

September 13, 2018

What's Going on in Private Sector Bargaining Units (PSBU) Negotiations

While the Urban Postal Operations and RSMC units negotiate for new collective agreements, we have some sisters and brothers who are trying to negotiate a first collective agreement or make gains in the same struggle, in the same industry.

Let's look at the state of negotiations in some of our Private Sector Bargaining Units.

What are private sector bargaining units?

Most CUPW members have Canada Post as a direct employer. But many who don't are still part of our world and we depend on each other's strength. External organizing is really about all postal workers. Contracting out, as with CUS (Combined Urban Services), pushes downward on everyone's wages and benefits by giving some postal work to the lowest bidder, which undermines our bargaining power. One way to resist it is by organizing those workers.

Meanwhile, same-day and courier employers and other logistics companies misclassify and exploit workers by treating them as "independent contractors" and denying them things like CPP/QPP, workers' compensation and EI.

Organizing in the courier sector and others helps more workers gain the wages and conditions that we all deserve, and stand up for their legal rights. A rising tide lifts all boats.

TForce Final Mile

TForce Final Mile is a same-day and overnight courier company formerly known as Dynamex. We represent TForce workers in six bargaining units. In this round of bargaining, we tried to bring the employer to the table for all units as one. TForce refused, but talks have begun and we're making some progress anyway.

Recent certifications: Medical Carriers Ltd and CUPE 1281

Our members at Medical Carriers deliver medical supplies and documents in Winnipeg. They joined CUPW this year, approved a program of demands in the spring, and bargaining is on.

The staff of CUPE local 1281 also joined CUPW this year, and we are currently trying to negotiate their first collective agreement.

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CUPE 1281 staff provide union representation and administrative support for more than 40 bargaining units – primarily with student unions, but also the Canadian Federation of Students and the Canadian Media Guild.

Pro-Ex

After about nine months of stalling tactics by Pro-Ex – a CUS contractor in the Atlantic provinces – Pro-Ex workers had to use mediation and conciliation to get the employer negotiating. In February, the members ratified a second collective agreement.

Nor-Pel

Nor-Pel is another CUS contractor. We represent Nor-Pel workers in three locations in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. CUPW initially requested that the employer bargain for its CUPW-represented workers all together, but Nor-Pel refused. Then our members had to go all the way this summer. It took two strike mandates and a two-day strike just to bring the Employer to the bargaining table. Once we got their attention, several days of talks resulted in an offer that the employer presented to the members for a vote under section 108.1 of the *Canada Labour Code*, which the membership ratified.

We also represent Nor-Pel workers in Thunder Bay, where we are in bargaining with a conciliator. After having to use some pressure tactics, we have scheduled meetings in late September to bargain with Nor-Pel for that unit.

Eazy Express

Eazy Express is a CUS operator in Burlington Ontario. After refusing to negotiate for a lengthy period of time, language has been exchanged between the parties with the hope of a first collective agreement being reached.

Support Goes Both Ways

Together we can win better conditions for all post and logistics workers. Postal unions worldwide are working to increase union density and improve the standards for workers in our industry.

Organizing is not easy but it's our way to build power and to show employers, including Canada Post, that we won't allow them to deny us our rights and fair conditions by putting workers in competition with each other. The more we stand together, the more we can gain for all of us.

If you're in one of these units, all 50,000 of us are with you. If not, remember that solidarity is a two-way street, and show your support for all CUPW members in bargaining. You can send messages of support for all the negotiating committees to feedback@cupw-sttp.org

In solidarity,



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