



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF CUPW 730 / MARCH 2025

# INSIDE OUT



**AFTER THE STRIKE:  
THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES**  
**MAYFIELD: LET'S CALL IT A WIN**  
**OPINIONS, WE HAVE A FEW**

**EXTRA! IN THIS EDITION**  
4 PAGE COLOUR STRIKE PHOTO FEATURE  
COMMEMORATIVE STICKER SHEET

**INSIDE OUT** is the monthly publication of the Edmonton Local of CUPW.

This newsletter aspires to educate and inform members and affiliates about our union's activities, opportunities, and challenges, as well as to raise awareness regarding all things labour.

Opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily the official views of the Local.

The Communications Committee (responsible for this publication) is always interested in submissions of original articles, photographs, or illustrations. Prospective material must always concern CUPW or the labour movement, but submissions of general interest to the membership will also be considered.

All submissions for publication are subject to the approval of the Local President, and may be edited for brevity, clarity, etc.

To make a submission, or to get involved, contact the Communications Committee at [communications730@gmail.com](mailto:communications730@gmail.com).

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**EMPOWER  
ORGANIZE  
RESIST**



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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT MARCH 2025

## Local Update

In late January, the situation at Mayfield was boiling over. On Call Relief Employees (OCREs) were being expected to cover two routes per day and only be paid for one. When those members became overwhelmed and went on leave, it then expanded to the Permanent Relief Employees (PREs). These PREs also refused to participate.

I salute them for the action in rejecting the employer's attempts at stealing from them. Unfortunately, the members will run out of personal leave long before the employer will run out of work. I approached the members and started using the skills taught to me by the Building Worker Power program. We created a petition demanding significant change and reimplementing of our rights. We then presented this petition, where members were given the opportunity to express their concerns.

Vanessa Danbrook, Peter Hall, and local Shop Stewards were key to this struggle by tackling it in more administrative ways. They collected statements, processed them into a format that was accessible, and got our Regional office involved.

They also tackled other concerns, such as the temperature of the depot. Under the Canada Labour Code, it is expected that a workplace should be maintained between 20 and 26-degrees Celsius. It turns out that the thermostats on the

RSMC side of the depot didn't even work. The Manager was in his office with gloves, a toque, and a jacket. We have since seen them repairing the thermostats.

After two weeks, I returned to the depot and the RSMCs and I discussed what had changed. As expected, there were no real changes. The RSMCs decided that no one would work over 8-hours, but they wanted support. I turned my

**“During this whole thing, a Superintendent managed to get themselves in a great deal of trouble... I believe wholeheartedly that we had a significant effect on the decision to get them removed.”**

attention to the Letter Carriers. The situation was the same with them, even with a formal decision from Arbitrator R.L. Ready, the Corporation was continuing to steal from our members – remember that time theft is a charge you will be fired for.

It was a unanimous decision by the Letter Carriers and everyone signed the petition. We presented the petition on

February 7th. Just last week, I took the petition to the Downtown Depot and we will be presenting it this week. In a short follow-up with members at Mayfield, it appeared that things were going better but we are reserving judgment until a later time.

During this whole thing, a Superintendent at Mayfield managed to get themselves in a great deal of trouble. Although officially they quit their job after two weeks of leave, I believe wholeheartedly that we had a significant effect on the decision to get them removed. If this superintendent had been well-liked by us, supervisors, and their superiors, they likely would have been kept around. There was enough pressure that it just wasn't worth it to keep them.

One thing I have learned from this is that there is never enough time, that there is always something to do, and that I need your help. We need more Stewards. We need more activism. If you can help the members by circulating a petition, please contact me.

## National Update

Speaking of time: we are under the gun. The fourth day of the Kaplan Commission has passed. Today and tomorrow (March 1st and 2nd), the Corporation and our CUPW negotiators will be taking another swing at trying to make some headway in negotiating an agreement. This is probably the last

attempt from the government to get us to sign something before we challenge the Canada Industrial Relations Board.

Much like the last time, we had 3-days of negotiations prior to the Industrial Inquiry Commission and I suspect this will be another attempt to strong-arm us. I don't expect much from this negotiation because it will likely have the same end as the last: the Corporation will agree in principle to a number of things but will only agree to continue if we drop all our legal challenges.

There is some desperation here from the Corporation. They are focused heavily on us dropping our lawsuits but at the same time they are not willing to give us what we want. Nothing we want is unreasonable. We are not stopping them from weekend delivery. We are not stopping them from changing parts of the collective agreements to facilitate weekend delivery. But it must be fair.

What the Corporation wants is carte blanche. They want it their way or the highway. Regardless of the Corporation's description of their financial position, or how much you

believe it, you should know that the Corporation has assets worth over \$13-billion, which has increased almost equally to the declaration of losses. They claim to have lost \$3-billion yet the Corporation is worth \$3-billion more. It's also conveniently timed to scare Canadians.

So what do we do about it? In the grand tradition of the Edmonton Local, we are going to lead the charge. We have a working plan. Timelines are tight, but the framework is there. Today, we will offer you a plan to push your Members of Parliament to vote for a plan that includes the expansion of services and keeps our post office public. From radio ads that will play out across our Local, handouts with QR codes, interviews, and social media – we are going to do our best.

If you care about having a good job at the post office, you'll need to participate. It's not enough to say what can my union do for me. It's what can I do for my brothers, sisters, and cousins. Because the threat is real. The Minister of Transport, Anita Anand, was quoted in the news as saying that she is going to

remove the stipulation that Canada Post has the exclusive privilege to deliver the mail.

This means they are going to open the Canada Post Corporation Act, which governs when and how we deliver the mail, the exclusive privilege of delivering the mail, how many post offices there are, and if, in fact, our post office is public at all.

What we do over the next few months will determine the future of our union, our pensions, and our jobs. The fate of public service in Canada may very well be in your hands. This is our moment to shine.

**JAMES BALL (HE/HIM)**



**PRESIDENT  
LOCAL 730 / EDMONTON & AFFILIATES  
CANADIAN UNION OF POSTAL WORKERS**

## FEBRUARY PRESIDENT'S REPORT: THE KAPLAN COMMISSION AND SECTION 108

The Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) has released their decision and our union plans on challenging that. Our National union has control over those challenges and we can support them from the Local. The timelines are very restrictive and the Industrial Inquiry Commission has already started (January 27th and 28th).

At the same time, CUPW will be challenging the CIRB decision to use Section 108 of the Labour Code, which is what allowed the government to create the Industrial Inquiry Commission (ICC). On dates later in January and early February, our National union will

challenge the CIRB decision about Section 107, which was used to send us back to work.

The ICC created by Section 108, led by William Kaplan, will have a broad mandate.

- Review the issues that prevented the Union and Employer from reaching negotiated agreements;
- Make recommendations about how to **amend the collective agreements**;
- Make recommendations about **any other changes** to be made;

- Make recommendations about the **structures, rights and responsibilities of the Union and Employer in collective bargaining.**

The Commissioner's report is due May 15th, 2025, one week before the revised expiry date of our current Urban and RSMC collective agreements.

What do the mandated questions ask?

**Amend the collective agreements:** I'm not certain what this means or even if it is legal to amend collective agreements in this fashion. If they can be amended

(continued on pg. 21)

# BREAKING POINT: THE MOMENT WE CHOOSE TO CHANGE

By Ryan Theriault and Vanessa Danbrook

**When is it enough? When is it enough for people to push back and do no more? The answer may be different for everyone, but one thing is clear: there comes a time when enough is enough and the push for a better, more respectful environment begins.**

Unfortunately, it can take years for a depot to reach the point where they stand up and say, “We’ve had enough and it’s time to do something about it.”

Mayfield Depot, having one of the worst track records of management abuse in the Edmonton area, reached a tipping point and the workers decided it was time to act. They took the first steps toward standing together and organizing for change, thanks to dedicated Shop Stewards and relief carriers who took the time to document the issues and organize a walkout, things began to take a positive turn.

This collective action marked the beginning of a shift towards a more unified and supportive environment. You can read about that initial action in Chrissy Greene’s article on page 7.

## Overwhelming Stress

Imagine being a relief carrier and always wondering in the back of your mind how many days of mail you will be forced to deliver when you come to work. ‘Mail as presented’ is an all too common occurrence in Mayfield. Then, when the worker asks to be compensated for

multiple days of mail, they are denied and told to either take it all or use a personal day.

Having to deal with this occurrence week after week can be an unbelievable amount of stress for anyone to live with. Not surprisingly, it led to many looking for help when the stress became too much, and many workers chose to walk right out the door when they saw the mess that management had created through mismanagement and staffing shortfalls.

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**“Imagine being a relief carrier and always wondering in the back of your mind how many days of mail you will be forced to deliver when you come to work. ‘Mail as presented’ is an all too common occurrence in Mayfield.”**

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The Corporation is all too aware of this and often uses it to their advantage, placing the burden of being tasked with impossible metrics on the workers. The constant struggle to make it work eventually reached a breaking point and our brave brothers, sisters, and comrades had enough.

Realizing the Corporation has way more resources, the workers ended a three day-long stand to not deliver double or triple mail for a single day’s pay. They were losing personal days and the mail continued to accumulate because routes

were going undelivered. This led to a unanimous petition signed by the urban members to also take a stand and only work the hours they are scheduled for. They were no longer willing to tolerate management’s bullying and intimidation into doing free work.

## Steps Towards Change

“Grieve it,” they say, knowing it would be denied at the first level grievance hearing and that the process is long and often thankless. But through incredible work, our members never let that stop them from doing the work – the hard work of making sure to document and grieve at every opportunity.

Beyond that, members of our Local had started the work of compiling the evidence to present it further up the ladder – all the way to the top and every position in between, shining a spotlight on the rule-breaking and cruelty that had gone unchecked for years. Something that may seem pointless or too obvious can be a step that is far more effective that one might think: laying accountability at each point of management is an effective tool, as one person at CPC gives notice to the next person below them and they begin to demand that each take the necessary steps to “solve” the problem. This can lead to something like a supervisor or superintendent being moved to another location or position altogether.

## Where Does it End?

Change is definitely happening, that’s for certain, but whether it is enough to transform the culture in the depot remains uncertain. One thing is clear, though: the growth of members who

(continued on pg. 20)

# RSMC MAYFIELD ACTION REPORT

By Chrissy Greene

**Finding themselves being pulled from their assignments and facing discipline for not finishing routes that hadn’t gone out for several days, Permanent Relief Employees at Mayfield stood together and let the Corporation know that improper staffing was not their fault and they would not be punished for it.**

What was once the best job in the world has become stressful and overburdened. A calm day working as a relief carrier (Permanent Relief Employee (PRE) or On-Call Relief Employee (OCRE)) in the RSMC bargaining unit has gone by the wayside.

Usually, we enter the building knowing what we are scheduled to complete or we get a daily assignment. However, at the Mayfield Depot in Edmonton, these relief carriers are being taken from scheduled routes or long-term assignments and told they need to complete a different route that didn’t get delivered for sometimes two, three, or even four days.

This amount of mail is heavy and it is stressful to those who now need to complete it. In addition to the mail, you also have neighbourhood mail that is 100% coverage, Costco and AMA magazines, parcels, and packets.

We are being pushed to complete these items, but we also only get one day’s pay. It is not our fault that there is not adequate staff coverage.

On January 7th, 2025, at Mayfield, each PRE who was at work that day (though we were already down 4 routes) was pulled aside by the staffing supervisor and told they were being pulled from their assignment and had to complete routes that had not gone out for a minimum of three days. We were told the expectation was to complete all mail, 1/3 of the Costco magazines, neighbourhood mail, parcels, and packets all for one day’s pay.

As each PRE was informed of this, they informed staffing that they were either completing their scheduled long-term

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**“What was once the best job in the world has become stressful and overburdened... it is not our fault that there is not adequate staff coverage.”**

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assignment or going home. These workers were then informed to go home, even though most had already sorted, pulled, and loaded the mail into their vehicles.

In solidarity, all 7 PREs stood together and refused to be overburdened and stressed by taking on a different assignment with multiple days of mail.

On January 8th, 2025, there was another show of solidarity when each PRE was once again pulled aside by the staffing supervisor and told they were being pulled from their assignments and had

to complete routes that had not gone out for a minimum of four days.

Once again, each PRE informed staffing that they were either completing their scheduled assignment or going home. Once again, the PREs were informed to go home, and all 7 PREs once again stood together and refused to be overburdened.

On January 9th, 2025, each PRE who was forced to take a personal day for the previous two days had returned to work. Most of their routes had now also not been covered. This time, however, the PREs were placed back on their scheduled assignments, with the expectation that they deliver three day’s worth of mail, again for one day’s pay.

Each PRE spoke with their supervisor. It was noted that they were to only work for 8-hours as overtime would not be paid. For most routes, it took three to four days for the mail to be caught up.

PREs stood together and refused to be overburdened by taking on a different assignment, unreal expectations of delivering several days of mail for one day’s pay, and having the Corporation obey the Collective Agreement and Schedule A’s delivery model (5-days per week). 



# STATEMENT TO THE KAPLAN COMMISSION

**As a part of the Industrial Inquiry Commission that was created by Minister of Labour Steven MacKinnon, members of the public were encouraged to submit statements. CUPW asked members to send emails to let them know what matters to them and what the future of the public post office looks like. Kathleen Mpulubusi, frequent contributor to the InsideOut and now a retired postal worker, shares her submission to the Kaplan Commission below.**

**D**ear Commissioner Kaplan,  
My name is Kathleen Mpulubusi and I retired in July 2024 after a 21 year career at Canada Post in Edmonton, Alberta. I was a letter carrier (Delivery Agent) and Union Representative with CUPW. In my time, my role underwent dramatic change as parcel delivery became paramount and letter delivery underwent its decline due to all the technological changes that have taken place. I was proud of the work I was doing and building relationships with my customers that went well beyond just dropping off mail. As delivery people and representatives of a Federal Crown corporation, people trusted us more than a private company. In many ways, we were the visible face of a government at work, providing an essential service to all Canadians, regardless of where they lived. This became very apparent during the COVID pandemic when we were often the only delivery people outside working delivering important pieces of lettermail, packets and parcels. In the senior home I delivered to, I was the only outside delivery person that could go inside and deliver, not the private companies.

To our customers, we were and are the heroes but unfortunately to Canada Post management we were often not treated as such. Over the years, the upper CPC management often adopted a condescending, arrogant tone with workers and the CUPW representatives. That as postal workers we were not educated enough to understand the complexities of modern business. That

we were not vested in the financial viability of the company. Very often, what management representatives did not appreciate was the often well-educated and sophisticated workforce they had. Working at Canada Post was a conscious choice I made because I gained great personal satisfaction and pride in the work. I myself have Bachelor degrees in both Education and Geography. They felt that our work was less-skilled and did not appreciate the skills needed to do the work efficiently and safely. Skills like excellent spatial

awareness and direction finding, organization and attention to detail, communication and customer service, and perseverance to get the work done no matter what environmental conditions Canada threw at us.

For many years, I worked as a Route Verification Officer for CUPW in the Edmonton Local. I worked with CPC Route Optimization when delivery depots underwent Route Restructures. I became an expert on the CPC route measurement systems including the Georoute system used to collect data and build delivery routes. As the CUPW representative, I worked to try and

ensure that CPC was open, fair and accountable when designing delivery routes. Our goal was always to have delivery routes that were safe, fair and not overburdened in delivery. The contractual rights to be involved in the Route Verification and Measurement Process is clearly defined in the collective agreements. What was frustrating was the top-down, "we know best" attitude from the Ottawa-based senior management that regarded our expertise as not legitimate and our concerns, particularly for health and safety, as of no consequence. The management often withheld data and manipulated the data to better suit their goals. We were often able to prove Canada Post wrong and won arbitrations on these matters. The new delivery model of SSD that is being implemented as we speak, in spite of very legitimate concerns by the workers tasked to do the work, is the pinnacle of the CPC management attitude. It appears that all that matters is the "cost savings" of the system. Savings might be realized by the reductions of outside workers doing the delivery but the costs sustained by the remaining workers in potential physical and mental injuries is higher. The conversion of delivery depots to SSD is continuing at a fast and furious pace despite all the concerns raised. There needs to be a **Moratorium on SSD restructures** until the CUPW concerns have been properly addressed. There are outstanding grievances on this that have not been adjudicated yet. People wondering why Labour Relations between CUPW and CPC are so divisive, can look at this example.



CPC appears to be racing to the bottom, following the model of Amazon maximizing profits while treating workers as expendable costs on the balance sheet. Canada Post though, is more than just a delivery company beholden only to shareholders and maximizing bonuses to the top management. Canada Post has the necessary and vital mandate of providing delivery services to all Canadians, no matter where they live. A strong Canada Post can play a vital role in preserving Canada's sovereignty. The threats of President Trump makes it clear that we need a stronger Canadian presence across all parts of our country and to support Canadian businesses and consumers. As the recent job action has

shown, CPC is absolutely necessary for small businesses and people outside of urban centres. Even within urban centres, Canada Post can play a vital Public Service role in helping to maintain communities. CUPW's program of providing check-ins for homebound people, making post offices community hubs and low cost banking are equally important in urban areas. Postal work is not "gig" work. For generations, workers have relied on Canada Post as a source of stable, secure employment providing for the needs of workers and their families. Myself and hundreds of thousands of retired postal workers have a secure retirement because of our work at Canada Post. This is just as important today as companies continue to absolve

themselves of their responsibilities to their workers. Canada Post can lead a better way.

Even in retirement, I care deeply about the future of Canada Post and the dedicated workers. I feel that there needs to be a re-balancing of Canada Post's business philosophy so that Canada Post can be sustainable but with the renewed emphasis of maintaining the mandate of Public service to all points of Canada. I believe it can be a win-win for everyone.

Yours truly

Kathleen Mpulubusi



## STRIKE FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER POINT OF VIEW

- By Karry Biri

**N**ow that the 2024 strike is over, I wanted to give a report from the Secretary-Treasurer's office. I may not have made it to the line as much as I would have liked, but please know that I was doing a lot of the behind-the-scenes things.

I did manage to make it out to Sherwood Park and Fort Saskatchewan a few times, and to Delton and EMPP and when I did, I was so proud and encouraged and heartened to see everyone there.

I would like to thank everyone for the patience and understanding when it came to the strike cheques. It was a huge undertaking and took many people to make it work and I would like to thank everyone that helped. There were a few late nights/early mornings to make sure everyone got their cheque. There were over 5640 cheques written. Almost all of them have been sent out.

However, there are a few that we do not have contact information for so if you are still missing your cheque, please let me know by emailing sectreas730@gmail.com. Our local spent just over 1.2 million dollars in picket pay that came from National. The propane and wood and supplies were another huge expense, but thankfully people were willing to help out with getting the propane filled or sourcing free wood and donating supplies.

I am hopeful that we will get a negotiated contract, hopeful but not counting on it, but if we don't and we have to do this all over again, we will be ready. You all proved how amazing you are and how we as a local can pull together and realize the fight is with the boss and not amongst ourselves!

Solidarity!



# WORKER SOLIDARITY

## LABOUR VICTORY AND STRUGGLE, AT HOME AND ABROAD

**Amazon** - Almost 2,000 Amazon employees will be out of work after Amazon has decided to cease operations at seven facilities for two months in Quebec. This is following a successful unionization drive at the facility in Laval last year, in which workers unionized with Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN).

**CUPE** - As of March 15th, education support workers represented by CUPE 3550 in Edmonton (on strike since mid-January) and CUPE 2545 and 2559 in Fort McMurray (on strike since mid-November) have now been offered contracts that have wage offers higher than the original provincial mandates.

**CUPE 829** - On March 13th, education support staff workers in Medicine Hat rejected the final offer from their employer with a 79.2% 'no' vote. This was a rejection of the 3% wage increase per year over 4-years as mandated by the provincial government.

**Nurse Next Door** - On the morning of February 1st, the Edmonton & District Labour Council announced that Nurse Next Door was using its workers as scabs, crossing the picket lines of striking education support staff, and that there was now an email campaign to tell Nurse Next Door to stop. By that afternoon, Nurse Next Door had ended its contract and issued an apology. ✉️



Remembering the cold, the dark, the boredom; but also the laughs, the solidarity and the togetherness of those long days that feel like yesterday

**Edmonton & District Labour Council**

Here to ruin your weekend, we have received word that Alberta is no longer rat free.

Nurse Next Door is not only scabbing for striking education support workers, but actively soliciting schools to undermine these brave workers and use their services!

Stand with these workers who are walking the line against the deterioration of good jobs across our province. Email the scabs at Nurse Next Door to let them know that Edmontonians do not tolerate companies undermining workers fighting for good jobs by following the link!

<https://edmontonlabour.ca/campaigns/defendededucationworkers/>

**SCAB ALERT!**  
Keep Alberta a RAT FREE ZONE!

**HOW IT STARTED...**

**HOW IT WENT**

**We are SORRY.**

Our locations have been receiving multiple emails and reviews recently regarding undermining EA's in Alberta. We had a school reach out to us to provide insulin injections and medications to medically fragile children. This is the only service we have provided and were not under the impression this would have any effect on your ongoing negotiations.

Our priorities will always be what is best for our patients, we were under the impression these injections were required in order for this individual to be healthy and safe while in the school.

We have since suspended these services and will not work with any other schools or school boards until your negotiations have been settled.

We sincerely apologize to our hard working Educational Assistants and to Edmonton and District Labour Council for any disrespect or harm we have caused your organization.





A "vintage" picket sign that could tell some stories!



"Lifted up by friends, a fallen soldier marches on."



The snow fell, the wind blew, the fires burned day and night..



...none shall pass.





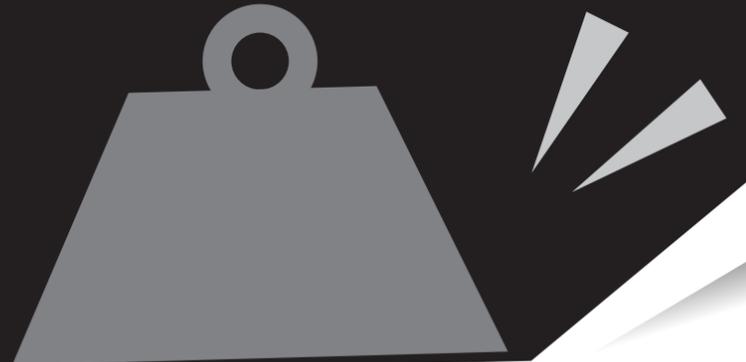
Bring your kids, bring your pets, we're all in it together!



Sure, the picket line is fun and glamorous: but have you tried writing cheques for days on end?

Many thanks to all who held the line, and a special thank you to friends and allies who helped to keep us warm, fed, and strong!

# SSD REPORT



**Despite our union's objections and the fact that stopping the implementation of this delivery model was one of our main demands in negotiations, the Corporation continued to ram through Separate Sortation from Delivery (SSD) restructures. The following is a report from someone who works as a router who sorts the mail in a facility that recently underwent an SSD restructure.**

**A** coworker has shared some details about the affect SSD (Separate Sortation and Delivery) has had on the delivery of mail at our depot. I would like to share some of the issues I have being the router – the person who sorts the mail.

First, I didn't receive any training, aside from the information about my position that I found myself. Luckily, before we switched over to SSD, I was a relief and I was tasked with putting the case strips together, so I was able to get some insight into what my new position would look like. I was only given help for the first two weeks and then was left to deal with things on my own.

Second, just before implementation, we lost one of our supervisors to another depot because they were behind on their work and had the same day of SSD implementation. This supervisor would

have been working on the routes, verifying addresses, coordinating flyer sections, and essentially finalizing each route. But because they had to leave, the supervisor didn't get to do that work. Because of this, there are so many errors in the routes: incorrect addresses, missing addresses, flyer sections that don't make sense, and so on.

I have 9 routes to sort. Five of them require the case stripes to be flipped but they do not need to be. This could have been fixed before implementation if we could have looked over the routes before implementation. One of the routes has been fixed, but the person who was able to make those changes hasn't been able to come back to our office. I have a list of things to change with the new strips, but these strips can't be printed at our office, so we have to get them printed elsewhere and wait for them.

Third, I have to manage the volumes myself and work with my coworkers to not overwhelm them. We had to setup a separate rack to hold the overflow flats and large bundles of flats. When we get Costco magazines, they go into bins on the rack to try to be managed in this way.

Fourth, my original schedule was 10 am to 6 pm, when our office closes at 5 pm. Now, I'm scheduled 9 am to 5 pm, but there is no way I can do all of my work plus overtime when I'm scheduled until 5 pm. The PO4s start at 4 am and are usually done sorting around 7 or 8 am. SSD makes it so I am sorting mail for the following day, so it shouldn't matter if

I'm sorting while the carriers are there. In the beginning, if I wasn't able to finish sorting all of the routes in one day, I would ask to come in earlier than 9 am to finish sorting before the carrier arrived. This was fine until recently.

Fifth, since we have been back from the strike, we have been short-staffed. One person is on stress leave, two people are injured, one person is on modified duties, and 2-3 people are on vacation, while there is only one temp who has been filling a part-time PO4 position for 3-years. There is one new full-time carrier who is struggling to do more than one portion of delivery in a day.

Because of this lack of staff, we have had so much mail not getting delivered. There are two router cases but for weeks we have had one route permanently sitting in the spare case, with only parts of it being delivered or picked up by customers. Another route also has a growing backlog. I've had to create plans with my supervisor to see what mail is actually going out that day and which routes I need to skip because there is no one to cover the route.

Sixth, customer service has gone down since there is no way to problem solve when there are no cases to hold mail, organize parcels, leave notes, hold snow calls, etc.

This is most of my frustrations so far with SSD, but it's only been a couple of months since implementation and I'm sure things won't get better. 🙄✉️

# THE GRAVEYARD SHIFT

- Kyle Turner

**I swore.** It was 1:30 am and my alarm was going off. When it looked like going on strike was inevitable, I told Stephanie that I would join her as a picket captain at the mail processing plant early in the morning.

When I said I would do that, I was thinking about the rotating strike of 2018. There were times at night when there was only one person on the picket line. Our union had done a lot of work since then, and going on a full-strike brought out more support, proving my commitment to be unnecessary.

I rolled out of bed and slinked over to my dresser to piece together the layers I would need for the picket line. The first night made it feel easy. We stayed warm with small propane heaters. The second night was colder and the propane heaters could not warm my feet. This was merely a brief glimpse of the misery that was to come.

And now I was on my bedroom floor, seeing how many pairs of pants I could wear over my long johns and how many hoodies I could fit over my three undershirts and under my Winter coat. It was taking me close to 15 minutes to get dressed.

It became very cold. It seemed like it was just -25 Celsius most of the time. We were denied a permit to use burn barrels, but we had to switch from propane heaters to burn barrels early in the first week. I don't think we would have survived otherwise.

I was recovering from a sickness. I don't know what it was. I felt it hit me in early November while I was at work. By the end of the day, I had a more clear sense of what was coming for me. I somehow made it home and got into bed. I woke up the next morning and took minutes at

the November GMM, and then slept for around 3-days.

I couldn't stay awake. I had no energy. I couldn't deliver mail. I tried to recover by using personal days and working in the office. It took two weeks to feel like I could suffer through returning to my route and trying to walk 20 km. However, that was the day we went on strike. I wondered if the strike could help me heal, but there I was standing in the cold and breathing in smoke from a burning barrel. I was sure I would be fine, but I wondered how long it would take my lungs to clear up...

I finally made it outside to brush snow of my car. A few days ago, it had gotten so cold that I snapped my driver side mirror off while brushing off the snow. I'd glued the mirror in place a year earlier when it was broken by the concrete cylinder that protects the barcode scanner to get into the parking lot at the airport.

But now, it was too cold for glue. I thought about going to a heated parking garage during the day, but I couldn't make it happen. My sleep schedule was destroyed. I realized I wasn't seeing the sun anymore, so I started taking vitamin D. While I would eventually rig my mirror in place with elastics, for now the mirror dangled. I was only driving in the early morning and doing my best to avoid any witnesses.

I parked on the southwest side of the plant. Everyone could tell I was coming because my front bumper had deteriorated and parts were hanging and scraping the mostly snow covered road, kicking up rocks and ice onto my own windshield.

I spent most of my time as a picket captain in this area, by the tent and the burn barrel on 121a Ave. I was freezing but also getting to know some of my coworkers who I don't think I would

have had the chance to talk to otherwise. We got to share the experience of smelling like a campfire and watching an ominous and icy fog roll in and out on 149th street.

As the end of our picket shift was approaching, a number of us went to start our vehicles so they would have the chance of being warm and less icy by the time we were leaving. I got back to the barrel and I could hear a high pitched sound that could only mean there was a belt slipping in one of these cars. I asked a friend if there was any chance it was her vehicle. She said it could be.

It was 6 am and my shift was over. As I approached my car, I could hear the squeal of a slipping belt getting louder. I sighed and squealed and scraped my way home. When I got to my door, my forearms were too cold and stiff to turn the key. Luckily, my roommate was up and heard my knock. I went back to bed, wondering if or when I would adjust to this schedule or if I would find the time to fix my car. 🗉



# A WORKER'S OPINION ON CANADA POST'S FALSE NARRATIVES

From rankandfile.ca 11/13/2024

By Michael McDonald, Canada Post PO5 forklift driver, St. John's

**C**anada Post has framed this narrative that they are losing money... well, I guess if you say something enough, people will start to believe it is the truth. Even though it is not!

I believe it's unfair that the Crown corporation can state that it has lost \$3 billion since 2018 when in actual fact it has invested that \$3 billion into new sorting plants, new vehicles to replace their aging fleet, as well as new equipment and technology all over the country!

The only thing that Canada Post has not invested in during that same time period is their workers - the people that provide the service and make the service work despite all the mismanagement and over-spending taking place.

Instead of placing value in the people who made it possible to build those new sorting plants and to purchase those new vehicles and equipment, Canada Post continues to push a narrative that they are now broke and cannot afford to pay their workers a living wage, or allow their workers after years of service to retire with dignity!

They continue to devalue the labour their workers provide. They continue to push false narratives about the financial stability of the crown corporation, and have pushed it to the point where they sabotage the public service by using their high volume mailers to scare the public into using other parcel providers in fear of a labour disruption.



We've all seen the little red box on the shipping page of whatever site we're shopping on telling us about how a labour disruption at Canada Post could affect your items delivery... better go with another provider right...

## Purolator

Well, it must be discussed and considered as an unfair labour practice that Canada Post can filter volumes through its other entity Purolator during its negotiations with CUPW-STTP and then scream foul in the public that our volumes are down. Anyone working for Purolator knows their volumes increase every time we enter negotiations at Canada Post!

They manufacture a crisis and then push their narrative on the public so they can impose their demands on the workers. It's a modernized application of what is known as the Mohawk Valley formula. It has been used by governments and employers for decades as a method of strike breaking and devaluing the workers who perform the service.

Canada Post has said more in the media this last week than they have said at the bargaining table in the last 12 months, as they continue to negotiate in bad faith with CUPW-STTP.

## The Sky is Not Falling at Canada Post

It's important to reiterate that Canada Post is not losing money! They are mismanaging their operations on a daily basis and spending money hand over fist as they invest in new facilities, new vehicles and new equipment!

After spending 3 billion dollars upgrading their infrastructure and embarking on a public relations campaign to make the media and public believe the Crown corporation is losing money, it is time we break that false narrative and come to the understanding that they are investing money back into the infrastructure of the service but are unwilling to invest in their workers! The same workers that take pride in delivering the public service and who are good at what they do.

Canada Post must recognize the value its workers bring to the table! They need to invest in their workers the same way they have invested in new facilities, new vehicles and new equipment!

The workers are asking for the public's support and understanding as we navigate this difficult time. The sky is not falling at Canada Post... although Chicken Little would like you to believe that it is!! 🗉

# THE PERSPECTIVE OF A LETTER CARRIER IN TORONTO

From rankandfile.ca 12/6/2024

By Samantha Porter

The corporate media has made a contest out of spreading the most outlandish lies about postal workers. We're simultaneously considered obsolete, glorified paperboys, yet also blamed for destroying Canadian small businesses. They say we should be privatized and subjected to the whims of the market, but in the same breath demand that we be treated as an "essential service" and forced back to work.

The media, echoing the bosses' narrative, has descended into self-contradiction and falsehoods. As always, the truth lies squarely with the workers.

The Truth about Separate Sort and Delivery

Letter carriers are being crushed under unmanageable and unsustainable workloads. Our routes can exceed 1,700 delivery points, involve climbing more than 160 flights of stairs, or stretch over 30 km. We perform these tasks while carrying the weight of 7 bundles of mail, flyers, and parcels. These gruelling demands are the result of a delivery model imposed by management, conceived in the fantasy world of a business school, called "separate sort and delivery."

"Separate sort and delivery" was designed to eliminate the carrier's duty to sort and prepare their mail. In reality, it means workers are stripped of the time and tools to do so, yet we're still expected to perform these tasks in inadequate workplaces. This so-called efficiency has allowed Canada Post to drastically lengthen routes using a

broken, outdated measurement system. The result: longer, more punishing workloads with fewer resources.

Instead of improving service, this model



has made mail delivery less efficient. Routes are so long that they can't be completed reliably on a daily basis, leading to backlogged mail that must be reintegrated into the system for the next day's delivery—adding unnecessary costs to already-sorted mail.

The corporation uses these inhumane route lengths as an excuse to harass, discipline, and abuse workers they view as problematic. Those who report hazards on their routes are targeted and ignored. Workers who take their lunch or restroom breaks are punished, expected to skip meals and urinate in

bottles. Workers who demand safe conditions or report injuries face retaliation. Women, trans, and racialized workers are especially isolated and mistreated. All of this is done under the

guise of "performance issues" with workers struggling to walk 30+ km a day.

## Highest Rate of Injuries among Federal Workers

Rather than collaborate with CUPW to restructure routes into manageable and safe workloads, the corporation is trying to remove the Collective Agreement's protections against surveillance and tracking. They want to use these tools to discipline workers on flimsy grounds, making it easier to punish us for the

corporation's failure to provide proper working conditions.

The constant, arbitrary discipline has created a dire health and safety crisis at Canada Post. Workers are so terrified of retaliation that they're afraid to report hazards. Workers attempting to address safety issues are often escorted out to their routes by supervisors who scream at them for taking too long. If they file a safety complaint, they may find themselves the subject of baseless investigations into alleged criminal wrongdoing. Is it any wonder that letter carriers have the highest rate of injury of any federal workers?



Canada Post expects us to endure these gruelling conditions for poverty wages. The average postal worker makes only \$35,000 to \$40,000 a year—while the bloated CEO and his 22-member board rake in \$450,000 plus bonuses, all while running a public service into the ground with service cuts and negligence.

## "Competitiveness"

Canada Post Corporation claims its ill-conceived changes are necessary to remain "competitive." These changes include demands for "flexibility,"

alongside restricting access to benefits and pensions.

Across the industry, logistics workers' rights are being gutted under the guise of "competitiveness." Amazon and Uber are at the forefront of this attack, reintroducing piecework through the gig economy and creating conditions where workers are forced to live in cars or work 12+ hour shifts just to afford to rent a bedroom. This isn't competition—it's exploitation. Postal workers are determined to put an end to these degrading conditions.

The business class is racing to the bottom, asking only how much more

they can bleed from workers. CUPW refuses to let decades of hard-won labor rights—paid for in workers' blood—be sacrificed for corporate greed. Postal workers set the benchmark for fair wages and rights in this industry. Breaking our union isn't just an attack on CUPW—it's an attack on every logistics worker in Canada.

## Blood, Sweat, and Tears

CUPW members give their blood, sweat, and tears to serve Canadians every day. But our ability to do so is

being sabotaged by a few greedy, self-serving parasites. Canada Post's management is inept, malicious, and hostile. They're in their positions only because they're willing to terrorize workers into submission. They are the single largest factor in the dysfunction of Canada Post, and the service would run more smoothly if these petty tyrants weren't standing in our way.

The long-term solution, for Canada Post and for any industry, is to put workers directly in control and eliminate the ownership class.

Postal workers are not just fighting for fair wages and humane working

conditions. We're fighting to preserve a vital public service that connects Canadians across vast distances. The bosses and their media want you to believe we're lazy or greedy, but the truth is—we're exhausted, exploited, and determined to fight back. Support your postal workers—our struggle is your struggle.

Photos supplied by Samantha Porter. The author's name has been changed to protect them from management retaliation. 🗉

## BREAKING POINT:

(continued from pg. 6)

have taken the initiative to reclaim their workflow is undeniable. Has it been easy? Absolutely not. Is everything perfect? Far from it – nothing ever is. But as the saying goes, the struggle continues.

We say this knowing it's not easy, yet we must continue to keep doing the work. Continue to help each other, do what we can, and never be afraid to ask for help when needed. We cannot accomplish this alone, but united, together, we can achieve remarkable things. We believe in this mentality because we have witnessed it in action and we have seen it succeed: "the union" isn't some distant force, it's the collective power of what we do together. It is formed from the ground up – the very place where the struggle began in Mayfield, with a group of workers coming together to say, "Enough is enough!"

The workers had been feeling abandoned, humiliated, exhausted, and hopeless. We heard their voices loud and clear. As a union, we made it our mission to hold management accountable. This toxic work environment was allowed to continue without repercussion, empowering management to bully and intimidate workers and put them in unsafe conditions when they should have been setup for success so they could provide the best service to their customers.

However, in the last few weeks, there has been a noticeable shift – a renewed sense of change in the Mayfield depot. Workers are starting to breathe a bit easier and there is a buzz of positive chatter in the air.

### The End or Just the Beginning?

As we write this, we've learned that a significant source of the issues at Mayfield is no longer working for the company. Now more than ever, our brothers, sisters, and comrades at Mayfield need to continue to show management that we, the workers, have the ability to create real change. Where do we stand now? Are we at the end or have we embarked on a new path where our members feel a renewed sense of strength and confidence, knowing that things will improve?

The work is far from over. From here, we will continue to set the standard for the Corporation, ensuring that we won't accept anything less than what the workers deserve: a safe, harassment-free workplace where our members aren't worried about the stress the next day may bring but where they can take pride in their work and provide the exceptional service to our customers that we all love to provide. 



## FEBRUARY PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(continued from pg. 5)

without collectively agreeing, what is the point? This may include sweeping changes to the agreements to allow for whatever the Corporation wants, including but not limited to gig work, weekend delivery options, vacation and seniority changes or removal. It's limitless.

**Any other changes:** This speaks to anything outside of the collective agreements. This is most likely about the Postal Charter. Expect sweeping changes here, including alternate delivery days, privatization of profitable sectors, breaking up the post office to have false competition, and the removal of the parcel business from Canada Post. This may also include the expansion of services, including postal banking, but I have serious doubts that the banks will allow the government to do it.

**The structures, rights and responsibilities:** This might have to do with crippling our union and its ability to strike. Creation or modification of a unit that is no longer able to strike, represent its members in any meaningful way, and mechanisms for forcing acceptance of offers from the Corporation.

In a recent CBC article, Dr. Lee of Carleton University said: "A future

version of Canada Post might be taxpayer-subsidized... with service primarily in rural and remote communities – areas not serviced by the private, for-profit couriers that tend to focus on Canada's major metropolitan areas." Lee also said, "there could be a scenario in which Canada Post delivers directly to independently owned franchise that exist in grocery stores and pharmacies, rather than delivering directly to home addresses... [That] Loblaws and Shoppers [Drug Mart] and corner stores will just be competing aggressively to obtain those franchise because they'll have guaranteed customers coming in the door... It's going to be restructured. The only question is when and to what extent, and what will be the proposition offered when they restructure?"

We must fight this with every part of our being. Canada Post is not meant to be a for-profit company but a public service. Privatization in this direction is a detriment to Canadians. Canada Post subsidizes rural delivery with profits from high density cities. By removing the profitable portion of Canada Post, it will place a burden on Canadians that will easily be defined as unbearable by politicians and the service will be slowly diminished until it is all but gone. And with it will go our wages, our benefits, our pensions, and our jobs.

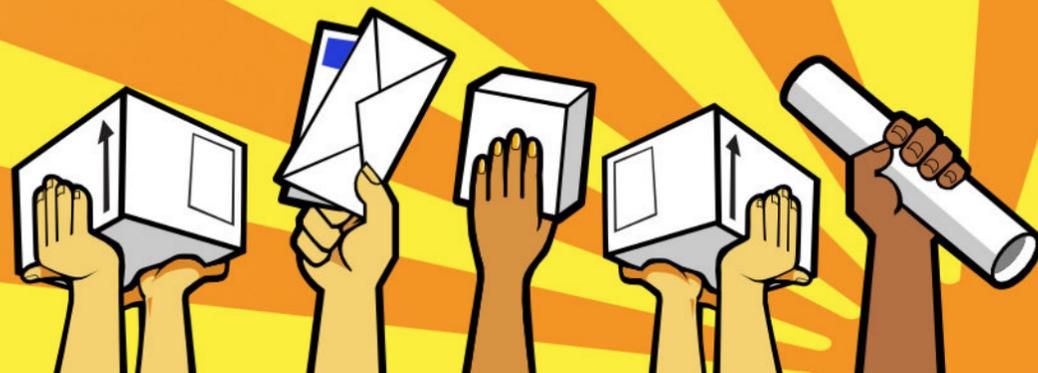
We must fight back. While National takes on the legal challenges, we may need to seek out other options. We need to fight this battle in the public because after the report is given, there will only

be a limited time of approximately one month where the government will be accountable. They will then break for Summer from June to September, and by then we may be moving into an election if we haven't already had one.

We could be on strike for months, followed by being order back to work under 90(1) of the Labour Code, which allows the governor in council to restrict our right to strike during an election period and until 21-days have passed after the new government is sitting.

We would then be on strike again with a new government. The membership has surprised me with their resilience and courage, but I feel we can avoid a protracted strike of several months to half a year if we can successfully challenge the Commission with positive demands.

Although there is no indication of any sort that there could be a contract that comes from the Commission or even an order for binding arbitration, there may be. One of the conditions of why we are unable to legally strike now is because we have a contract in effect. It has been extended. Should they create an order that forces binding arbitration on us, we will have to strike illegally if we are not successful in influencing the Commission. We must be successful in demanding changes that serve our needs and Canadians needs or be prepared to strike illegally to win.



# CUPW730.CA

## STILL YOUR MOST UP-TO-DATE INFO SOURCE

**A**t the March General Membership Meeting (GMM), we debated and voted on a motion to suspend our Local special assessment for a year, and to create a committee to review and make recommendations for what it should be going forward.

The special assessment is an additional amount of dues that a Local can vote to collect that is over and above the amount of dues set in our National Constitution. Our Local assessment works out to around \$15 per month per member, and we get around \$25 per month per member back from what is collected by National. This gave the Edmonton Local around \$40 per month per member.

As a member of the Local Executive, we also work in accordance with a vision statement: "To build an empowered and educated workforce. To mobilize the workers to fight back against the employer. To encourage the membership to be more involved in Union activities."

If I am to take this vision statement or any of my training seriously, then I must be honest and speak against this motion, which reduces the Local's operating budget by around 33%.

I would like to acknowledge that I agree with one of the arguments in support of the motion. For a number of reasons, we have money in accumulated funds from past budget years where the entire

how to understand their routes, how to organize and solve issues on the workforce, how to write a grievance, and the history of our union. This is unheard of in other Locals, which rely on sending a few members to Regional courses.

In the Edmonton Local, we have been able to respect our coworkers' work-life balance because of the special assessment. We can afford to give facilitators time away from work to prepare for the course. We can afford to pay members to be away from work to get educated and to not potentially create childcare issues for them by only having courses on the weekend. I also think we should pay for child care so that we don't have to worry about this at all, but that might be a conversation for another time.

The Edmonton Local also has route measurement committees that make sure the Corporation isn't cutting any corners when it comes to building Letter Carrier and RSMC routes. These members, who are training in understanding our routes, pore over every number on every document to make sure we are being paid for the work we are doing.

If we lose the special assessment, we are at risk for losing a lot more than \$15 per month. Even if we don't take the courses offered by the Local, we still benefit from our coworkers being trained.

This is not fear-mongering. This is being honest and wanting to have an empowered and educated workforce. This is wanting future members of our Local to have the same opportunities that I did.

If you have concerns about losing the special assessment, the Committee that is reviewing it is open to all members in good standing. If you would like to attend these meetings, you can find the meeting times on our Local website ([www.cupw730.ca](http://www.cupw730.ca)).



CUPE 3550 Picket at Ross Sheppard High School - On Wednesday, February 19th, leader of the federal NDP Jagmeet Singh addresses striking CUPE 3550 workers.

## ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SPECIAL DUES ASSESSMENT

— by Kyle Turner

The motion passed, so members should see around \$15 less being deducted from their pay cheques each month.

I spoke against this motion, asking the members present what they would like to see less of from the Local. I was accused of fear-mongering for this.

I've been trained in workforce organizing and I've actively engaged in it while working at the post office. I've also been trained and have worked as an external organizer. The important lesson that comes from this training and these experiences is that you need to be honest with people about the risks they are taking.

budget was not used: we should spend this money – and we have been. We used it to create the Strike Relief Fund by selling our strike hoodies and long sleeve shirts. We used it to make shirts that we have been giving to any member of the Edmonton Local that wants one – stop by the office and ask for one if you haven't gotten yours. We used it to fund the media campaign to keep the post office public.

But the money in accumulated funds will not last forever and if we lose the special assessment, we are at risk of losing the ability to have an educated workforce. We have a Local education schedule that trains our coworkers in how to be a Shop Steward, their rights,

CUPE/ATA Rally - On Thursday, February 27th, thousands of members of CUPE and the Alberta Teachers' Association, as well as their supporters, gathered at the Alberta Legislature to protest before and after the provincial government released its budget.



International Women's Day 2025 - CUPW members Karry Biri and Vanessa Danbrook (left), among many other speakers, address a full crowd at the 2025 International Women's Day celebration at the Alberta Avenue Community Centre on Saturday, March 8th, 2025.



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