

RSMC Negotiations

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Rural Mail Box Delivery

We have 2 negotiations demands that deal with the whole issue of rural box mail delivery. Demand 6 where we are requesting that local consultation take place before any mode of delivery is modified and demand 13 as we want our right to refuse to be included into the collective agreement language.

These demands have come about because RSMCs face Health and Safety issues everyday while delivering mail that must be addressed. But Canada Post has used this situation in their efforts to cut services, jobs and costs.

Below are extracts from an article entitled "*Mailbox Headaches – How Hard Can It Be To Get Your Mail In The Country?*" that can be found in the Harrowsmith's Truly Canadian Almanac 2010, pages 166-169 inclusive. To purchase a copy of the almanac please go to www.harrowsmithcountrylife.ca. It is also available from bookstands and from several major retailers that sell Harrowsmith magazine.

"...I moved to a quiet, tree-lined, dead-end dirt road....There wasn't even a mailbox. No problem, we thought. Little did we know or would have believed just how difficult it would be to get our mail. We bought a post box."

"...In the city, our mail was delivered on foot, come rain, sleet or snow, by an understandably fit Canada Post worker, who slipped bills and cards through a slot in the front or stashed them in a wall-mounted box that came with the apartment building. Easy."

"...First, we were told we had put our precious mailbox on the wrong side of the road...a quiet road...So we dug up our picture-perfect box...Shortly after, we received a complaint that our mailbox was the wrong height...We found a taller wooden spike...and repeated the whole postbox planting process a third time."

"...But our troubles were only just beginning. The kicker came with the national rural mailbox inspection in the summer of 2008 (See "*Reviewing the Rural Route*," page 168)...First a strange car came barreling down our road again and again one afternoon, while someone stood at the side with a stopwatch. I flagged them down to say "Slow down!"...They said they were inspecting the safety of rural mail delivery."

"Since no cars had passed that day, they had decided to simulate the dangerous traffic conditions they imagined they had to protect the posties from. I kid you not."

"...Looking chagrined, they then told us we had to move the mailbox. "Do you get along well with your neighbour?" they asked, gesturing to the next farm and its perfectly situated post, half a kilometre away. Were they suggesting we share their mailbox? "Not gonna happen," I answered."

"Then you'll have to get a post office box in the village," they said. "I work from home" I replied, "and I need my mail delivered here. After several more minutes of head shaking and hopeless

expressions, one of them said: "Maybe you could move it to the other side of the barn." Done. So once again we replanted the box, taking care to make it level and correct in every way. That's not the end of the saga. A while later the car was back, zooming up and down the road with different people inside. Now our barnside location was no good."

"...There had been no other vehicle traffic the entire day as usual. I gestured around the bucolic scene, trying to explain the obvious. "There is never any traffic here! Dogs sleep in the middle of the road! It was like dealing with lunatics – of an extremely bureaucratic sort."

"...Cut to few weeks later, and the band of jokers were back at it again..."You're gonna kill me, but your box is too close to that tree." He offered to move it himself if I could lend him a shovel. I watched as he planted that box in the sweet spot he'd selected, pretty much exactly where it had been originally!"

"In all, there were five visits to our sleepy dead-end road in the middle of nowhere...And I doubt the saga is over. Shortly after the final visit, I noticed one of those community mailboxes set up nearby....**I wonder if eliminating home delivery was the plan all along.** What a headache."
[emphasis added by CUPW]

"YOUR TURN – Do you have a mailbox headache story? We'd love to hear from you. Send a line – by mail, if you dare, to the editorial team." Harrowsmith's Truly Canadian Almanac 2010

As postal workers we are not the only ones who are seeing what CPC is up to. Using our very important Health & Safety issues to implement their postal service cuts, Canada Post is fooling no one not even the customers. Given that Harrowsmith is looking for more stories we may have more examples to come.

UNIVERSAL PUBLIC POSTAL SERVICES FOR ALL

SHOP STEWARDS NEED TO BRING THIS INFORMATION TO THE ATTENTION OF THE MEMBERS DURING REGULAR WEEKLY SHOP FLOOR MEETINGS.

In solidarity,



Donald Lafleur
Chief Negotiator and
4th National Vice-President

2008-2011 / Bulletin no.235
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