

Submission to the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates regarding Canada Post

By the Canadian Union of Postal Workers September 21, 2016

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers represents about 50,000 workers throughout Canada. The vast majority are employees of Canada Post and members of the union's Rural and Suburban Mail Carrier (RSMC) bargaining unit and its Urban Operations (UO) unit. However, CUPW also represents cleaners, couriers, drivers, vehicle mechanics, warehouse workers, printers, emergency medical dispatchers and other workers in the private sector.

Our union is very proud of the role it has played, over the years, in keeping post offices in communities and improving public postal service in Canada.

Our involvement goes back to the creation of Canada Post through the *Canada Post Corporation Act*. This Act, adopted unanimously in 1981 was the product of over two years of consultations between three successive federal administrations, business groups and postal unions under the umbrella of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC).

In the run-up to the passage of the *CPC Act*, the CLC and postal unions argued for a mandate that would allow the corporation to evolve and grow. We stated that, "If the Post Office is to effectively perform its role of promoting the general welfare and advancing the national economy, it must be given the appropriate authority to offer the services required in today's cultural and commercial environment. This will involve the extension and the expansion of existing services and the initiation of new services to the public."¹

CUPW is pleased to say that our views were, in fact, incorporated into CPC's legislative mandate, which provides for "the desirability of improving and extending its products

¹ Allan Darling, "Considerations which affect the Choice of Organization Structure for the Canada Post Office," Report of the Study Group to the Postmaster General, (Ottawa: Government of Canada, August 1978), Appendix D.1.

and services in the light of developments in the field of communications.”

Since this time, the union has participated in all reviews of Canada Post. We have consistently argued for the preservation of home mail delivery and the creation of new and expanded services, including postal banking. We have also vigorously argued for a Canada Post that operates in the public interest. After all, while Crown corporations like Canada Post have both public and commercial activities, they are distinct from commercial enterprises in that they are designed to serve the public interest, not simply maximize profit.

CUPW welcomes the opportunity to participate in the current review of our public postal service. Our submission to the Standing Committee is organized into the following sections:

- Financial situation of Canada Post Corporation
- A pattern of deception and misinformation from Canada Post management
- Home mail delivery vs. community mailboxes
- The importance of full daily delivery
- Retail services and maintaining the moratorium on post office closures
- Postal banking
- Broadband service
- Potential for expanded retail services
- Potential for new services at the door
- Services to the elderly
- Services to First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and services to northern residents
- Canada Post as a leader for environmental innovation
- Postage rates and universal service at a uniform price
- Equality for RSMCs
- The Canada Post pension plan
- Crown corporation as a model employer and Canadian job creator