

February 26, 2010

Partial Win for CUPW in LCRMS Manual Decision

One of the main elements of Modern Post is mechanized sequencing of lettermail. With this change, the vast majority of short and long mail will be sequenced by machine in the plant and sent to the letter carrier depot in order of delivery.

Canada Post (CPC) proposed a number of changes to the Letter Carrier Route Measurement System (LCRMS) and Manual to facilitate their introduction of Modern Post (Postal Transformation).

CPC Looks for Quicker Implementation

In 2008, CPC proposed to add a “transition” chapter to the LCRMS Manual. In this new chapter, Canada Post wanted to provide for a quicker implementation of mechanized sequencing. Its proposal included:

- No requirement to have a volume count to determine the amount of mail remaining for a letter carrier to sort after the introduction of mechanized sequencing.
- Building new letter carrier routes based only on an *estimate* of what percentage of the short and long lettermail would be sequenced
- A “pre-implementation” validation of the estimated percentage of sequenced short and long mail *at the depot (not route) level*. Once the percentage was reached for the depot, the restructure could go ahead.
- After implementation, CPC would fix problems on any route, but only **if the letter carrier complained**.

CUPW Disagrees – All Routes Are Not the Same

CUPW did not agree with Canada Post’s proposal. Among other things, the Union was concerned that there could be significant differences in the percentage of sequenced mail from one route to another in the same depot. Different routes get different types of mail, and some mail is more easily sorted by machine than other mail.

CUPW also felt that problems on *all routes should be fixed*, not just where a letter carrier complained.

The Union argued that CPC’s change was not justified under Appendix CC of the Urban Operations agreement, because the proposal was a *less accurate* way of measuring routes than doing an actual count of how much mail is sequenced and how much is not. CUPW also argued that CPC proposed the changes to the LCRMS Manual so that implementation could happen more quickly, and not for any legitimate route measurement reason.

CPC Changes are *Less Accurate*

Technical arbitrator Ronald Ellis ruled that (in principle) the Corporation was justified in making a change to the Manual for economic reasons.

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However, he agreed with the Union that CPC's specific proposal was not an accurate means of measuring the work. Mr. Ellis said that:

- CPC could do a Modern Post restructure based on an estimated percentage of machine-sequenced mail.
- However, to address the Union's concerns, the Corporation had a choice of:
 - o Addressing problems with the routes *before* implementation by doing the pre-implementation validation at the level of the new routes and making any required adjustments, or
 - o Doing a validation after implementation on *every* route, making any required adjustments within 5 months.
- In all cases, the resulting routes could not be over assessed.

First Appendix CC Decision

This is the first time that a grievance has gone to technical arbitration under Appendix CC of the contract. While CUPW still does not believe that a special transition process was required or justified, Arbitrator Ellis' decision puts some limits on this process, and reinforces the need for the LCRMS Manual to allow for the accurate structuring of letter carrier routes.

Appendix CC was negotiated in the 2000 collective agreement. It resolved one of the main issues in the 1997 strike – the right to prevent CPC from making unilateral changes to the LCRMS Manual.

If there are any questions, contact your local union office.

In Solidarity,



Denis Lemelin
National President

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The struggle continues

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