIAL
NATIONAL CONVENTION

MAY 2015

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

As provided for in Article 3.04 of the National Constitution, I submit this report for your review and consideration.

Many Challenges

Postal workers throughout the Union have faced many challenges this past mandate and workers in the Ontario Region have certainly seen their fair share.

In my report to the 2011 Convention, I did comment on the impending implementations of Postal Transformation throughout the region along with some of the projected impacts on workers. Since that time, we have seen virtually every local affected by these changes, whether through full implementation and motorization of Letter Carriers Depots to P.T.-Lite which consists of the sequencing of mail and limited motorization.

As a consequence of these restructures, we are constantly receiving reports that Letter Carriers are finding their routes unmanageable and that they are being forced to work many hours of overtime just to complete their own routes on a daily basis.

It has also been reported to the Regional Office that many of the problems with the routes seem to stem directly from the Letter Carrier Route Measurement System, where-by the Route Measurement System does not properly capture all the elements of the Letter Carriers day under the delivery model nor does Geo-Route properly assess the true line of delivery or drive speeds/times that C.P.C. now expect the workers to follow. Another example we are seeing is the increased volumes of parcels/packets and P.C.I.'s that are not being properly reflected in the Letter Carriers daily activities and insufficient space in the Corporate vehicles that are provided making it almost impossible to properly load the mail for efficient delivery.

Group 1 workers have also seen a number of changes this past mandate that are having negative impacts on many of their working conditions and likewise affecting their personal lives.

Finals were removed from Letter Carrier Depots and centralized into mail processing plants with even more work going on to the night shift; mechanized equipment was relocated or removed completely from plants (as was the case in Windsor); management adjusted highway services impacting arrival times of mail in plants for processing thus forcing the realignment of shifts and processing models were changed moving/removing mail from Windsor to London to Hamilton and then to Toronto.

With these changes, we saw many more assignments moved onto the night shift, making it even more difficult for senior workers to obtain day shift assignments. We were also receiving reports on the new equipment and the requirement of workers to have to stand for prolonged periods of time on hard concrete floors without the benefits of fatigue matts and with little relief due to limited rotation of duties. Certainly I have noticed and believe that all of these changes are having a negative impact on the moral of our membership.

R.S.M.C.'s were also affected by changes this past mandate seeing the implementation of new restructure models for a number of facilities throughout the Region.

We also saw the introduction of the Corporate right-hand drive vehicles for R.S.M.C.'s in a number of instances, which were in reality just old (some fifteen (15) years or older) Letter Carrier right-hand drive vehicles which were to have been reportedly refitted (repaired) and then supplied to R.S.M.C.'s for use. Again, many reports were received by the Ontario Regional Office of problems with these vehicles from windows that would not work properly; mechanical problems, doors that would not open or close properly, tracking problems in the snow because of the offset wheels, just to name a few.

Then of course we saw the introduction of the reaching devise, and the long list of issues with this tool and reports of how it was more of a hindrance and a hazard than helpful. We know that a 'new and improved' reaching device has now been introduced and we are still awaiting the final verdict on this new tool and its effectiveness.

Relief for R.S.M.C.'s has continued to be a problem (as with Group 2 workers) and we saw many instances where routes went uncovered for periods of time only to have incumbents return from absences and find days of mail left behind for them to deliver. Clearly this issue has to be addressed in the upcoming round of negotiations and has to be resolved once-and-for-all.

One of the most important challenges faced by the Membership was the announcement of Canada Post and the Government that Door-to-Door delivery would be eliminated across Canada.

In October, 2014, we saw the first implementation of this process in Oakville with approximately a for-five per cent (45%) reduction in routes. Since that time, the Corporation has announced an aggressive plan of implementation across the country and the Region, focussing on Letter Carrier Depots that have already seen full Postal Transformation implementations with a goal of restructuring many of these depots by the fall of 2015. I believe that this is obviously not coincidence that this would be just prior to a fall Federal Election.

Local Executives, advocates and activists have been hard at work, challenging these announced plans, meeting with M.P.'s, M.P.P.'s, City Councils, Support Groups, Coalitions and others trying to rally support. I will comment in more detail further on in my report on these activities.

I would recommend that you read the Report of the National Executive Board to this Convention for more detailed information on these matters.

Education

To help prepare Local Executive, advocates and activists meet the challenges faced by the Union, once again, education has been an important part of the responsibilities of the Union. As in the past, I am confident that those challenges were met as more than eight hundred and thirty (830) participants attended the education seminars put on by the Regional Office and many more received training at the Local level in addition to those who had the opportunity to participate in the National Union U.E.P. Program.

In addition to the structured Spring and Fall Seminars put on by the Regional Office, Brother Leon Bouvier coordinated additional training at the Ontario Regional Office for interested individuals sponsored by their Locals to attend one (1) day training sessions concerning specialized issues.

The Ontario Regional Office also made our education rooms available to Sisters Elaine McMurray and Mary Ellen McDermott who conducted meetings with the London & Area Local Retiree's Committees. Topics discussed at these meetings not only included retiree issues but they also discussed how the retirees could support the Unions various campaigns and most importantly the Fight Back Campaign.

The Following is a list of courses put on by the Ontario Regional Office:

- Basic Shop Steward (3 classes)
- Fight Back for R.S.M.C'S – A Primer in Postal Workers Power
- Health & Safety – Basic Orientation
- L.C.R.M.S. Postal Transformation and Modern Post (2 classes)
- Health & Safety Level I (W.H.S.C.)
- Human Rights
- Managing Disabilities – A Local Perspective (2 classes)
- Local Administration
- W.S.I.B. Level I & II (O.D.R.T.)
- W.S.I.B. Level III (O.D.R.T.)
- Collective Agreement Update (2 classes)
- Harassment Violence Awareness (3 classes)
- Course for Health & Safety Representatives
- Solidarity Skills – Confidence in Conflict
- R.S.M.C. Collective Agreement Course
- W.S.I.B. Level IV (O.D.R.T.) Return To Work
- Advanced Shop Steward (2 classes)
- Collective Agreement Update R.S.M.C.
- C.U.P.W. and the Media
- Basic Health & Safety
- Basic L.C.R.M.S.
- Solidarity Skills Level I
- Political Action (2 classes)
- W.S.I.B. Level V (O.D.R.T.) Medical Orientation
- Know Your Route
- Solidarity Skills Level II

Additional one (1) courses put on by the Ontario Regional Office were;

- Grievance Administration
- Local Administration
- S.T.D.P.
- Pension
- Retirement Made Easy (2 classes)

As previously mentioned, in addition to the courses and training sessions listed above, I do know that many Locals have also made training sessions available to their membership and in some instances coordinated with surrounding Locals to reach a wider group. It is efforts such as this that have helped enrich this Union and shows the true dedication of Local Executives and the resolve of the membership.

I would recommend that the delegates to this Convention review the report of Brother Leon Bouvier, Regional Education and Organization Officer for the Ontario Region for more in depth information as it relates to Education this past mandate in the Ontario Region.

Article 54 & Accommodations

With all of the wide-sweeping changes being implemented by Canada Post this last mandate, accommodation of our membership has been difficult at best.

As commented on in my report to the 2011 Convention, we are now starting to see/feel the full impact of Postal Transformation and its effects on our ability to accommodate workers as well as the impact of the Corporations ongoing initiatives around the mail processing review.

One instance of difficulty for the Union and the Membership was the unforeseen circumstances of the long hours Letter Carriers have to work on their routes. As a result of Article 15.08 overtime situations and the two waive system we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of accommodation requests from members who are claiming that they are unable to work beyond 5 p.m. or 6 p.m. due to childcare issues.

We have also seen situations where Group 2 members had previously been accommodated prior to the implementation of Postal Transformation; but due to the reduction in assignments (thus leaving members unable to acquire assignments through seniority) or the unmanageable requirements of the new assignments for injured workers to be able to perform, have meant that some Letter Carriers were sent home without accommodation.

Family Status requests for accommodation have not just been limited to Group 2 but we have likewise seen an increase in requests coming from Group 1 members. This increase is a direct result of the reduction in day shift assignments in all sections and most importantly in the manual sort assignments (where we have seen a reduction in the Manual Sections or Final Sections) that we have experienced in the past few years.

With fewer day shift assignments available for members to self-accommodate into using their seniority, we are also seeing an increase in medical requests for accommodation on to the day shift which is placing an enormous strain on the Article 54 process with all of the competing interests. The end result is once again that members are being forced out of work and are being sent home without accommodation.

In one local, we have experienced a circumstance whereby members had previously been accommodated into the Finals Section prior to centralization of the work, but once management moved the work into the new location, the employer advised us that the members were no longer permitted to use seats/stools due to space requirements which resulted in a number of previously accommodated workers to be sent home due to their limitations and accommodation requirements.

To further compound all of these issues, at the time of the writing of this report, we have just learned that at least one of the members sent home due to the employer's refusal to continue to accommodate them after the implementation of one of CPC's initiatives has been informed that Sun Life has determined that their previously approved LTD claim has been overturned and that the member must now pay back approximately one (1) year of benefit payments.

The rationale given by Sun Life for the reversal of the claim was based on the fact that they have determined, that the member had not suffered a 'new' injury or illness, but rather their limitations remained the same but what had changed in this instance was that there were no longer any suitable assignments available for them to perform within their limitations.

Based on the wording in the Policy, Sun Life has determined that this member's situation is not covered by the LTD Policy and thus they are not entitled to benefits.

Given that this individual is not the only member that we have in this Region who is currently on LTD benefits under similar, if not identical, circumstances; I can only conclude that we should expect to hear from more members receiving similar letters in the near future.

R.S.M.C. accommodation requests have also been growing this past mandate, but unfortunately, due to the limited variety of work assignments or tasks available to these members, accommodating these individuals has proven to be extremely difficult. The Article 54 committees throughout the Region continue to explore all options available to us, however, due to the limitations placed upon us by the distinct Collective Agreements hinders our ability to place many of these members. Clearly, one possible option to enhance their chances for accommodation in the future would be one combined Collective Agreement for all members, appreciating that accommodations this past three-and-one-half (3 ½) years has been difficult for the entire membership.

While I know that many of the employers violations, as they pertain to Article 54, have been grieved by members and Locals throughout the Region, few have yet to be arbitrated and clearly we have to start elevating these issues to place pressure on the employer to resolve these matters. The injustices inflicted on these members is of utmost importance and as an organization, we must do our best to ensure that these grievance receive the attention that they deserve. I will comment on this matter further on in my report.

Private Sector Bargaining Units

The Union continues to represent cleaners in three (3) separate units working in Hamilton, Kitchener and Windsor.

As reported to the last Convention, negotiations were about to begin for these units and it was the goal of the Union to try and negotiate one (1) Collective Agreement for all of these members. I can now report that with thanks to that Negotiating Committee and the resolve of the members in these units, we were successful in achieving our goal, and we now have one (1) Collective Agreement covering all three (3) units.

Recently, the NEB approved the Program of Demands for the upcoming negotiations for these members and at the time of the writing of this report, the members are voting on the ratification of the demands. We have also served notice on to the employer to commence negotiations and they are set to begin in mid-April.

It is the hopes of these members to continue to improve on their rights, benefits, working conditions and wages that have been denied to them as a result of many years of having to contend with constantly changing employers who refused to recognise them for the loyal and valuable services that they have provided throughout the years.

I would recommend that you review the report of Brother George Floresco, 3rd National Vice-President for a more comprehensive report on Organizing and Private Sector Bargaining Units throughout the Union.

Grievance/Arbitration

Grievance submissions seem to be levelling off recently compared to the dramatic increase seen in the previous mandate.

This reduction however, does not mean that the employer has changed their tactics, but rather seems to be symptomatic of the fact that they are simply repeatedly violating the same provisions of the Collective Agreement and that Locals are being asked to file group grievances to reduce the needless repetition of filing like grievances.

Regardless of the workload, numerous individuals throughout the Region have continued to represent the membership at arbitration in a most diligent manner. Whether they be the representatives working in the Ontario Regional Office or Local Advocates working out the Scarborough, Hamilton, Kitchener or London Locals who have taken on the challenge of arguing files at arbitration, I am confident that the membership are receiving the best possible representation. One problem that has been identified by the Ontario Regional Office, as it concerns the grievance/arbitration process, is the failure to submit Resolution Reports in a timely manner. This Office along with the COPE 225 staff has been working diligently with all of the advocates (Regional Representatives and Local Advocates) to ensure that all reports are submitted so that the National Grievance System can be accurately updated. These updates are necessary to make sure that only active grievances are being scheduled to arbitration so as not to create a false backlog. As part of the solution, Sister Karen Calder, Administrative Assistant and Sister Debbie Carmichael, Union Representative have been working with Locals to update any missing reports and reviewing the status of older grievances to identify which ones are resolved or relevant. These types of actions should help to streamline the system and ensure that grievances reach final resolution quicker.

WSIB appeals and CIRB complaints continue to be a part of the regular workload performed by advocates in the Ontario Region. Local and Regional representatives have risen to the task of responding to these complicated issues in a most professional and efficient manner. In addition to these files, we have been contending with the LTD and the STDP Appeals. While the LTD appeal process is not a new one, we have seen a growing number of appeals under this system, and not unlike WSIB and CIRB files, these files tend to be very complicated and time consuming.

The STDP appeal process, on the other hand, is a new experience for the Union given that this was negotiated into the last Collective Agreement. The responsibility for these files has been assumed by Ontario Regional Office at this time, but due to the growing number of files, it is obvious that in the future, Local advocates will be asked to assist in these duties. Training courses dealing with both LTD and STDP Appeals have/are being developed to assist advocates in dealing with these matters so that the Union can continue to deliver the best possible services to the membership.

For more detailed information, as it relates to Grievance/Arbitration, I would urge the delegates to review the reports of Brother Philippe Arbour, National Grievance Officer and Brother Wally Polischuk, Regional Grievance Officer, Ontario Region.

Fight Back Campaign

Work continued on the Fight Back Campaign following the last Convention. Local Executives and Activists jumped into action, further preparing for more demonstrations, actions and Town Hall Meetings to address the unfair government legislation that ended the Lockout of Postal Workers.

Throughout the Region, activists at all levels worked with our allies in communities to continue to educate the public about the injustice of this legislation and to try to force the Corporation to return to the negotiations table and negotiate a Collective Agreement rather than the proposed unjust arbitration process contemplated in this legislation. With thanks to this hard work, ultimately, the Union was successful in achieving this goal and a negotiated Collective Agreement was reached.

While I appreciate that this last Collective Agreement was not unanimously recommended by the NEB (nor was it without its controversy) it was none-the-less ratified by the membership.

The campaign did not end here as the Union at all levels continued to communicate to the membership and the public about the Governments anti-labour sentiments and their refusal to engage the public in discussion and debate on matters directly affecting us all. These sentiments were further solidified on December 11, 2013, when the Government and Canada Post announced the elimination of door-to-door delivery.

Since that time, the Union has worked diligently with our allies to raise public awareness and to gain support opposing the elimination of door-to-door delivery and to make this matter an election issue.

Local and Regional activists have been working tirelessly attending City Council meetings, demonstrations, Town Hall meetings, talking with politicians at all levels of government, meeting social groups and allies, just to name a few of the activities. These actions have continued to raise support and awareness surrounding these issues and will undoubtedly pay dividends in the end result.

Through their actions, I am confident that this battle can be won and that the elimination of door-to-door delivery will be stopped if not turned around.

For more detailed information I would recommend that you read the report of the Brother George Floresco, 3rd National Vice-President.

Thanks To All

Once again, I cannot imagine how all this work (and other duties and responsibilities not covered in this report) could be done without the dedication and support of so many, who often times go without recognition and the thanks that they so justly deserve.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks on behalf of the Ontario Regional Office, to all the Local Executives, Committee Members, Shop Stewards, Local Activists, Advocates, Worker Educators and Committee Members who have dedicated so much of their time and efforts in support of the membership. This past mandate has been an extremely challenging one due to all of the attacks by the Government and the employer and these individuals have continued rise to this challenge and deliver quality services and representation.

Again, my role as National Director has been made easy as a result of my confidence in the skills and abilities of the Representatives working in the Ontario Regional Office. I have taken comfort in knowing that Brother Wally Polischuk, Sister Debbie Carmichael, and Brothers Jim Morris, Tom Garbatt, and Mark Platt are always capable of working independently as well as with others in ensuring the job gets done. I extend my sincere thanks to them all for their hard work and dedication.

On a more personal note, I wish to extend a special thank you to Brothers Leon Bouvier, Regional Education and Organization Officer and Dave Stutt, Regional Union Representative. I have come to know both of these brothers over the years having worked with them in various capacities and have come to respect their work ethics and knowledge and the valuable assets they brought to this organization. Neither of these brothers will be re-offering at this upcoming Convention and I know that these decisions were not taken lightly by either of them. I know that their skills, knowledge, abilities and dedication are without question and will be missed by myself and the membership of this Region. I wish to extend my thanks to both of these brothers for their hard work and dedication and I wish them both the very best in the future.

All of the work in the Ontario Regional office is made easier with the help of the Administrative Assistants (C.O.P.E. 225) who continually provide us with the best possible services and professionalism. Sisters Carol Greer, Karen Calder and Amy Scott have proven to be a valuable asset to this Office and the quality of their work is without question. On behalf of the Ontario Regional Office, I would like to thank them for their excellent work.

I believe that it is important to recognise the work of the N.E.B. this past mandate. While we have not been able to agree on all matters, the discussions were always thoughtful and respectful and I am confident that all the members on the Board were expressing what they believed to be in the best interests of the membership. I would like to thank them all for their hard work and dedication and for their willingness to work through the diverse issues and provide the membership with solid solutions to the adversities that face the membership. This dedication cannot be understated.

Finally, it is important to recognise the role that partners and families play in bringing all of these services to fruition. The responsibilities of an activist and advocate are difficult at the best of times however they are made easier with the continued support and understanding of the families who surround them. I wish to extend many thanks to all of those loving and caring families who, far-to-often, go without the recognition that they deserve.

In Closing

The decisions that we make at this Convention will help direct the Union in our future battles with the employer and the Government. I am confident that as an organization we will continue to meet those challenges head on and that we will be successful in achieving our goals.

It is important to continue to keep the membership informed at all times and to remind them of all the work that is being done on their behalf and to motivate them into becoming involved in the activities and actions of the Union. It is through their support and actions that we will achieve our goals.

I trust that this Convention will be a positive one and I wish success to us all.

The Struggle Continues

In solidarity,

Gerry Deveau
National Director
Ontario Region
Canadian Union of Postal Workers

GD/kc cope 225

REPORT
OF THE
NATIONAL DIRECTOR
PRAIRIE REGION

SUBMITTED TO THE
TWENTY-FIFTH QUADRENNIAL
NATIONAL CONVENTION

MAY 2015

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

In accordance with section 3.04 of the National Constitution the following is my report to National Convention.

Fight back

On December 11, 2013 the boss announced their five point plan which included among other things the elimination of door to door delivery, an increase in postage rates and the contracting out of retail services. The plan was announced without consultation with the public or the workers and came without warning, when everyone expected that there would be full public discussions prior to changes of this nature being made.

As a result of the announcement the Union initiated a fight back plan which included National and Regional Co-ordinators and financial resources to assist Locals. Fight back activities included Petitions, Public Forums, Town and City Council Resolutions, bill boards, lawn and window signs, buttons and Post Cards. We also reached out to our allies and potential allies to support us in this fight.

This fight is far from over, but at the time of the writing of this report we can be proud of what we have accomplished. The Locals in the Prairie Region have fully participated in this campaign and as a result we have tremendous public support in this fight.

In 2015 there will be a federal election, it is imperative that Postal Services becomes an election issue.

Structure and Finances

At the National Convention in 2008 a resolution was passed to have an independent committee review CUPW's structure. The Independent Committee's report was completed in March 2010. Resolutions were submitted to the 2011 CUPW National Convention; however most of the resolutions were not debated. At the National Convention in May it is unlikely that many resolutions dealing with the big structure issues such as the number of Regions will be dealt with as the only Region to adopt resolutions of this nature was the Prairie Region. Going into this Convention however we are not in a deficit position, this is largely due to the \$10.00 per member, per year, assessment which was passed by the NEB following the last National Convention. I voted against this resolution and recorded my dissent as did a few others on the NEB. There were several reasons to disagree with this resolution including that the National Convention had not passed a dues increase and that we still have not done everything possible to lower costs, although a lot of work had been accomplished in this area.

The reasons that existed in 2008 for changing our structure still exist. There has been a decrease in members since 2008. We cannot just continue to raise Union dues. At some point we will be forced to seriously look at our structure.

Education

During this term, there have been eight 3-Day schools in the Prairie Region, with over 600 participants attending. During the same period, there have been seven 5-Day schools with 140 participants attending. Three of the 5-Day schools have been joint with the Pacific Region, giving us the opportunity to access more variety in courses and also a cost saving.

One of the 5 day courses offered this mandate was Arbitration Advocacy, we trained 6 more Worker Advocates for our Region and 6 from 3 other Regions, Toronto, Pacific and Central. The Prairie Region believes solidarity between the Regions is very important and that we should work together whenever possible.

Solidarity Skills courses were developed following the changes to our Constitution at the 2011 Convention, when we added conflict resolution. The first 5-Day course (level 1 and 2) offered to members, was held jointly for the Prairie and Pacific Regions in the fall of 2012. Since then the Prairie Region has held the 5-Day course once more, as well as level 1 and 2 two times each. Sixty-seven members in our Region have been through the training. There will also be another level 1 training between the writing of this report and Convention. We have offered either level 1 or 2 at all but one 3-Day school since the fall of 2012, when the course was completed.

The Prairie Region believes that the culture in our Union needs to change, but recognizes it will take time and commitment. Educating our leadership and members in listening techniques, non-violent communication, mediation and restorative circles is an important step in the right direction and needs to be given priority.

There were Facilitator level 1 and 2 courses offered Nationally during this mandate. Our Region trained 5 members at level 1 and 2 members at level 2. We concentrated on equity groups, as we felt we did not have enough diversity for facilitation in this Region.

The National Union and this Region have been looking for ways to get members from equity seeking groups involved in the Union. One initiative is the Turtle Island course. Our Region piloted the course in the fall of 2011, shortly after the last Convention and there was a National Turtle Island Facilitator training in Ottawa this fall. At the writing of this report the Prairie Region is preparing to hold this course at our spring educational. We all need to continue to look for ways to encourage equity seeking groups to become involved as it will enrich all members of our Union and move us further ahead, when we are able to achieve participation that truly reflects our membership.

For the Appendix HH Human Rights training, the material was updated during this mandate. There was a Master Trainer training session, followed by 4 Train The Trainer sessions, in which approximately 35 Prairie members were trained as facilitators. These trainers will co-facilitate the 4 hour sessions in the workplace. In some locals training is well underway. I would like to thank all of you doing this important work.

There have been numerous courses at the Local Level during this mandate, as in the past, sometimes with assistance from the Regional Office. This is very important work, which is a great savings to the Union and removes barriers for those who cannot travel for various reasons. It also gives more members the opportunity to access the Union Education Program. Locals should be commended for their efforts in this area.

There were 2 sessions of Port Elgin, the Union's 4 week residential program, during this mandate. We sent our full entitlement of 9 participants to each session. Feedback from the members who attended was positive.

Health and Safety

During this mandate the employer continues to place little importance on Health and Safety. Regional escalation meetings, where we meet with the boss to discuss items from Local Joint Health and Safety meetings which had not been dealt with at the Local level, continue to be irregular. As of late, the Prairie and Pacific Regions have been holding these meetings together, as the same upper management look after both Regions and we face a lot of similar issues. It is too early to tell if this will help make the process more effective.

There was a Train the Trainer session held in Calgary last fall for Appendix DD facilitators. A number of facilitators were trained for the Prairie and Pacific Regions. These trainers facilitate the half day Health and Safety training for members in their workplaces. The employer had stopped training employees in many locations in the Region, which is completely unacceptable. Training is now happening in some locations, but it is still spotty.

Joint Health and Safety Committee training sessions take place several times a year for our committee members and representatives, as well as the employer's. There were 10 sessions held this mandate at the time of the writing of this report, with another 3 sessions planned before Convention. Approximately 100 of our members have been trained to serve on committees.

Health and Safety is one of the most important Union issues. All of our well-being hinges on the Boss maintaining a Healthy and Safe Workplace. Since the Modern Post was implemented, injuries have increased for both group 1 and 2 members. The employer continues to ignore Union suggestions to make the workplace safer, resorting to arbitration, which is slow.

There were some victories through the arbitration process regarding Modern Post, but several of the issues we grieved were lost. For Group 1 workers, Arbitrator Keller ordered an ergonomic study of the MLOCR. For Group 2 workers, Arbitrator Burkett ruled that the 2 bundle method with one bundle on the forearm was unsafe. The Parties agreed to do studies of both, including surveys and observations by independent ergonomists, (HFN for the MLOCR and Golder for the 2 bundle methods). Following this a report would be issued. There were also studies of ergomates, which are fatigue soles that are attached over the shoes, (they will be available to employees shortly), and on the IDC cart and the ring scanners with recommendations to be implemented.

Equity in our Union

Equity in our Union is still a big struggle. There are only two women and one worker of colour on the National Executive Board, out of fifteen positions. No workers from any other equity seeking group are on the NEB. Up until the election in November of 2014, there was no worker of colour for the entire mandate. Three NEB positions were elected in November, only one from any equity seeking group was elected. One of the two sisters on the NEB has been on an extended absence, so there has only been one woman on the NEB for quite some time now.

In this Region three of the five large Locals have women presidents, sixteen small/mid-size Locals have women presidents, twelve small/mid-size Locals have men presidents. Three are from equity seeking groups.

There are currently 4 women and 3 men working in the Regional Office in elected positions. In respect to gender, this is representational of the membership in the workplace, but we must be diligent to maintain what we have achieved. There are no other equity seeking groups working at the Regional Office.

While this Region does good on gender, there are only a very small number of the other equity seeking groups, workers of colour, aboriginal peoples, lesbians, gays, transgender and disabled workers, that are Presidents or in full time positions. This does not reflect the membership in the workplace.

The Union must find ways to attain more diversity in our leadership. We need to achieve this through education, organizing or targeting specific groups, which this Region has been striving to do since the last Convention.

There was a National Human Rights Conference in June of 2014 in Ottawa, which members of the National Human Rights Committee organized. All new and accumulated 7.59 funding was used to pay for the conference. I would like to thank all of our members who were involved in this endeavor.

The Prairie Region is one of the few Regions that uses all of its 7.58 funding each year. This is the funding used to assist CUPW women to participate in education, conferences, seminars, and forums for women. There are so many applications by Locals for 7.58 funding, that we are not able to give them as much as they ask for. We have a limit of \$10,000 per year. The Locals within the Region regularly sent Sisters to take part in the Prairie School for Union Women which is held in Waskasui each year and put on by the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour.

Grievance Arbitration

At the last Convention there were approximately 11,215 outstanding grievances. There is a very slight decrease in the number of grievances, but the system is still overloaded, as you can see by the numbers below. Comparatively, at the time of the 2008 Convention, there were only 3,800 grievances in the system, we must find ways to reduce the current number of outstanding grievances.

| TIME PERIOD | URBAN OPS | RSMC | PRIVATE SECTOR | TOTAL |
|-------------|-----------|------|----------------|--------|
| 2011 | 10,500 | 670 | 45 | 11,215 |
| Dec 2014 | 9,756 | 513 | 14 | 10,283 |
| 2015 | 9,705 | 307 | 14 | 10,026 |

Urban Ops, 6,648 grievances submitted from November 1, 2011 (since last Convention) to February 10, 2015 for the Prairie Region.

RSMC, 499 grievances were filed November 1, 2011 to February 10, 2015 for the Prairie Region.

For Dynamex 52 grievances were filed during the same period.

The employer continues to knowingly violate the Collective Agreement and the grievances continue to be filed. It is apparent they don't care how many are outstanding.

Due to the Grievance Officer defection in December 2014, we have had the opportunity to look at the grievances in our Region and how the lack of leadership in this area, over the last number of years, has hurt us. We have been working hard to develop a strategy and get things back on track.

During this mandate, as in the last several, we did not use lawyers for any of the formal or National Policy Grievances we argued at Arbitration.

Short Term Disability Plan

The Short Term Disability Plan came into effect January 1, 2013. There are still disputes, where we need interpretation in two areas, the definition of hospitalized and the definition of injured. There have been a substantial number of cases sent in to the Regional Office for appeal; we have appealed nearly all of them. We have lost the majority of these appeals. Now that we have had decisions from several independent medical practitioners on different issues, we need to take a harder look at what we are appealing.

External Organizing

There were two organizing campaigns this mandate, unfortunately neither one of them ended with a certification. Regardless, it is important that we continue with our efforts. The Prairie Region has always believed that Organizing is of great importance to this Union and society in general. Although Organizing campaigns are not always successful, they are critical to our future.

The Workers Organizing Resource Centre (WORC) in Winnipeg was established in 1998, to provide community and labour-oriented outreach and advocacy services on a daily basis and assist workers in organizing. We have had Myron May, a CUPW member act as Director of the WORC Centre during this mandate. I would like to thank him for all of the work he has done. Since January of 2012, thirty five Manitoba Labour Standards appeal hearings were prepared, twenty six of which were argued. Of the twenty six cases argued in front of the board, nineteen were successful for a total of \$165,168.01 in compensation awards. One of the appeals was precedent setting in the province of Manitoba. There were seven cases settled prior to hearing for a total of \$9,200.47. Additionally, there are four current appeals that are waiting to be scheduled and one decision pending. There are also four Manitoba Human Rights complaints pending.

We work with couriers at the WORC Centre and are always watching for organizing opportunities. Recently there was a very strong lead for a possible organizing campaign; we remain in contact with these Activists in their workplace.

Private Sector Negotiations

Currently there are four Private Sector Bargaining Units in the Prairie Region. We represent Couriers, Warehouse Workers and some Administrative Workers who are employed with Dynamex Courier, in Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Red Deer. We also represent workers at Open Door Press, a printing company in Winnipeg.

The Dynamex Saskatoon and Winnipeg Collective Agreements were both renegotiated in 2012. The negotiations were long and difficult but a Collective Agreement was reached and ratified by the members in December 2012. Both the Saskatoon and Winnipeg Dynamex Collective Agreements have an expiry date of December 4, 2017. This was the first time that we were able to co-ordinate the negotiations of both Collective Agreements in order to achieve the same expiry date. The Dynamex Red Deer Collective Agreement expired in 2013 and was also re-negotiated, this Collective Agreement was signed in 2014 and also expires December 4, 2017. All three Dynamex Collective Agreements expiring on the same date will enhance our bargaining position when we return to Negotiations in 2017.

I would like to thank those that served on the three Negotiating Committees.

RSMC Negotiations

In December 2012 we reached a tentative agreement which expires December 31, 2015. Locals are currently discussing resolutions they wish to put forward at the Regional Conference, which will take place June 13 and 14, 2015. These resolutions will be debated, then sent forward to the National Office, where the National Executive Board will compile them and use these resolutions to formulate our demands.

The Urban and RSMC Collective Agreements will expire only a month apart, which gives us an opportunity to negotiate them together this round. Due to the fact that we were facing the Harper government's back to work legislation last round, we didn't make the progress we hoped for. Hopefully this time we will be able to achieve the equality for RSMCs that we have been striving for.

Urban Operations Negotiations

In December 2012 we reached a tentative agreement which expires January 31, 2016. We were put in a position of final offer selection and managed to have two arbitrators removed, but after a third was appointed, we went back in to negotiations, in order to minimize the damage that would be done to the Collective Agreement. It was apparent Canada Post and the conservatives intended to gut it when they legislated us back to work. We were able to have several of the most regressive roll backs taken off the table, put it to a vote of the membership and they accepted the Collective Agreement.

Locals are currently discussing resolutions they wish to put forward for demands for the next round. We now have dates for a Regional Conference, June 26-28, 2015, where we can debate the Local resolutions and send them forward to the National Office. These resolutions will be used to formulate our demands. This is very important, as there are many issues that we didn't have a chance to negotiate in the last round, such as the effects of the modern post, the LCRMS, the grievance process, forceback and many other important articles.

Congratulations and Thanks

I would like to thank Sister Lana Smidt for agreeing to accept the Acting Grievance Officer position for the past 5 months and Sister Doris Salmaso for coming to Winnipeg to work as an acting Union Representative since January. Both of these sisters have worked extremely hard to help make our Regional Office run smoothly.

I would like to thank Sister Barb McNeely for all of the hard work she has done on the Fight Back campaign.

A big thank you to all of the Worker Advocates in the Locals, who have done an amazing job at representing their members at arbitration, as well as assisting with keeping travel costs down for the Union. Also, a big thanks to all of those who have volunteered their time to facilitate courses at the three and five day schools.

I would also like to thank all the Activists, Local officers, Union Representatives and Regional Officers I have worked with during this mandate, your hard work on behalf of the members is appreciated.

Thank you and best wishes to all of the Activists who have retired over this past mandate, your knowledge and experience will be missed by all of us.

In Solidarity,

Gord Fischer
National Director
CUPW Prairie Region

REPORT
OF THE
NATIONAL DIRECTOR
PACIFIC REGION

SUBMITTED TO THE
TWENTY-FIFTH QUADRENNIAL
NATIONAL CONVENTION

MAY 2015

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

The following is my report to the National Convention in accordance with Article 3.04 of the National Constitution.

Disruption during Difficult Times

This is my first report as National Director. I was elected to the position of National Director of the Pacific Region on November 8, 2014 at our pre-convention Regional Conference in the midst of one of the greatest attacks on Postal Workers in CUPW's history. Due to translation and printing deadlines this report is being written at the beginning of March and is based mostly on 4 months in office and my projections for the future. Comments on issues that occurred prior to the election will be from the point of view of my previous position as the Regional Education and Organization Officer.

The 2011 to 2015 term could be best characterized as turbulent. Three of the original 6 officers and union representatives elected at the 2011 National Convention have resigned. On March 31, 2014 Sister Cindy Lee, Regional Union Representative, accepted a job with the Canadian Office & Professional Employees Union (COPE 378). On September 23, 2014 the previous National Director, John Bail chose to retire before the end of his term. On January 26, 2015 Brother Ken Mooney, Regional Grievance Officer, accepted a job in the advocacy department of the BC Government and Services Employees Union (BCGEU).

The high turnover this term has posed a challenge for those of us who remained. In the last 6 months of this term Brother Tom Jackson, Sister Cindy McDonnell and I have all taken on new roles on the Regional Executive Committee and Brother Rick Hansen, Sister Karen De Francesco and Sister Angel Hoare all joined our office as new Union Representatives.

Everyone dove into their new positions head first. While they all brought with them diverse and strong opinions they have all demonstrated a willingness to have open and respectful debate and have proven their ability to work together to represent the membership.

Planning Meetings and Communication in the Office

One of the first things we did when Brother Bail announced his retirement was to resurrect the regional planning meetings that used to be held two or three times per year. The last planning meeting in our Region was held on January 12 and 13, 2009. In the past these two to three day meetings were held in different Locals around the Region. That allowed us to get away from the distractions of our office and personal lives, which enabled us to focus on developing strategies and setting goals for the future, to review our past goals and adjust our strategies when necessary. These meetings also allowed us to meet with Local Executive Committees and to conduct work floors visits in surrounding areas.

Due to concerns about costs we held our first meeting on September 24 and 25, 2014 in the Regional Office. Our priority was to plan for the pre-convention Regional Conference that was scheduled for November 8 to 10, 2014 and the Regional Resolutions Committee being held just before that on November 5 to 7, 2014, and to keep the Region running until the new National Director, Regional Education & Organization Officer and Union Representatives were elected. We also wanted to ensure we had organized upcoming education and other events so the newly elected Regional Officers and Union Representatives could focus on learning their new jobs and to ensure that their transition would be as seamless as possible.

After the Regional Conference we scheduled our next planning meeting for January 15 and 16, 2015. This time we headed for Williams Lake as they were the first site in the Pacific slated for conversion to Community Mail Box (CMB) delivery under Canada Post's 5-point plan. Due to scheduling restraints we were only able to hold a two-day meeting. Nevertheless, we were still able to meet with the Local Executive and visit the work floors in Williams Lake and 100 Mile House.

This time our priority was to plan until the next National Convention, which was less than four months away. As before we also wanted to ensure that pre-scheduled events such as educations or the Urban Operations and RSMC Wage and Contract Regional Conferences were fully organized so that the newly elected Regional Officers and Union Representatives could focus on learning their new jobs and representing the membership after the National Convention.

We have worked hard to nurture a culture of open communication and collaboration in our office. To ensure the free flow of information and more in-depth discussions we have also been holding regular REC and REC/UR meetings in our office. That hard work has paid off. The Regional Office is working better than ever.

The Political Climate in Canada

Stephen Harper and his Conservative Government have launched an unprecedented attack on workers, unions, women, minorities, immigrants, public services and social programs. The Harper Government has used their majority in Parliament to ram through a series of omnibus legislation that has rolled back the progress our parents, grandparents, and great grandparents made when they built this country. We are all affected.

Like other unions, CUPW is facing some of the most difficult challenges in its history. Since the moment that Canada Post unveiled its five-point plan, we have faced the most sophisticated attack on our jobs ever. Extraordinary changes are now taking place in our workplaces and throughout our communities. We must have the vision and resolve to stop the attacks on postal services and jobs. We all recognize, this action was well-orchestrated and had the full backing of the Conservative federal government. Make no mistake; our struggle exists not only on our work floors but in the broader political arena.

Canada Post's Manufactured Crisis

On December 11, 2013, just after Parliament adjourned for their winter break, Canada Post announced its 5-point plan to steal door-to-door delivery from 5 million Canadian homes, downsize or close corporate retail outlets, raise postage rates, reduce our pensions and eliminate 8,000 living wages jobs. In a concerted move just 2 hours later the Conservative Government of Canada issued a press release fully supporting Canada Post's plans.

Canada Post has since eliminated door-to-door delivery to 100,000 homes in the first 11 communities from Calgary to Halifax on Monday, October 20, 2014. That was followed almost immediately on Wednesday, October 22, 2014, when Canada Post announced that Victoria's Depot 4 would be the first Letter Carrier Depot in BC to be converted from door-to-door delivery to Community Mail Boxes (CMBs). Since that time Canada Post publicized that numerous Letter Carriers Depots in Canada and Quebec would be converted to CMB delivery including Sidney, Campbell River, Abbotsford, Mission, Chilliwack, Delta, Williams Lake and Fort St John. In all cases Canada Post refuses to hold meaningful consultation with the union, the public or municipalities.

Canada Post claims that service cuts are necessary to keep Canada Post from becoming a burden on taxpayers. However, their assertions were based on faulty financial projections included in report from the Conference Board of Canada. Coincidentally, Deepak Chopra has a seat on the Conference Board.

The reality is that Canada Post is not broken. It's a cash cow for the federal Government. The Crown Corporation has been profitable in 17 of the last 19 years. Plus since 1996 Canada Post has contributed over One Billion dollars in taxes and dividends to the public purse. In the last fiscal year CPC announced that it made \$53 million in profits during the second quarter, which was followed by another \$13 million in profits in the third quarter. Traditionally, the second and third quarters have not been money makers and Canada Post's financial forecasts are predicting profits for 2014. They posted a loss in 2011, but Canada Post would not have lost money if it were not for the one-time benefit increase of \$63 million as a result of the pension adjustment in the second quarter, and the one-time payment for pay equity in the third quarter (estimated to be between \$150 million to \$250 million). That was also the year Canada Post locked out Urban Operations members and shut down the post office.

Postal Workers are Fighting Back

On October 16, 2014, our union announced that CUPW is filing a Charter challenge in the Federal Court of Canada. Canada Post was created in 1981 by an act of Parliament which mandated the corporation has a universal service obligation to provide delivery of mail to all Canadians at the same price. The Canadian Postal Services Charter also states that Canada Post will deliver letters, parcels and publications five days a week ... to every Canadian address. Eliminating door-to-door delivery will also have a negative impact on senior citizens and violate the human rights of the disabled. Moving home delivery to Community Mail Boxes also puts Canadians at risk of crimes such as mail theft, fraud and identity theft.

Such a fundamental change to one of Canada's oldest and most cherished public services is beyond the mandate of Canada Post management. It requires a vote in Parliament after a full debate by our elected Members of Parliament and the Senate.

Executives and activists from every Local in the Pacific Region have done an excellent job of gaining support from Members of Parliament, Members of the Legislative Assembly, City Councils, community groups and the public. CUPW members are doing an amazing job of promoting our union's "Save Canada Post" campaign. However, we must all do more to mobilize our membership, build our allies, and escalate our fight back campaign.

CUPW also has a plan to reinstate Canada's successful Postal Bank that was shut down by the Liberal Government in 1968. Many post offices around the world operate postal banks. For example Post Offices in Italy, Switzerland and New Zealand earn 67% to 71% of their profits from their banking services. That's more than enough money to maintain and expand public postal services.

Every community in the Pacific Region will be threatened with the end of door-to-door delivery and cuts to other postal services in the coming months. If Canada Post and Stephen Harper's Conservatives are allowed to get away with their plans then coupled with the Postal Transformation we will be threatened with the loss of hundreds of jobs in our Region.

Postal Workers have Broad Public Support

Our Save Canada Post continues to build momentum. As of the writing of this report, over 552 municipalities and 13 municipal bodies, including the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Big Mayors Caucus, the Lower Mainland Local Government Association, and the Union of B.C. Municipalities, have passed resolutions and/or sent letters to the Government opposing the sweeping cuts announced on December 11, 2013 and that number is growing every day.

Over 500 municipalities have also passed resolutions supporting CUPW's proposal to expand services and to reinstate Canada's successful Postal Bank.

Hundreds of thousands of Canadians have signed our petitions to the House of Commons and mailed post cards to their Members of Parliament, opposing Canada Post's plans.

CUPW's research shows that a majority of Canadians support our plans to expand services such as postal banking rather than cutting valuable public services such as door-to-door delivery and closing corporate retail outlets.

Postal Workers interact with Canadians from coast to coast to coast on an almost daily basis. That extensive network means we have a far greater reach than the media or Canada Post.

Despite that amazing public outcry Canada Post and the federal Government are not listening. So Postal Workers continue to work with the public to turn up the volume. To that end the Regional Office has been working with our allies in the community and the labour movement to build a broad based coalition called "British Columbians for Public Postal Services"

Federal Election 2015

The next federal election is scheduled for October 19, 2015, unless Stephen Harper calls one earlier. One of the key planks in our fight back campaign is working to elect a worker friendly Government that supports public services, like the Post Office, and respects labour rights such as free collective bargaining and the right to strike.

Stephen Harper and his Conservative Government have proven time and time again that their policies are bad for Postal Workers and our families. The party that forms Government controls Canada Post and therefore has a direct impact on our members and our union. Therefore it is essential that our union plays an active role in federal elections.

Everything we do between now and the next federal election is to make an election issue of Canada Post's cuts in postal services and CUPW's plan to expand services in reinstating Canada's successful postal bank. You can help by contacting your Member of Parliament to ask them where they stand on these issues and by voting for the candidates and political parties that support public postal services.

I believe the choice is clear. The NDP stood up for us with a 56-hour filibuster against Stephen Harper's back to work legislation (Bill C-6) in 2011. They have continued to supported us in our campaign to Save Canada Post and to restore Canada's Postal Bank. The time has come to return that support. It's not acceptable to vote for the lesser of 2 evils: Trudeau's conservative – light party.

The National Union has been working with the Canadian Labour Congress to identify 14 ridings where the Conservatives won by less than 10% of the votes. Three of those ridings are right here in the Pacific Region (Vancouver Island North – Powell River, Courtenay – Port Alberni, and Vancouver South). We also have to support our friends in the NDP who were only elected by small margins in BC, such as Randall Garrison in Esquimalt and Kennedy Stewart in Burnaby South. In BC the race is between the NDP and the Conservatives. The Liberals are not a factor in this province and they cannot win government.

CUPW will be participating in a "Go Vote" campaign in the next election. Over 40% of Canadians did not vote in the last federal election some of them were our members. Low voter turnout only helps the Conservatives. So, it is essential that we all do our parts to get our families, friends and coworkers to go vote.

Organizing in the Pacific Region

Adecco/SQR

In 2012 the Canadian Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) certified CUPW as the bargaining agent for our new members who work in the Customs Postal Import Program (CPIP) at Canada Post. That followed an organizing drive to sign up these members that started in 2005 and a seven-year fight at the CIRB as the union attempted to have Canada Post declared as their employer. Disappointingly, the CIRB ruled that Adecco was their employer. Adecco is an international temporary hiring agency contracted by Canada Post to process incoming international parcels. CPIP Members work in plants in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, alongside Public Service Alliance of Canada members employed by the Canadian Border Services Agency.

Shortly after we received the certification order CUPW and Adecco began negotiations, which went on for over a year. During that time Adecco created a wholly owned subsidiary called SQR to act as the employer for this bargaining unit. To put pressure on the employer CUPW filed for conciliation and it was during that process that the parties were able to reach a tentative agreement in October 2013, which was subsequently ratified by the members.

The collective agreement includes wage increases of almost 20% for most of the members; seniority based schedule bidding; protection from unfair discipline; Health and Safety committees and other provisions.

In the Pacific Region members of the REC along with members of the Vancouver Local Executive met with our new members throughout this process on a regular basis to welcome, support and help integrate them into our union.

Dynamex Canada Limited

As this term began the Pacific Region gained new Private Sector Bargaining Unit (PSBU) members when the Canadian Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) issued a certification order for CUPW to represent the workers at the Kelowna Branch of Dynamex Canada Limited, a same day courier company and now wholly owned subsidiary of TransForce Canada Limited. We started negotiations in August 2011 and in July 2012 we ratified and signed a first collective agreement for our first Dynamex bargaining unit in the Okanagan which was composed of 19 members. Subsequently, we organized a second bargaining unit in Victoria BC composed of 26 members. We negotiated, ratified and signed a first collective agreement for these members on February 16, 2013.

In September 2013 Dynamex purchased Total Delivery Systems Inc. (TDS) a next day courier company and one of their major competitors in BC. TDS workers were represented by the newly formed Unifor.

The Pacific Region continued to sign up new members who worked for Dynamex and on December 23, 2013 we applied to the CIRB for certification of a bargaining unit for workers at the Dynamex Branch in Nanaimo.

On January 14, 2014, in a surprise move, Unifor applied to the CIRB to intervene in our certification application in Nanaimo. At the same time they also asked for a review of the bargaining units.

After mediation with Unifor fell apart, both unions proceeded with submissions to the CIRB. Subsequently, the CIRB created 3 bargaining units in BC: Vancouver Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island and the BC Interior. As CUPW had no members in the Vancouver Lower Mainland the CIRB declared that Unifor was the bargaining agent for that area. The CIRB ordered a vote in the other 2 bargaining units for the workers at Dynamex and TDS to decide which union they wanted to represent them: CUPW or Unifor. Ironically, we put forward this exact position at mediation and it was rejected by Unifor. The mail in ballot was counted on August 13, 2014 and the workers chose CUPW over Unifor by a vote of 67% on Vancouver Island and 78% in the BC Interior. As a result, on September 2, 2014 the CIRB certified CUPW as the bargaining agent for Dynamex workers on Vancouver Island and in the BC Interior.

At the count meeting Dynamex served both unions with notice that they intended to amalgamate TDS into the operations of Dynamex and informed us of their plan to terminate all positions as they formerly existed in each company, restructure new routes and bid them by seniority. Dynamex gave the union minimal time to dovetail the seniority of our members from TDS and Dynamex, review the postings and conduct a bid on the new routes. The Regional Office was still dealing with the numerous problems that were created by this ill thought out management debacle when on December 15, 2014, Dynamex announced that they had made a mistake in purchasing TDS and planned to end all their next day customer service contracts in BC and new routes would be implemented on January 16, 2015.

It was in this atmosphere that we developed the program of demands which were ratified by the PBSU membership by a vote of 94.7%. The union commenced negotiations with Dynamex and their parent company Transforce in January 2015. Meetings are continuing as of the writing of this report. We are hopeful that a tentative agreement can be reached by the end of the summer. To be successful we will need the support of the entire membership and all 37 Locals in the Pacific Region.

As a result of our successful organizing campaigns, the Pacific Region had grown our private sector members from 19 in 2011 to over 200 in 2014. We now have Dynamex members in the following Locals: Kamloops, Kelowna, Nanaimo, Prince George, and Victoria. Dealing with our new PBSU members has been both time consuming and rewarding. As the size of our bargaining units grew so did the challenges for integrating our newest members into the fabric of our union. However, the outcome has been well worth it. Many of our new Dynamex members have become active in their Locals including in Kelowna where Brother Patrick Ward became the first Dynamex member in the Pacific Region to be elected as a Local President. He was also elected a delegate to this Convention.

Continuing our external organizing drives is one important way we will ensure the long term viability of our union.

Group 3 & 4

In preparation for our upcoming negotiations the Union scheduled a meeting with our Group 3 and 4 members in Toronto on January 23 and 24, 2015. There are approximately 700 Group 3 and 4 members in 21 locals across the country. Discussions centred around identifying solutions to problems that these members face on a daily basis. While some of their concerns are similar to other members the specialized nature of their work revealed unique issues that need to be addressed. Those issues were included in the discussion paper for the Urban wage and contract negotiations demands. Locals are encouraged to submit resolutions to address those problems for the Wage and Contract Demand Regional Conference that is scheduled in June 2015.

The issues we identified can be grouped under six categories:

- a) Staffing: understaffing, compulsory overtime, weekend work, tool quality, shift changes and filling vacant positions.
- b) Job Descriptions and Work Organization: updating based on the new technology, standardization of duties in all postal facilities, integrating equipment into the collective agreement (Appendix “I”).
- c) Occupational Health and Safety: work on high-voltage electrical panels, working alone, tool quality, uniform quality, insufficient time for clean-up and other operations, safety goggles, etc.
- d) Training: access to and quality of training, inadequate e-training.
- e) Maximo (centralized time management program): time values are not in line with reality; program aimed at eliminating jobs; applied differently from one facility to another.
- f) Wages: Bringing wages in line with industry averages.

Education

During this term we have tried to ensure our education program met the direction set by the delegates to the 2011 convention and the needs of Locals in the Pacific Region. Surveys were sent to Locals twice this term to seek input about the courses that you wanted us to hold at the Regional and Local level.

The start of the term saw the Pacific Region being hit with the tail end of Postal Transformation and the two wave system. Now at the close of the term we are being hit with CMB conversions. This term we have scheduled 4 Letter Carrier Route Measurement Courses for Observers that focused on training Union Observers in the most up-to-date restructuring methods. I would like to thank Brother Martin Champagne, 4th National Vice President and Nicolas Presne, National Union Representative for Staffing and Work Measurement for sharing their extensive expertise with the participants in these courses.

At the start of the term we scheduled training for Local Executive members: Local administration at the 2012 spring 3-day education and we held the Roles & Responsibility of a Secretary-Treasurer Course at the 2012 fall 3-day education. It would be much easier to schedule these courses and provide training to newly elected Local Executive Members if Locals followed the recommendation in Section 9.05 of the National Constitution to hold their elections after the National Convention every 4 years.

We started the last term with the ratification of collective agreements for our two largest bargaining units. Therefore, we scheduled Collective Agreement courses for the Urban Operations and RSMC bargaining units to ensure Local Executives, Shop Stewards and active members received training on the changes to those contracts.

Delegates to the 2011 National Convention passed a resolution to add a voluntary alternative dispute resolution mechanism to the provisions of Article 8 of the National Convention. This change directed all levels of the union to create Conflict Resolution Committees. The NEB chose Solidarity Skills: Confidence with Conflict as the course to train members of these committees as well as members at all levels of the union in conflict resolutions and non-violent communication skills. The course was originally designed as a 5-day course but, was later modified into two 3-day courses: level 1 and 2. We have ensured that this course has been offered regularly at regional educations in an attempt to build a culture of respectful and non-violent communication in our day to day union activities and to give members tools to deal with conflicts that arise in a positive and productive way that encourages people to stay or become active in our union.

Shop Stewards are the back bone of our union. They are on the frontline on a day to day basis and they are the face of our union to our members and to local management. We have ensured that Basic Shop Steward training is available at every 3-day education to support local’s efforts to recruit new Stewards to represent their members.

The following is a list of courses held in the Pacific Region this term:

| Date | Course |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Fall 2011 December 2, 3 & 4 | Basic Shop Steward Harassment – Violence Awareness Human Rights Training RSMC fight Back |
| January 23 to 27, 2012 – PEL | Letter Carrier Route Measurement for Observers |
| Spring 2012 April 21, 22 & 23 | Basic Shop Steward Local Administration RSMC Fight Back Letter Carrier Route Measurement for Observes (4-day) |

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| June 25 to 29, 2012 – PEL National | Solidarity Skills: Confidence with Conflict |
| July 23 to 27, 2012 – Sonoma | Summer Institute for Union Women |
| October 16 to 21, 2012 – PEL (in conjunction with Prairie) | Advanced Shop Steward Solidarity Skills: Confidence with Conflict |
| Fall 2012 November 23, 24 & 25 | Basic Shop Steward H & S Representative in Workplaces with 20 Employees or Less Roles & Responsibility of a Secretary-Treasurer Solidarity Sills: Confidence with Conflict Level 1 |
| Spring 2013 April 27, 28 & 29 | Basic Shop Steward Changes to RSMC Collective Agreement Changes to Urban Collective Agreement Solidarity Skills: Confidence with Conflict Level 1 |
| June 23 to 27, 2013 – PEL Prairie | Regular Arbitration Advocacy – Phase II |
| June 25 to 29, 2013 – Seattle | Summer Institute for Union Women |
| September 15 to 20, 2013 – PEL (in conjunction with Prairie) | Fight Back: A Primer in Local Postal Worker Power Urban Collective Agreement |
| Fall 2013 November 22, 23 & 24 | Basic Shop Steward Media Training for Television & Radio RSMC Restructure & Collective Agreement Updates Solidarity Skills: Confidence with Conflict Level 1 |
| February 2 to 7, 2014 - PEL | Leadership Skills |
| Spring 2014 March 7, 8 & 9 | Basic Shop Steward RSMC Restructure & Collective Agreement Updates Solidarity Skills: Level 2 Urban Operations Collective Agreement |
| March 31 to April 4, 2014 - PEL | Letter Carrier Route Measurement for Union Observers |
| September 7 to 12, 2014 – PEL In conjunction with Prairie | Advanced Shop Steward Effective Communications |

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| Fall 2014 November 21, 22 & 23 | Basis Shop Steward Fight Back: A Primer in Local Postal Worker Power Grievance Handling Solidarity Skills: Confidence with Conflict Level 1 |
| February 16 to 20, 2015 – PEL | Leadership Skills |
| March 18 to 22, 2015 | Letter Carrier Route Measurement for Union Observers |
| Spring 2015 April 10, 11 & 12 | Basic Shop Steward Temporary Workers’ and Their Rights Political Action Letter Carrier Route Measurement for Union Observers |

Health and Safety

During this term we were able to resurrect the Regional H&S Escalation meetings with senior management including the General Managers for Collection and Delivery and the Mail Processing Plants, Fred Pollard and Mike Shearon. Meetings have been held on Feb 19, June 18, and October 21, 2014 and February 4, 2015. The next meeting is scheduled for May 14, 2015.

It is essential that we continue to hold Canada Post management to their responsibility to provide our members with a safe and healthy work place.

To assist in those efforts we are building an email distribution list for Health and Safety Representatives in the Pacific Region that will create a two way communication network to share information and improve the escalation process. We also continue to schedule Joint Health and Safety Training under Appendix “DD” of the Urban Collective Agreement members of Local Joint Health and Safety Committees, and for members at large on a regular basis.

Grievance Arbitration

This term with the guidance of Brother Ken Mooney the Pacific Region was able to reduce the use of Lawyers to present formal discharge grievances. In fact, we have some of the lowest legal fees of any Region in the union. We also have some of the highest expenses for the use of Worker Advocates. Our members are more than capable of taking on the Corporation's Labour Relations Officers and Corporate Lawyers and winning. That is something to be extremely proud of. The current REC believes we need to continue this trend. Therefore we will continue to recruit and train our members to be Worker Advocates.

With the departure of Brother Mooney we have found that we are lacking in Worker Advocates who are trained to do formal arbitrations. As a result, the use of Lawyers and the associated costs may increase slightly in the short term. However, Sister McDonnell and I have worked with our Lawyers at Rush, Crane, Gunther to develop a training program and a plan to grow the pool of advocates, starting with the Regional Union Representatives, who will be capable of handling formal arbitration files.

The Pacific Region has also been able to work with our list of Arbitrators to reduce the number of Arbitration dates that were being cancelled or rescheduled by the Corporation. That combined with the fact that we have started using an expedited procedure that we developed in conjunction with most of the Arbitrators on our list we have now virtually eliminated the back log of grievances in our Region. Currently grievances that used to take 1 to 2 years to get to arbitration are being scheduled within 4 to 6 months.

Previously, Canada Post Supervisors would tell our members to grieve violations of our Collective Agreement because they knew that they could get away with them for years. Justice delayed is justice denied. Now many grievances are being settled at first level hearings as the Local Area Managers know that they cannot get away violating our rights. Due to this success the REC plans to expand this expedited arbitration system to the entire Region.

Worker Advocates

There is an ongoing need to identify and recruit new Worker Advocates in the Pacific Region. Following on the success of the Worker Advocates in the Grievance Arbitration system the REC would like to expand our pool of Worker Advocates for Workers' Compensation and for Short Term and Long Term Disability claims. Our long term goal is to ensure that we continue to expand the pool of trained Worker Advocates and build the secondary leadership in the Pacific Region to ensure we have a large selection of candidates to fill positions on Local Executive Committees and in the Regional Office.

Structure and the Future of our Union

If Canada Post and the Conservative Government are successful in implementing their 5 point plan to destroy our public Post Office then our union will be severely weakened. Under Moya Greene's Postal Transformation plan Canada Post eliminated 3,500 positions. Canada Post management continues to delete every Group 1 position that becomes vacant. Now with the Corporation's 5-point plan Canada Post is set to eliminate up to 8,000 more positions and the conversion of home delivery to CMBs is resulting in an estimated loss of 30 to 50% of Letter Carrier positions.

For each loss of positions there is an equivalent loss of revenue for the union. Therefore, it is essential that we continue to look for ways to be more efficient and to examine ways to change our structure at all levels of the union. We have to also think outside the box and consider all our options to ensure the long term viability of our union.

We also need to look at our dues structure. The current formula is regressive system that exploits our temporary members and leaves them in a vulnerable position. Several Regions and the National Executive Committee passed and submitted resolutions to this convention to change our dues structure to a progressive system that would charge members a percentage of their regular pay. In other words, you only pay dues for the straight time hours you actually work.

Not only would that bring long sought relief for temporary workers it would also eliminate the cumbersome system of waiving dues for members experiencing financial hardship due to loss of income. I urge delegates to support such a resolution if it makes it on the floor of Convention.

Negotiations for the RSMC and Urban Operations Bargaining Units

The collective agreements for our two largest bargaining units (Urban Operations and RSMC) will begin in the fall of 2015. In June of 2015 Regional Conferences are scheduled to put forward our program of demands for upcoming contract negotiations in both the RSMC and Urban Operations. Prior to the Convention Locals from coast to coast to coast have been holding meetings to discuss and develop resolutions on potential contract demands.

There are many inequities that we must address in this round of bargaining. One of the first questions we must answer is whether or not we want to merge the RSMC and Urban Operations bargaining units into one larger unit. While that has been a long time goal of our union leadership it will be up to the members to decide if that is the direction we want to go in during this round of bargaining. We also have to address the multi-tiered pay system between the RSMCs and Urban Operations as well as the ones that exist within each bargaining unit. It is also essential to ensure that all our members are properly compensated for all the work they perform and all the hours that they work. We need living wages that keep up with or exceed the rate of inflation. We also need to see improvements to our benefits.

Canada Post will have their own set of demands in this round of negotiations. The attrition rate due to retirements is not keeping up with the loss of positions caused by Postal Transformation and Canada Post's 5-Point Plan. So, we can expect an attack on our job security provisions. It is also likely that our Pension will be under attack as well. The Corporation will also be looking to reduce what they refer to as "trapped time." For example the recently negotiated APOC Collective Agreement has a clause that stipulates if CUPW loses our 30 minute paid lunch period superintendents and supervisors will lose theirs too.

We must start engaging our members in discussions on what improvements we are looking for to address the problems they face. Resolutions will need to be drafted, debated and passed at local membership meetings and submitted to the Regional Office. Wage and Contract Regional Conferences for both RSMC and Urban Operations are scheduled in June 2015. The National Directors are scheduled to meet in August 2015 to develop our program of demands for the RSMC and Urban bargaining units. Ratification votes for the demands will likely be scheduled in September.

We also have to prepare our membership to call CPC's bluff during collective bargaining and for the possibility of resisting any back to work legislation. We have to draw a line in the sand that we will not let them cross and we must say no to any more concessions.

Starting now we have to empower our members to take back their work floors.

Acknowledgements and Special Thanks

We often forget to thank the people who dedicate their time and expertise to our union. Whether you are a full time officer, a part time officer or volunteer activist your valuable contributions are essential to the successful operation of our great union. The strength of our union comes from the grassroots. It is the Local Presidents and Executive Committee members, the Shop Stewards, and the Health and Safety Representatives that make our union what it is. Therefore, I want to acknowledge and thank each and every one of our local activists who have stepped up to take on the work of the union. Without you our union would not be as strong as it is.

I would also like to thank the current members of the Regional Office, Tom Jackson, Cindy McDonnell, Rick Hansen, Karen De Francesco and Angel Hoare. They demonstrate their shared commitment to the membership each and every day. It has truly been a pleasure to work with such a dedicated and hard working group of people.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge our Administrative Assistants, Irene Kwan and Nicole Van Dijk. They are members of the Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union (COPE) Local 225. They are the glue that keeps everything together and without the hard work of these professional individuals our office would simply not function.

In Conclusion

This report addresses a non-exhaustive list of issues that have faced the Pacific Region and CUPW during this last term and where we need to go in the future.

The next four years will hold multiple challenges for Postal Workers. Convention is where we come together to set the direction of our union and to elect our leadership to take us there. At Convention and at every level of our union we must ensure we hold open, honest and respectful debate on how we will collectively deal with the issues that confront us. Once the Convention is over we must leave united. We will only overcome those obstacles if we stick together and work collectively.

I wish you all strength and wisdom as you deliberate the best path for our collective future and for a successful Convention.

The Struggle Continues! Together we will win!

In solidarity,

Tim Armstrong
National Director
Pacific Region
March 2015