

THE WAY FORWARD:

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR MAKING

CUPW

STRONGER

AND

MORE EFFICIENT

FINAL REPORT

Submitted by:
Independent Working Group
on CUPW structure
March 6, 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
Background.....	3
Our role, our objectives, our mandate.....	3
How we undertook our work	4
CUPW today: Strengths, weaknesses, Opportunities and threats.....	6
Improving the Union: Four basic thrusts	7
Specific recommendations	15
A. Member Services.....	15
1. Grievances.....	15
2. Demand Setting and negotiations	17
3. Education	17
4. National Communications	19
B. National Structure	20
5. The National President's office	22
6. Role and functioning of the National Executive Committee and National Board of Directors.....	22
7. The Role of the National Constitution	24
8. Financial administration (including the role of the National Board of Trustees).....	25
9. The role of Union staff at National office (including NURs and specialists)....	27
10. The role and functioning of the Union's national committees	29
11. Organizing the Postal Sector.....	30
C. Regional Structure	32
12. The number and structure of Regions.....	32
13. The size and shape of locals.....	35
D. Servicing Special Groups of Members	37
14. Rural and Suburban Mail Carriers (RSMC)	37
15. Temporary Workers	38
16. Private Sector Bargaining Units (PSBU).....	39
17. Groups 3 and 4.....	40
18. Retirees	41
E. Inclusion and equity	42
19. Women.....	43
20. Human Rights	43
21. Youth.....	44

F. The democratic functioning of the Union.....	45
22. The special needs of the Quebec Nation.....	45
23. The National Convention.....	46
24. Getting and keeping the best staff we can: Election versus professional recruiting.....	48
25. Creating a healthy atmosphere within the union: addressing harassment...50	
G. CUPW and the outside world	51
26. Labour and community outreach	51
27. International Solidarity	52
Concluding Comments.....	54



INDEPENDENT WORKING GROUP ON CUPW STRUCTURE

March 2010

Brother Denis Lemelin
Members of the National Executive Board
Presidents of local unions
Brothers and Sisters, members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers

Sisters, Brothers:

On behalf of the Independent Working Group on CUPW structure, we are pleased to submit our final report.

This document is the result of hundreds of consultations with CUPW members and officers at all levels in all regions of the country undertaken by the Independent Working Group between January 2009 and January 2010.

Our group was consistently impressed by the hard work and commitment of CUPW officers, activists and members across the country. Yours is an impressive organization with a storied history which continues to play a leadership role in defending the rights of workers in Canada.

However, we feel that it is possible for CUPW to improve its ability to function in four broad areas: better union management; strengthened democracy; greater transparency; and more efficient operation.

Our report makes 119 specific suggestions which are aimed at helping the Union move forward.

We have sought out consensus where that is possible. Where there was no consensus we have put forward recommendations which make the most sense to us, based on the information we have received, and our general understanding of the principles of democracy and good union management practices.

Our recommendations fall into three general categories each of which will probably have to be addressed differently by the Union.

One group of recommendations will clearly require a change in the CUPW Constitution. The changes we propose to the role and composition of the NEB are an example.

A second group of recommendations do not require constitutional change. Some require a simple change in attitude, or in practice, or lie within the power of the NEB to make today.

A third group of recommendations are those that will require further study. Investigating the computerization of grievance handling is an example. This is within the power of the NEB, but will require further study. In these areas we recommend that the Union set in motion a process to study the recommendation further before making changes.

In our assessment, we have now completed the mandate you assigned us sixteen months ago. We remain, of course, at your disposition to provide any clarification you feel necessary. But the ball is now in your court.

On behalf of all the members of the working group, we would like to express our appreciation to you and all the officers, activists and members of the CUPW for entrusting this task to us. We were impressed with the sincerity and generosity with which you shared your time, insights and suggestions with us. We would also like to express our special gratitude to Claire Gravelle and Angèle Morin for the fine support they gave our group.

We hope you and your brothers and sisters find this document of use to you in your search for a better Union.

Nycole Turmel,
Coordinator,

Bev Burke,
Member

Peter Larson,
Member

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2008 National Convention called on the National Executive Board to appoint a small Independent Working Group to conduct a review of the Union's structure, finances, meetings, procedures and services.

Three people were appointed by the NEB, none of whom has ever been a member of CUPW. Working under the leadership of a former president of a national Canadian union, it conducted extensive meetings across the country with officers, activists and members.

An interim report was prepared and circulated in the summer of 2009, outlining issues and options based on what it had heard. The working group carried out further discussions on the basis of this interim report in the fall of 2009.

This document represents our final report to the NEB and members of CUPW.

The Independent Working Group was uniformly impressed by the enthusiasm and dedication of the CUPW members, officers, activists and staff. The CUPW justly merits its high reputation in the Canadian labour movement. However, an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the Union revealed some threats and also some opportunities. We feel that the time has come to make some significant changes in the way the Union is structured in order to effectively provide services to its members.

Our recommendations aim at four principal thrusts.

1. Better union management

We feel that the Union would be better served by a radical restructuring of its decision-making structure – especially at the national level. We propose, for example, that elected officials be better trained, be given clear responsibilities and be held accountable to the members for the accomplishment of their tasks.

2. Strengthened democracy

We feel that the Union can be made more democratic by making it clearer who is responsible for what, by more effectively including minorities in decision-making, and by giving more powers to locals and regions.

3. *Greater transparency*

We feel that the Union has developed little by little a “culture of secrecy” as a result of which most members (and many activists) do not really understand how decisions are made.

4. *More efficiency*

We feel that many of the Union’s current structures have grown up over time and deserve a close review. This is the case of the national committees, for example which are costly for the Union. We also recommend restructuring the triennial convention in order to bring it more in line with the practice of other unions. We feel that national and regional staff can be reduced as well. In the end, we feel that our recommendations will reduce the cost base of the Union considerably.

We conclude by making two recommendations for consideration of the NEB.

The first is that our recommendations are too sweeping and too extensive to be adopted at a National Convention. Instead, we recommend thinking of our report as a “menu” or a “library” of possible changes for the Union to consider and bring in as appropriate.

The second is that we urge the leadership of the Union to consider another possibility which was not in our mandate – merger with another union. We make this recommendation with a heavy heart – mindful of the glorious history of CUPW – but also with an eye on global economic trends and also trends already at work in the Canadian labour movement.

BACKGROUND

OUR ROLE, OUR OBJECTIVES, OUR MANDATE

The 2008 National Convention called on the National Executive Board to appoint a small, independent third party group (the Independent Working Group) to conduct a review of the Union's structure, finances, meetings, procedures and services and to bring forward recommendations for change.

Some of the key considerations were:

- The current structure was largely developed to meet the needs of a Union representing one bargaining unit and one collective agreement.
- The Union now represents members in various bargaining units, employed by multiple employers and administers 20 different collective agreements.
- Furthermore, the Union intends to continue to organize in the whole “postal sector” which, if successful, will further broaden the mix of members.
- The Union needs to develop a structure which encourages and facilitates the participation of all its members, including women and equity-seeking groups, younger workers, and from all bargaining units, especially the new ones, both large and small.
- The Union needs to ensure that any new structure takes into account the Quebec reality.
- The Union is under intense pressure to maintain or increase service levels at reduced cost. It needs to ensure a solid financial foundation on which it can continue to provide a high level of service and representation to all its members.
- The senior levels of the Union need to be able to devote critical time to discussing strategic options and providing political and organizational leadership, while at the same time ensuring that service remains at a high level.
- The Union also needs to ensure that its leaders do not suffer “burnout” because of unreasonably high workload and stress levels.

- The Union needs to strengthen its organization at all levels in order to be better prepared to face current challenges and those it will face in the future.

Within parameters established by the NEB, and under the direction of the National President, the Independent Working Group was asked to solicit input from members, and consult with all levels of the Union: locals, elected officers and Union Representatives. The review was to include a variety of approaches including calling for written submissions, interviews, surveys and focus groups. It was to consider issues such as geography, technology, membership density, equity, finances, participation, representation and services, and be guided by the Union's democratic principles.

The third party group was asked to provide a final report to the NEB six months prior to Pre-Convention Area Council meetings.

The Independent Working Group was constituted under the leadership of Nycole Turmel, a former president of the Public Service Alliance of Canada. It has two other members, Bev Burke and Peter Larson. None of the members has ever been a member of the CUPW.

HOW WE UNDERTOOK OUR WORK

The work of the Third Party Group unfolded over 16 months, from November 2008 when it was first constituted, until March 2010, when this final report was submitted.

Broadly speaking the work took place in 8 phases:

Phase 1 November 2008

- preliminary discussions and submission of proposal to NEB

Phase 2 December 2008 – January 2009

- gathering background information, reviewing constitution, statutes, resolutions of NEB
- briefings by key experts at national office
- individual meetings/or telephone conversations with ALL members of the National Executive Board and all elected National officers
- development of work plan

Phase 3 January 2009

- Presentation of work plan to NEB at its meeting of January 20 to 23
- Begin planning consultations
- Develop communication plan
- Start communications with members/locals

Phase 4 January – June 2009

- Consultation phase. Presentation of initial questions/findings to Regional Presidents meetings. Meetings with a sample of locals in all regions. Meeting with all national committees.
- Survey questionnaire to all members
- Creation of feedback site on CUPW website
- Visits to all regions. Review of structures in other similar organizations
- Review of CUPW financial structure
- Review of executive decision-making model.

Phase 5 July 2009

- Preparation of “What we heard” an interim report outlining issues, and options for future structure.

Phase 6 September 2009

- Presentation of interim report to NEB and membership.
- Distribution of interim report to all locals

Phase 7 October 2009 – January 2010

- Second round of visits to regions. Discussions with regional executives and sample of local presidents
- Further meetings with National committees, specialists and officers
- Preparation of final report

Phase 8 March 2010

- Submission of final report.

CUPW TODAY: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

To be effective, every organization needs to have a clear idea of its strengths and weaknesses, what threats might loom on the horizon, and what opportunities lie ahead.

In fact, most organizations carry out a regular analysis (SWOT Analysis) as part of their strategic planning activity.

It was not part of our mandate to undertake such a strategic analysis of the Union. However, as our consultations with members proceeded, we shaped our own impressions, as outsiders, of the strengths and weaknesses of your organization. As these impressions underlie many of our recommendations, we thought it would be useful to share them with you.

CUPW – A “SWOT” ANALYSIS

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proud history ➤ Reputation ➤ Leading role in Canadian union movement ➤ Country wide ➤ A leader in women’s equality ➤ Strong educational component ➤ Dedicated staff and leadership ➤ Democratic traditions 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Living in the past ➤ Growing detachment from the base ➤ Different members have different needs ➤ Leadership not representative of diverse membership ➤ Decreasing level of “union consciousness” in society ➤ Weak management structure
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased economies through better management ➤ Organizing in non-unionized sector ➤ Increasing member involvement ➤ Increased cooperation with other unions 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Changes in the Post Office (e.g. Modern Post) ➤ Dropping membership/revenues ➤ Technological change (e.g. email) ➤ New competitive environment ➤ “me first” culture in Canadian society ➤ Many programs funded out of “special” agreements with employer

IMPROVING THE UNION: FOUR BASIC THRUSTS

We have made 119 specific recommendations for structural change. All of the recommendations are based on four common themes which we believe are central to improving the Union. These are:

1. Better Union management
2. Strengthened democracy
3. Greater transparency
4. More efficiency

1. The need for better management of the Union

The success of the CUPW in the '80's and '90's indicates that its structure and culture were appropriate at the time.

However, the CUPW of today is functioning in a different world, and is facing different challenges than was the case two decades ago. Its current structure is showing some strains as it struggles to defend the interests of its rather diverse membership of 55,000 men and women from different backgrounds working in a variety of jobs and for a number of different employers.

Specifically, the Union's culture (and the constitution which reflects that culture) avoids giving authority or responsibility to officers for any decisions. Instead, it favours a "collective management style" in which responsibilities and accountabilities are broadly shared. This structure is a conscious one, and reflects the Union's history. At some time in the past, the Union lived through a period in which all decisions were made by a few people at the national office, without transparency. It was very hard for activists to know what was happening. As a result, a new constitution was developed which shared decision-making much more broadly, and adopted a 'collective management style' of operation.

This "collective management style" has a number of advantages:

- Because responsibilities are widely shared, it reduces the possibility that one person, or one group can "take over" the Union.
- It draws on the enthusiasm and initiative of many members.
- It encourages the culture of "democracy", which is one of the cornerstones of the union movement itself.

However, it also has a number of negative impacts:

- Collective management usually means slow decision-making. Because the NEB agenda is loaded with small items, meetings are long, and some items have to wait for several meetings before they can get on the agenda.
- Collective management means wasted resources. Each NEB meeting costs thousands of dollars, and many of the items on the agenda are ones that could – and should – be dealt with by either individual National officers – or by the National Directors at the regional level. Very little is gained by bringing a series of small decisions to the NEB. Worse, it means that the NEB does not have time to debate/discuss the really important items which will determine the future of the Union.
- Collective management undermines accountability. It's hard to hold anybody accountable for anything. Was a bad decision made? "It's not my fault, it was a collective decision". As it currently stands, no NEC member can spend more than \$1000 without the approval of the whole 15 member NEB. In fact, National Executive officers have less spending authority than many local presidents.
- Collective management can mean a lack of flexibility. National Directors do not have the authority to respond to individual situations that arise in their region.
- Collective management often also means that financial control has to be highly centralized. This is because there needs to be a control over finances to avoid the danger that the collective make decisions that run the Union into serious financial difficulty.

In our view, the CUPW can significantly improve its efficiency, effectiveness and democracy by improving its own internal management.

We recognize that many militants in the Union will be uncomfortable with a focus on better management. After all, isn't management what they are fighting? Well – maybe. But it's probably more accurate to say that CUPW is fighting an approach to management that focuses on profits above anything else. By good management in the Union context, we mean the efficient use of both human and financial resources to meet the needs of the members while also taking into consideration the values and needs of the Union staff.

CUPW officers, activists and members need to recognize that CUPW is now a major Union with 55,000 members, managing a budget of nearly \$30 million a year. It has millions of dollars in property.

In addition, it also has over 200 employees, which in Canada would rate it as a medium to large enterprise. Each of these employees has a salary, benefits, a pension, vacation time, etc. But many have unclear job descriptions, ambiguous responsibilities and poorly defined reporting structures.

All of the staff require management. Based on the information given to us by a wide range of CUPW staff, the national (and regional) officers of the CUPW are generally weak at managing the people who work for them. This leads to frustration and hurts effective performance.

It is our impression that CUPW's elected officers are reluctant to assume their important responsibility as managers. Many tend to either play a "hands off" role – effectively leaving staff to fend for themselves, or – to jump in and perform themselves tasks which would be better delegated to CUPE or COPE staff. The result? The officers are overwhelmed with work, while the CUPE and COPE staff are sometimes left unclear on which task to prioritize.

In addition, this confusion means that staff sometimes doesn't know whose leadership they should follow. At the limit, it even allows staff to choose which elected officials they want to follow, or even to define their own direction. This undermines the democracy of the Union.

By more clearly delimiting the responsibilities of various officers, and by giving them the authority to act within specific boundaries, it will be easier to hold them accountable. It also makes it clearer to staff whose leadership they should be following. And by giving officers training in financial and human resource management, it will be possible to significantly improve the effectiveness and economy of the organization.

In doing this, CUPW would not be breaking new ground. In fact, it would be bringing itself in line with the practice at other major unions in Canada. PSAC, CEP, CUPE and other organizations have more clearly defined responsibilities, and processes for ensuring that staff is working on the right issues according to the needs and requirements of the elected officials. It is also the practice at leading non-governmental organizations.

2. The need for strengthened democracy

It may come as a surprise to some members that the Independent Working Group feels that democracy at the CUPW can be improved. After all, the Union's constitution was inspired by its democratic culture. A very high number of Union staffers are elected directly from the membership, the salaries of the elected staff are barely higher than those of members (and significantly **LOWER** than those of the staff of other unions), and the Union has active committees devoted to the inclusion of women, visible minorities, aboriginal, T/L/G, members. It also has a strong position on the democratic rights of Quebec.

In addition, the Union's constitution has many built-in controls that ensure that the top officers of the Union are severely constrained in their ability to act.

However, many members have indicated to us that the current structure also causes some impediments to democracy.

Specifically:

- Because no office holder can really be held accountable for what he or she does, elections for specific offices can become “popularity” contests rather than vehicles to allow the members to choose the direction of the Union.
- The election of so many of the Union's staff (both national and regional URs), and their broad freedom of action, as described in the constitution, creates the potential for undermining the leadership of the democratically elected executive officers. Decisions of the National President and the NEC can be ignored by NURs, who are also elected. The result can be a standoff.
- Democracy also requires that the elected officers should have the ability to direct the work of the non-elected staff. The current climate at National Office too often results in non-elected staff deciding their own priorities. This is a clear undermining of democracy. Democracy requires that the elected officers determine the priorities of the professional staff including specialists and administrative staff.
- The high degree of administrative centralization undermines the ability of regions – and in particular Quebec – to make decisions corresponding to changing circumstances. According to the CUPW constitution, Quebec has the right to a level of autonomy within the Union.

- The current structure continues to fail to reflect the increasingly diverse membership of the organization.

The way to increased democracy in the CUPW lies in creating some clarity around who is responsible for what, what authorities they have, what authorities are delegated to the regions, and who gets to direct the work. It also depends on finding appropriate methods to remove barriers for equity seeking groups to participate in Union activities and leadership and in finding ways to encourage them to do so.

3. The need for increased transparency

A third weakness which CUPW needs to address is in the area of transparency. In particular, the budgeting and financial systems do not allow an easy understanding of where the priorities are.

We want to be clear. We do not think that the leadership is consciously withholding information from the members. On the contrary, many members, especially the activists, tell us they are overloaded with information. Nor do we have any indication, at all, that monies are being spent in a way that is not entirely legitimate.

However, it appears to us that a kind of culture of secrecy has built up over the years, which when combined with the “collective management style” means that members have very little understanding of how much the Union spends on which priorities or on the decision-making process itself.

For example:

- It is not clear how people are selected for education courses, either as participants or as facilitators;
- It is not clear how much money is spent on grievances each year, nor which regions spend more or less on grievances, and why;
- It is not clear how much the Union spends on international solidarity, or on how individuals are selected for international travel, or what benefits accrue to the Union as a result of these trips;
- It is not clear how people are appointed to special tasks at the National Office. There are rarely any published criteria;

- The minutes of the NEB meetings are so summary as to give no idea as to what decisions are being made (or even contemplated) by the senior level of the Union.

Not surprisingly, the lack of transparency creates a fertile ground for rumors and criticism. Dark motives can be attributed to the officers of the Union. The feeling can easily spread, for example, that people are hired at the National Office based on whether they are “politically aligned” with the right people, rather than based on their competence. It is possible for members to imagine that the Union is spending huge amounts sending officers and their friends abroad on international trips at the Union’s expense, when the total amount might be quite a bit smaller.

In order to remedy the lack of transparency, the Union needs to undertake a number of simple steps:

- It needs to record its decision-making and make those decisions known to the members, particularly decisions of the NEC and NEB.
- Establish budgets for specific areas of defined responsibility within the Union. There should be a budget for grievances, education, international solidarity, health and safety, human rights, and women’s rights for example. Those budgets will make it clear where the Union is actually putting its priorities, and should be available to members.
- Elected officers should be given the authority to spend those monies in accordance with Union policies and should be required to report back to the Union and to its membership on how much was spent and on what.
- Hiring staff at the national level should be done by first establishing clear criteria and then by an open process of recruiting staff against those criteria. The same process should be used for choosing delegates for international travel.

4. The need for more efficiency

The fourth and final weakness in the CUPW lies in the risk that with its current structure, its revenues may no longer be able to cover the expenses of running the Union.

If this problem is temporary – only a year or two – it is not a significant problem, since the Union can dip into its dwindling Reserve Fund.

However, if it continues over several years, the Reserve Fund could be depleted, with predictable consequences for the bargaining position of the Union. If it continues even further, the Union will have to consider reducing its level of service to members or raising revenues.

We feel that this risk can be reduced by taking structural steps now to reduce the costs of running the Union. The Union still has the time to consider making structural changes in order to lower costs while maintaining or even improving the quality of service.

Here are a few of the areas that seem ripe for review:

- **The Union's decision-making structure** – We feel the current NEC/NEB structure is inefficient, time consuming and costly. We propose a new structure that will save time and money while providing the Union greater strategic direction and accountability.
- **Communications** – There are too many overlapping communications going out to members (e.g. bulletins). The communications function could and should be streamlined. Too many documents are printed and left unread in local Union offices across the country.
- **National Office** – By redefining responsibilities, the number of staff at national office can be reduced.
- **Regional Offices** – By redefining responsibilities, and by putting more responsibilities at the local level, the number of staff at regional offices can also be reduced.
- **National Committees** – By reviewing the cost and benefits of the main national committees, it will be possible to identify ways to accomplish the same objective in a more efficient and less costly manner.
- **Grievances** – The Union spends a huge amount of money on grievances, but it is significant that nobody seems to know exactly how much. Not surprisingly, little or no attention is paid to ways to reduce those costs. There are several areas in which significant savings seem possible.
- **National Convention** – CUPW sends more people to convention per capita than any other major national union. Reducing the attendance at the convention from 650 to 450 people will mean a significant saving for the Union.

We understand, of course that for every suggestion we make – somebody will be opposed. It is almost impossible to make recommendations that don't affect somebody's important project or potential position in the Union. If fewer people come to the National Convention, for example, some people will be left out and unhappy. If fewer trips are made to Cuba or Brazil, those who believe passionately in international solidarity will be frustrated. If the number of staff in the national or regional offices are reduced, then the people who either hold those jobs now, or who were hoping to run for them, will be unhappy. Etc.

Of course, it will be up to the leadership of the Union to decide which changes, if any, it wants to make. We feel that our job is to point out where savings can be made.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

A. MEMBER SERVICES

1. GRIEVANCES

There is a sharp contradiction between the very significant resources the Union puts into the grievance process and the broad lack of member satisfaction with the Union's work in this area.

We know from our discussions with Union staffers at National Office and in the Regions that a very significant portion of Union resources go into preparing, recording and defending grievances on behalf of members, including the significant legal and arbitration costs.

On the other hand, we were told over and over again stories about members unable to find out where their grievances were, about lengthy delays, and general member dissatisfaction with the process – and the results.

In addition, we were told repeatedly that there is some confusion and a considerable amount of duplication in the Union's current approach to grievance handling which has all three levels – local, region and national office – playing a role.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. The roles of the Local, Region and National Office to be clarified and differentiated. In general, the handling of individual grievances should be pushed down to the locals and regional offices, and the National Grievance Officer should focus more on strategic and system issues. Specifically:

The Local Union should have primary responsibility for handling grievances:

- ensuring that grievances are well founded and well documented
- assisting members by helping them prepare grievances
- keeping the Region informed as grievances are filed

The Region should:

- provide assistance to small local unions as needed
- train and make widespread use of local worker advocates
- provide advice to other locals as needed
- monitor grievances across the region, and ensure quality control
- maintain a record of all grievances in progress
- help local unions learn from each other and take up best practices
- make regular reports to the National Grievance Officer (NGO) on grievances
- make recommendations to NGO for policy grievance

The Grievance Department at national level to be limited to six key functions:

- monitoring grievances across the system in preparation for negotiations
- developing a nationwide grievance strategy
- providing advice to regional officers
- assisting regions to learn from each other and taking up best practices
- preparing policy grievances, based on consultation with regions
- scheduling grievances

B. In accordance with these changes, the staff of the grievance department at national level to consist of three people plus appropriate administrative staff.

- National Grievance Officer
- 2 NURs (one English, one French)

C. The Grievance Department at National Office, including the NURs, to operate under the overall direction of the National Grievance Officer.

D. The National Grievance Officer should review the current policy of automatically filing “attendance” grievances. Attendance grievances currently account for a large percentage of total grievances and is costly for the Union, but are almost always set aside. A more efficient approach to responding to attendance issues should be considered.

2. DEMAND SETTING AND NEGOTIATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Urban Operations

Demand setting process has already been simplified by abolition of area councils. We recommend the CUPW try out this new process and evaluate it after next round.

The management of the collective bargaining process should be delegated to a sub-committee of the NEB, headed by a member of the NEC.

B. Rural and Suburban Mail Carriers (RSMC)

We recommend that the RSMC be integrated into the urban operations collective agreement as soon as feasible.

C. Private Sector Bargaining Units (PSBU)

We recommend that for PSB units with fewer than 100 members, the National Director of the region be authorized to approve demands, authorize a strike and direct negotiations. The National Director is obliged to keep the National Secretary-Treasurer advised of potential financial implications for CUPW.

3. EDUCATION

Member education is a key element in defending the rights of members. The CUPW has developed a sound education program based on the principles of good adult education. However, the union has become increasingly reliant on an “education fund” funded by the employer for financing key education programs. In our view, the Union runs a considerable risk by allowing its education program to become excessively dependent on financing from the employer.

In addition, there is a broad demand for a more flexible education program, which is tailored to the needs of locals. We think it is possible for the Union to greatly increase the number of members who can participate, without greatly expanding its budget.

There is agreement that the National Office should maintain control of major course development to ensure consistency across the Union. However to ensure that the program meets the needs of different regions and diverse locals, we suggest more course design and development should take place at the regional level, drawing both on the URs responsible for education and on experienced member facilitators.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Replace two NUR positions in the National Office with one bilingual specialist in curriculum development working under the direction of the 2nd National Vice-President. In addition to expertise in course design, the specialist should also have the skills required to train regional education representatives and selected member facilitators in course design and adaptation.
- B. Enhance the role of the Education URs beyond regional course logistics to include educational needs assessment of locals, assistance to locals with the design and facilitation of short courses, and support to member facilitators in the region.
- C. Maintain the national Union education program but reduce the costs through reducing the length, changing the locale etc.
- D. Clarify and tighten selection procedures for national and regional education programs by making the criteria transparent and ensuring that there is a consultative mechanism between the region and the locals to review selection of both participants and facilitators.
- E. Make better use of a national tracking system for course participants. A system has already been developed at the national level for tracking participants in specific courses so that no member would be permitted to take the same course twice. This system requires implementation across the Union.
- F. Target regional and national education to those who have taken or are about to take on specific roles within the Union.

- G. Ladder the education program so that there is a logical sequence of courses with pre-requisites attached to advanced courses.
- H. Undertake one or two e-learning experiments to test this approach as a means of increasing the number of members able to access the Union education program.
- I. Make better use of, and continue to develop member facilitators, involving some of the more experienced in curriculum design activities at both national and regional levels. CUPW has built an impressive group of member facilitators; however, this resource is not being used to its' full potential in some regions.

4. NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

Communication – both internally with CUPW members, and externally, with the outside public – is a critical function in the Union. This is true at all times, but even more important during negotiations.

Our study showed that the communications function at the National Office would benefit from a clearer structure.

According to the information shared with us, communications does not appear to be well coordinated. Bulletins come from various sources at the National Office, for example. Another element seems to lie in the fact that the “target” of specific communications is not always clearly identified. As a result, information that would be mostly of use/interest to local officers and stewards is sent to the general membership.

In addition, staff working in the communications area feel they are constrained by overlapping, competing and sometimes even contradictory agendas.

The overall result is that the officers at the local level feel overwhelmed by the volume of information coming from the National Office (eg. bulletins) while at the same time their members are not being effectively informed about issues facing the Union.

As a general principle, we think there needs to be a stronger overall coordination of the communications function.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. The National President should have overall responsibility for the communications function.

- B. He or she could designate one person to control and co-ordinate the flow of information including the website, bulletins and national publications to members/locals across the country.
- C. Under the direction of the National President, the Union should undertake a strategic review of national publications, including bulletins, to find out who reads them, what impact they have, how well they serve the membership, and what changes in delivery methods (including electronic methods), content or frequency, would best serve the needs of the members and local activists.

B. NATIONAL STRUCTURE

At the heart of the CUPW, like every other union in Canada, lie the main decision-making bodies of the organization. Taken together, their responsibilities are three fold:

- to give strategic direction to the Union
- to ensure efficient and effective ongoing administration
- to ensure democratic control by members

At the national level of CUPW, there are four key decision-making instances:

- The National President
- The National Executive Committee (NEC) (7 people)
- The National Executive Board (NEB) (15 people)
- The National Directors (8 people)

However, as things are currently structured, almost all of the decision-making powers lie with the National Executive Board. This power ranges from the broadest and most strategic – what should our demands be in the next round of bargaining, for example – to the smallest administrative detail – whether or not the Pacific Region can spend money to meet with the Independent Working Group.

As a result, the NEB is in almost continuous session. The NEB is required to meet at least every two months and in fact it often meets more frequently. In 2008, for example, the NEB had 13 meetings for a total of 52 days. In addition the NEB can take urgent decisions while not in session by facsimile.

This is extremely costly for the organization (travel and accommodation), results in very slow decision-making (as items pile up on the agenda), but most importantly it takes officers away from their most important duties of providing strategic leadership to the organization and managing the area of the Union for which they have been elected.

The current structure limits the powers of the National President and of all the other members of the National Executive Committee to the point where they cannot provide effective overall administration of the Union. By the same token, they cannot be held responsible for their actions because their power is so very limited.

The same is true for the eight National Directors – who are in effect, regional directors, but who have very little decision-making power, and almost no financial autonomy within their regions.

The result, in our view, is a system that is unwieldy, slow, expensive, and not as democratic as it should be.

We recommend, in general, that CUPW move toward a modern management system (similar to that used by other unions and non-government organizations).

The main elements of this are:

- Executive officers who have clear leadership and executive responsibilities and who are accountable for acting within certain guidelines;
- Regional officers who operate within agreed to budgets and are responsible for providing local political leadership and the effective administration of their region;
- A policy and control body, which provides direction and supervises the activities of the officers.

The way this is done in other organizations is to **SEPARATE**, as much as possible, the **ADMINISTRATION** of the organization from the overall **POLICY AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION** setting.

This is done by giving much more latitude to the specific office holders – the National President, the other members of the Executive, and to regional executives to provide political leadership and carry on the effective administration of the organization within the specific guidelines given to them by the organization.

With this greater latitude, however comes greater responsibility. The office holders must be held accountable for their actions to a larger body which is representative of the Union and which has overall authority.

RECOMMENDATIONS

5. THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

- A. The National President to have overall authority to assign work and responsibilities to the individual officers of the NEC, where not specifically stipulated in the constitution.
- B. The National President to have responsibility for communications – both inside the Union and with the outside.
- C. The National President to have responsibility for the international work of the Union.
- D. The National President to have the authority to hire an Executive Assistant on a contract for a period of time to coincide with the mandate of the National President. Preferentially, but not necessarily, to be hired from within the Union membership. The Executive Assistant can be assigned to other tasks at the discretion of the National President.

6. ROLE AND FUNCTIONING OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The National Executive Committee Officers

- A. The National Executive officers should have the authority, and responsibility, for carrying out the duties assigned to them by the constitution.
- B. They also have a responsibility as members of the National Executive Committee for the collective leadership of the Union.
- C. Individual National Executive officers should each have the budgetary resources necessary for the accomplishment of their specific tasks, and should be accountable to the Union for the execution of those functions. The budget for each Executive officer should be prepared by the National Secretary-Treasurer and adopted by the National Board of Directors.

- D. Individual National Executive officers should have the authority to spend monies within their budget up to an amount of \$10,000. Any expenditure in excess of that requires the approval of a majority of the National Executive Committee.
- E. Where the Constitution does not clearly stipulate responsibilities, or in the case of ambiguities, the National President should assign specific duties to individual officers.
- F. Each National Executive officer should be accountable to the National Board of Directors for the accomplishments of their individual offices, and for the management of the budget which they have been assigned. They must make a report to the National Board of Directors on a regular basis.
- G. Each National Executive officer should have overall responsibility for providing direction to NURs, specialists and administrative staff working in their individual areas of responsibility.
- H. The National Executive officers, including the National President, should take management training (including human resource and financial management) within three months of election.

The National Board of Directors

- A. The National Board of Directors (NBD) is the highest policy making body in the Union between conventions. It has the power to override decisions by individual Executive officers, including the National President.
- B. The NBD is not an administrative body – its function is to debate strategic direction, provide policy guidelines to the Executive officers and to hear reports from individual officers in the execution of their mandate.
- C. The National Board of Directors will meet four times a year for two days at the National Office.
- D. The NBD will consist of 23 members as follows:
 - i. National President
 - ii. 6 National Executive Officers
 - iii. 6 Regional Vice-Presidents
 - iv. 3 Presidents of largest locals
 - v. 1 representative of RSMC
 - vi. 1 representative of Groups 3 & 4
 - vii. 4 representative of Equity seeking groups
 - viii. 1 representative of the PSBU

- E. The minutes of the National Board of Directors will be noted and made available to the general membership. (However, in specific cases, the NBD will have the right to move to in-camera session.)

7. THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION

CUPW's National Constitution is the basic legal document of the organization. It defines the roles and responsibilities of all the officers, boards and committees of the Union.

It also describes a number of key Union policies in such areas as the role of CUPW in the labour movement, the attitude of the Union toward the employer, and CUPW's position on a number of key Canadian social issues.

The current version of the Constitution has 175 pages plus 51 pages for the National Policies which are also considered part of the Constitution (for a total of 226 pages.)¹

Over the years, convention decisions added to the Constitution more responsibilities, duties, functions, activities, committees without a real review or clean up of the existing document. The Constitution has been written for one big bargaining unit and there are few references at all to any of the new bargaining units.

Many people say the Constitution has now become too long and too complex for most people to use. In addition, as a result of many amendments over time, the Constitution now seems to include some internal contradictions. Finally, also like the bible, we were told that there are many items in the Constitution which don't really reflect current practice in the Union.

CUPW members have different ideas about how the Constitution should be viewed. Some believe that anything which is not in the Constitution is not permitted. Others believe, on the contrary that lots of situations arise which are not foreseen in the constitution. In these cases, they argue, the Constitution should be seen as a "general guide", not as a definitive list of what is "permissible".

¹ The CUPW Constitution is one of the longest and most detailed of any Canadian union. As a point of reference, the constitution of the Canadian Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP) has 82 pages, that of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) has 43 pages and that of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) has 50 pages. Each of these unions has more than 3 times as many members as CUPW (and many more collective agreements).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. One member of the NEC be assigned to undertake a full review of the Constitution to reduce or eliminate excessive detail and contradiction, clarify ambiguities, and eliminate items that by common agreement, no longer apply to the current situation.
- B. The current CUPW Constitution be separated into three separate documents:
 - i. A basic National Constitution, (to be approved/amended by convention);
 - ii. National Policies, (which can be adopted by NBD or convention);
 - iii. Administrative Regulations (which can be adopted by NEC).
- C. Rewrite the Constitution in “clear language”. The CLC has done a clear language Constitution so there is a model to learn from.
- D. Put Constitution (and policies) on the Internet, and reduce dramatically the number printed. (Print and mail only the number of copies requested by locals).

8. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION (INCLUDING THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES)

There are few tasks more important to the functioning of the Union than the effective administration of its finances. Members pay nearly \$30 million in dues each year. The Union spends this in salaries for its officers and staff, rent for offices across the country, travel and accommodation for key officials, fees for lawyers, and hundreds of other items.

Establishing policies to guide such expenditures, and practices to ensure that the policies are followed is no simple task. Without good policies, practices and records the Union would quickly sink into a financial morass.

Our discussions with members and elected officials across the country left us with the impression that the CUPW is very careful with members’ dues.

However, we feel that the current approach to financial administration is lacking in four key areas.

Firstly, the expenditures of monies are not tracked by purpose or activity area. As a result, it is impossible to know how much money the Union is spending on grievances, for example, or education, or international travel.

Secondly, control over individual expenditure items lies too much in the hands of the NEB (and in practice the National Secretary-Treasurer). We have discussed the consequences of this earlier. Good financial administration would give more autonomy to specific officers to make expenditures within established budgets.

Thirdly, member's dues are the same for all CUPW members (although special exemptions are possible with approval of the NEB). This is particularly onerous for temporary workers who work fewer hours per month.

Finally, every union has the equivalent of CUPW's National Board of Trustees to keep a watching brief over the expenditure of monies. However, we feel that the CUPW National Board of Trustees is wrongly mandated and wrongly staffed. We suggest that CUPW adjust its practices to come in line with other unions and non-government organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

- A. Review and prepare options for a different dues system that could reflect the wages of different kinds of workers, including PSBU, and temporary workers , keeping in mind the decision made by CUPW to organize new members.
- B. Move to an “activities-based budgeting approach”, where the Union debates its priorities and decides what resources it wants to apply to each of them, and assigns authority and responsibility to specific officers to carry out the tasks.
- C. Increase transparency by the creation of separate budgets for such priorities as: education, grievances, human rights, international solidarity, etc., and giving an accounting to the membership each year on how these monies have been spent.
- D. In order to properly resource this new approach to financial administration, the Director of Finance position should be separated from ongoing office administration.

- E. Create a new position of Office Manager, to deal with administration of the office, including human resource administration. The Office Manager to report directly to the National Secretary-Treasurer.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE NATIONAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES COMMITTEE (NBT)

- A. The mandate of the National Board of Trustees should be to hear the report of the auditors and report to the National Board of Directors recommending new policies and regulations as appropriate. (It should NOT be to go over the individual expense items in the budget.)
- B. The mandate of the auditors should be to verify that expenses have been handled in line with the Union's National Constitution and policies. The auditors should be also mandated to include recommendations to improve overall financial management.
- C. The size of the National Board of Trustees should be reduced to three people, elected at convention.

9. THE ROLE OF UNION STAFF AT NATIONAL OFFICE (INCLUDING NURS AND SPECIALISTS)

There are approximately 100 people who work full-time² at the CUPW National Office at 377 Bank Street in Ottawa. The National Office occupies the whole building, which is on four levels.

National Office staff can be roughly divided into six categories:

- 1. There are **seven elected National Executive Committee Officers**, including the National President. They are elected to serve a 3-year term.
- 2. **11 National Union Representatives**. These are CUPW members who are elected at convention to carry out a number of different functions at National Office “in conjunction with” the National Executive Officers. They are elected for a 3-year term from convention to convention.

² This does not include people who come into work full-time but for short terms at head office. The National Board of Trustees, for example, comes into the National Office for 2 weeks every 6 months.

3. **21 technical specialists** provide support to the national officers. They are permanent staff members, hired by the Union for their technical expertise. The range of services is wide – from the Director of Research to translation. The technical specialists have their own union (CUPE 1979) and work under a collective agreement with CUPW.
4. **35 administrative and support staff.** These include secretaries, receptionists and other personnel essential to the functioning of any office. It also includes the print shop. They also have their own union (COPE 225) with their own collective agreement. The same local also includes support staff who work in the eight CUPW regional offices.
5. **Three “contract personnel”**, including the Director of Finance and Administration, and two Directors of the IT departments.
6. Finally, there are **approximately 10 “others”, including alternate URs, and other appointed staff** who work on a variety of special projects on a “temporary, but full-time basis” at National Office (an example is the three who work on the Transition Committee or those who work on the “AA” committee). Although their status is “temporary” some have been working many years in Ottawa at the National Office.

It is our impression that these 100 or so people currently work under a very loose management style, in which there exists considerable confusion over who has responsibility for what, and who should determine priorities. We feel that there is room for considerable improvement, and probably efficiencies in operation through a clarification of the roles of each.

In principle, everyone working at National Office should know what his/her responsibilities are and be clear about who assigns them work, decides priorities, and evaluates their contribution to the organization.

RECOMMENDATIONS³

- A. All National Executive officers should take at least three days of management training (including financial administration and human resource management) within three months of being first elected to National Office.

³ (note: several of the recommendations regarding the role of staff are linked to recommendations regarding the management role of National Executive Officers. See recommendations 6.E, 6.G and 6.H)

- B. Clarify the responsibilities of National Executive officers. In areas of overlap or confusion, it shall be the responsibility of the National President to allocate files or responsibilities.
- C. Clarify reporting relationships for NURs. NURs should carry out their work “under the direction” of the appropriate national officer.
- D. Clarify reporting relationships for specialists. Specialists should carry out their work “under the direction” of the appropriate national officer.
- E. Every CUPW employee (NUR, specialist or administrative staff) should have a conversation with the responsible Executive Officer at least once a year to evaluate their contribution to the organization and discuss approaches to improvement.
- F. In recruiting for all temporary positions, clear job descriptions should be drafted, and a transparent, objective process should be used.
- G. CUPW should develop a contingency plan for “temporary” staff whose work is dependent on funds from the employer derived from special agreements under the collective agreement.

10. THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONING OF THE UNION’S NATIONAL COMMITTEES

In order to pursue several of its objectives, CUPW has created a number of National Committees. Two of these – the National Women’s Committee and the National Human Rights Committee – are essentially political committees which work toward political objectives within the Union.⁴

Three are more technical and deal with specific issues facing the Union. These are the National Work Measurement Committee, the National Health and Safety Committee and the National Board of Trustees.

⁴ The National Women’s Committee and the National Human Rights Committee are dealt with in the chapter F. Inclusion and Equity.

The objectives, membership and meeting frequency for each committee are all outlined in the Constitution. Membership is generally based on equal representation by region (one to four persons per region, depending on the committee) plus, some other representatives or officers as specified in the Constitution. Each committee meets in Ottawa usually for two or three days at least twice a year. The costs of lost wages, travel and accommodation for committee members as well as simultaneous translation, and preparation of documents is paid by the National Office.

As a result, the costs of operating the committees are considerable.⁵

It is not clear to the Independent Working Group that in every case, a national committee is the best approach for achieving the Union's objectives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. The National Secretary-Treasurer to establish an estimate of the annual costs of each of the five national committees.
- B. The National President should ask the National Executive officer leading each committee to carry out a review of the committee's work and effectiveness, and to identify better approaches to accomplishing the objectives of the Union in each area using the same spending base.
- C. On a going forward basis, the National Executive officer in charge of each area (Health and Safety, Women's rights, etc.) should submit an annual budget for the accomplishment of the tasks, including a budget, if any, for a national committee.

11. ORGANIZING THE POSTAL SECTOR

In June 2007, the NEB adopted an organizing plan called "Organizing for the next decade" with the goal of uniting all workers in the postal sector.

There is a NUR in charge of organizing responsible to the 3rd National Vice-President.

⁵ We do not have exact figures, (see section on financial administration) but the total costs of the 5 national committees, including travel, lost wages, accommodation are probably in excess of \$500,000)

There is also a budget for organizing of approximately \$800,000. The NEB votes on all organizing targets and determines the dues charged to new locals. Regional educational and organization staff are responsible for organizing work in each region. Worker organizers are also taken from the shop floor with their wages and expenses paid by the national organizing budget.

Organizing outside the post office is a complicated task involving work at both the national and regional level. Organizing any worksite requires patient work, knowledge of the sector, and good contacts in the proposed workplace. It also requires a significant investment on the part of the Union, because organizing can take time, and will not always be successful. Our information is that CUPW has now organized a total of 15 private sector bargaining units with a total membership of approximately 485.

Organizing is one thing – but it is only the first step. After that comes negotiating a first collective agreement, and then, of course, servicing the new members.

We have been told that there have been weaknesses at all three levels.

- In some cases, CUPW organizers have not been on the ground long enough to build up the necessary contacts to carry out a successful campaign.
- In other cases, the organizing has been successful, but no contract is negotiated, usually because of lack of time at the regional level.
- In yet other cases, the organizing has been successful, a contract has been negotiated, but the unit ends up decertifying (mostly because it is not satisfied with the level of service provided.).

CUPW needs to carry out a careful examination of its policy, its strategy and its practices with respect to private sector bargaining units.

It seems to us that “organizing the unorganized” has become within CUPW an untouchable question. At least publicly, everyone is in favour of it. However, we heard many question this policy in private. If CUPW is to be effective in organizing currently unorganized workers in the postal sector, we feel it must adapt its structure to be more effective.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. CUPW should carry out an internal review of its success and failure in organizing outside CPC over the last year. This review should include an analysis of whether it makes sense **FINANCIALLY** for the union to continue to dedicate resources to this objective.
- B. If the answer to the above question is “YES”, at the national level, the Union should hire a chief organizer. (i.e. this should not be an elected position).
- C. The decision to launch a campaign in a specific worksite should be made by the Regional Vice-President. If the Regional Vice-President does not feel the chances of success are great enough, no campaign should be launched.
- D. Regional Vice-Presidents should be asked to make a report on organizing in their region to the National Board of Directors on an annual basis.

C. REGIONAL STRUCTURE

12. THE NUMBER AND STRUCTURE OF REGIONS

CUPW is currently structured into eight regions across the country. The regions differ from each other in many ways including: geographical area, membership, language, number of provinces covered, and composition of members.

Office Name	No. of Locals	No. of members	No. of Officers ⁶	Location of Office
Atlantic	37	3721	5	Halifax
Québec	31	4996	6	Québec City
Montréal	2	7006	6	Montréal
Central	40	5269	6	Ottawa
Ontario	31	9022	7	London
Toronto	1	8518	6	Mississauga
Prairie	37	9503	7	Winnipeg
Pacific	38	7579	6	New Westminster
Total	216	55584	49	

⁶ National Director, Regional Education and Organization Officers, Regional Grievance Officers, plus Regional Union Representatives. Support staff are not included.

Each region is headed by a National Director, who is supported by two regional executives (a Regional Grievance Officer and a Regional Education and Organization Officer) as well as a number of Regional Union Representatives, and appropriate administrative staff. In each region, all staff operate out of the regional office.

The regions have representative/democratic functions, service delivery functions and control functions.

The main representative/democratic functions are:

- to help locals prepare resolutions for convention or for collective negotiations
- to act as the link between the members in the region and the rest of the union
- to represent the needs of the region at the national level, particularly on the NEB
- to represent the members to Canada Post officials at the regional level

The main service delivery functions are:

- to assist locals in the preparation of grievances, and to help in the management of the grievance process up to final resolution
- to organize and conduct union education according to programs established by the national office
- to provide other services to members – including education and advice on pensions, health and safety, and other services for the wellbeing of members

The main control functions are:

- to ensure effective democratic functioning of the Union locals in its region
- to monitor compliance of locals with the Constitution and policies of the Union.

The regions do not have their own sources of revenue. All their revenue comes from the National Office. National Directors are continually appealing to the NEB for funds for special projects.

Despite their varying sizes and geographical situations, the eight current regions are treated equally in terms of access to educationals, and representation on the NEB.

We believe that CUPW would be able to more efficiently provide services (grievances, education, etc.) to its members if it had fewer regions. It does not make sense, for example, for the Quebec region to provide services to Eastern Quebec, which is actually closer to Montreal.)

However, we understand that the number of regions has grown for political reasons. In Quebec and Ontario, for example, a main driver for creating separate regions for Toronto and Montreal was because of concerns about the overwhelming weight of the Toronto and Montreal locals in the existing regions.

Similarly, the Atlantic Region makes perfect sense from a service delivery perspective. From a political perspective, to give the Atlantic Region equal weight on the National Executive Board with the Toronto Region is obviously undemocratic.

The answer to this riddle, we believe, lies in separating the service delivery function from the representative function.

We believe that from a service delivery point of view, CUPW would best be served by reducing the number of regions from eight to four. (Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Western). However, we recognize that this may be too big a step to take in one leap. As a result, we recommend that the number of regions be reduced to six, and that the Union undertake further discussions about how to reduce to four regions in a future reorganization.

We also believe that the Union can reduce costs and improve service delivery by making specific changes in the regions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. The number of regions to be reduced to six, by reducing Ontario to two regions and Quebec to one region. This reduction should take place through a series of discussions in each province on how to best provide services to members.
- B. Each region to be headed by a Regional Vice-President, whose principal responsibilities include providing political leadership in his/her region, ensuring a high level of service delivery to members and assisting the locals in his/her region. He or she will also be the principal spokesperson for the Union in his/her region.
- C. The Regional Vice-President will be assisted in his/her duties by an Assistant Regional Vice-President who will replace the Regional Vice-President as necessary. Regional Vice-Presidents will be given the authority to make expenditures within an approved budget and responsibility for managing his/her office and for providing services in his/her region. He/she will be accountable for the management of the region.

- D. In each region, there will be a Regional Vice-President, an Assistant Regional Vice-President, and the current complement of URs and administrative staff. This will reduce the number of staff in each region by one (a total of eight person years).
- E. Regions should make more extensive use of the existing network of worker advocates and worker educators to take on some of the work currently done by full-time staff.
- F. The Regional Vice-President will assign dossiers (grievances, education, organizing, etc.) to regional staff as appropriate.
- G. The budget for each region should reflect the number of members in the region, and any special circumstances relating to the geography of the region. (i.e. regions are no longer “equal” from a budget perspective.)
- H. The permanent office of each region to be located within the region in a city to be approved by the National Executive Committee. In each region, satellite offices to be created as appropriate with the approval of the National Executive Committee.
- I. The Regional Executive Committee to be eliminated.
- J. Regional Vice-Presidents will sit on the new National Board of Directors, to help ensure regional input into the overall strategic direction of the Union, and to help hold National officers accountable for the accomplishment of their mandate.

13. THE SIZE AND SHAPE OF LOCALS

CUPW currently has 216 locals spread across the country. The locals range in size from over 7000 in the case of Montreal and Toronto, to as few as 5 or 6 in some isolated posts. There are 9 very large locals that have over 1000 members. A few have full-time staff. On the other end, there are 30 locals with fewer than 20 members.

According to the Constitution “*The local is a group of members composing a basic unit of the union and having received a charter from the National Executive Board.*”

According to the Constitution, locals receive 26% of Union dues collected for their own purposes. In addition, locals are given supplemental funds on a sliding scale. Locals with fewer than 250 members receive \$250 per month, larger locals receive less on a per capita basis).⁷

The size of locals (and their geographical boundaries) should be decided in a way that facilitates efficient service delivery and ensures democracy is ensured across the union.

The Union has special challenges with respect to very large locals and very small (and often isolated) locals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Every local, and in particular the largest locals, should review its own size/structure with an eye to improving services to members. That review should include determining if any members would be better served by belonging to a separate local, or to another existing local, or by joining two locals together.
- B. The Regional Vice-President will determine the size and shape of locals in his/her region. The Regional Vice-President should examine whether there are any cases in which RSMCs would be better served by creating an RSMC local.
- C. Regional Vice-Presidents should pay special attention to the size/structure of locals of fewer than 25 members. He/she should encourage the sharing of resources as appropriate for small locals.
- D. The National Presidents meetings should be preceded by a one-day conference for presidents of small and isolated locals. Additional costs to be shared 50/50 by the local and the National Office.

⁷ In addition, 44 locals assess local dues to supplement revenues from the National Office.

D. SERVICING SPECIAL GROUPS OF MEMBERS

The overwhelming majority of CUPW members work in “urban operations” and most are either letter carriers or mail clerks. However, there are a number of special groups of members who have special issues that deserve attention.

In this, CUPW is moving along a path that many other Unions have followed – from being “craft” unions (representing one trade) to “industrial” unions, representing all the workers in a particular company or industrial sector. Large unions like the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), the Canadian Auto Workers’ Union (CAW), the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada (CEP), and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) have had to change their structures to account for their new heterogeneous membership.

There are a number of sub-groups within CUPW, but we have identified four in particular:

- RSMC
- Temporary Workers
- Private Sector Bargaining Units
- Groups 3 and 4

14. RURAL AND SUBURBAN MAIL CARRIERS (RSMC)

In 2003, CUPW won “voluntary recognition” to represent 6000 RSMCs, a majority of whom are women. Their current contract expires in 2011. Before joining CUPW, RSMCs were contract workers – most contractors earned very little but a small number made as much as \$100,000 per year. Not surprisingly, as contract workers, the RSMC culture differs sharply from that of other CUPW members.

The Union has attempted to equalize routes so that people make more or less the same for doing the same job. A national Transition Committee was set up with three Union and three management representatives, paid for by CPC, as an advisory committee to the corporation. Their job is to deal with the restructuring of RSMC routes and their compensation.

It seems to be generally true that the marriage of RSMCs and CUPW has been a rocky one. The biggest problems are in areas where RSMCs do similar work to postal workers who earn more than they do, or where they work in isolated areas. Some people are generally optimistic, but many are angry. It is not only a “structural” issue, but part of the issue is definitely “structural”. In any event it is a challenge the CUPW leadership will have to deal with.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Assign one NEC member the overall responsibility for RSMCs.
- B. Incorporate the RSMCs in the Urban Operations collective agreement at next round of collective bargaining.
- C. Organize a one-day RSMC caucus prior to the CUPW convention, for all RSMCs who are convention delegates.
- D. Give local Unions extra training, as necessary, to process RSMC grievances.
- E. Recommend that local Unions offer a (partial) mileage allowance for RSMCs who have to drive more than 25 km to attend local Union meetings.

15. TEMPORARY WORKERS

BACKGROUND

Most new workers are brought in as temporary workers and are on probation for varying time periods before they can become full-time. Temporary workers are not defined as either full-time or part-time. Some are hired at Christmas or other peak mail periods. Many temporary workers are young workers.

We heard that many temporary workers feel the Union is not as welcoming to them as it might be – reflecting perhaps a feeling that temporary workers are potential competition for jobs. In addition, their precarious status makes it difficult for temporary workers to make use of services provided. As a result, some temporary workers feel their Union dues are not well spent.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Temporary workers should pay dues based on hours worked.
- B. The executive of each local Union should keep a list of temporary workers.
- C. Local executives should ensure that each new temporary worker has been met by a representative of the local within one month of being hired.

16. PRIVATE SECTOR BARGAINING UNITS (PSBU)

After several years of active organizing activity, CUPW now has many private sector bargaining units representing members who work as cleaners, couriers, printers, drivers etc. In some areas enough workers were organized in a company to allow them to form their own local. In many cases, they were incorporated into existing urban sector locals.

However, the CUPW is still teething in this area. PSBU members generally do not yet feel they are really full members of CUPW, especially where new PSBU units were judged to be too small to form locals and have been incorporated into other locals.

It seems that new contracts are not always understood by stewards who have to represent the new workers.

As a result of this discontent, a number of new units have decertified.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Regional Vice-Presidents to have final authority on whether and when an organizing drive should be undertaken in their region.
- B. Regional Vice-Presidents to have responsibility to ensure that PSBUs are well serviced and well represented in Union affairs.
- C. Regional Vice-Presidents to make regular reports to the National Board of Directors on issues relating to PSBU organizing or servicing in his/her region.

17. GROUPS 3 AND 4

Approximately 85% of the current CUPW membership works in “Urban Operations”, most of them in groups 1 and 2. However, urban operations also includes two other groups of members with special jobs and special needs. These are the approximately 650 Group 3 workers, and another 100 or so members in group 4. These two groups of employees were folded into CUPW from UPCE/PSAC and IBEW respectively. Members in groups 3 and 4 are highly skilled (mostly male) mechanics and maintenance workers and are the highest paid workers in the bargaining unit.

Members of groups 3 and 4 work in about 20 mail sorting facilities from Halifax to Vancouver. Because they represent a small minority in each local, CUPW members from groups 3 and 4 face significant challenges in being elected to their local Union executives, or in being selected as delegates to convention or to Union educationals.

A major challenge for the Union is how to ensure that groups 3 and 4 feel adequately represented in negotiations, are adequately serviced, have equal opportunity in Union education, and are represented appropriately at convention.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Organize a one-day groups 3 and 4 caucus prior to convention or bargaining. Expenses for attendance to be shared 50/50 between local Union and National Office.
- B. Designate specific responsibility for liaison with groups 3 and 4 members to one Regional Vice-President.

18. RETIREES

BACKGROUND

Every year hundreds of CUPW members take their retirement. Some of them don't want to have anything more to do with Canada Post – or the Union. But many do want to remain in contact with the Union. Retirees have skills and allegiances that could be helpful to the Union – but there are few official ways to incorporate that experience. Retirees are able to participate off-hours in tasks, such as election balloting in large locals, which are difficult for activists working full-time. Those with experience as member educators can be called upon to facilitate courses, assist with WSIB cases and other tasks.

The 2005 national convention established local Pension and Retiree Benefits Committees and the membership status of “retired member”. A number of locals have established committees. However, as of September 2007 there were only 59 members with retired member status.

Dues are waived for retirees under sections 1.21 and 1.22.

These sections also define a process for gaining lifetime member status, with rights to participate in all Union activities. There are currently 311 lifetime members in the Union.⁸

⁸ Tracking retirees, and keeping them in touch with the Union seems to be very “hit and miss”. Some locals do a better job of it than others. The number of retirees is likely to increase significantly over the next 10 years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Locals should be encouraged to keep ongoing contact with retirees, and to facilitate the organization of retiree committees where possible.
- B. Retirees should be encouraged to continue to attend local Union meetings as observers.

E. INCLUSION AND EQUITY

BACKGROUND

The CUPW is proud to be a democratic organization. It is a principle of democracy that everyone should be treated equally. But because people are not all the same, turning that principle into practice is not easy for any organization, including CUPW.

Inclusion and equity can cover a vast range of people and issues. In fact, almost anybody can feel “excluded”. For the purposes of this report, we have focused on three major groups of members who, by virtue of who they are, rather than what they do, have challenges in participating fully in the Union. They are:

- Women
- Equity seeking groups (visible minorities, differently-abled, Lesbian/Bi/Gay/Transgendered, aboriginals)
- Youth

The CUPW has shown leadership in the development of sound human rights policies, anti-harassment policies, sections 7.58 and 7.59 to help pay expenses and encourage participation of women and equity seeking groups etc. There are national committees established – one for Human Rights and one for Women with mandates and membership outlined in the Constitution. These committees provide important opportunities for members to network and have input to the NEB.

The Constitution says that each Local should have a women's committee and a human rights committee, but small locals can't and many other locals don't have functioning committees. There are no regional committees and few conferences on equity issues.

Although approximately half the members are women, there are only two women on the NEB (13%).⁹ No Regional Directors are women. Of 11 National Union Representatives, four are women. (36%). There are 25 Regional Union Representatives and only six are women (or 24%).

Although visible minorities constitute over 10% of the Canada Post workforce, only three of 67 full-time officers are workers of colour.¹⁰ There are no aboriginal members and no differently-abled workers in NUR or officer positions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

19. WOMEN

- A. Reduce the frequency of national women's committee meetings to one per year, with teleconferencing between meetings as needed.
- B. Create regional women's committees in each region to meet once per year.
- C. As for all national committees, establish a budget for women's equality. The National Secretary-Treasurer to publish an annual report on how the money was spent.

20. HUMAN RIGHTS

- A. Create a full-time, national human rights specialist position to report to the 2nd National Vice-President. The specialist would assist all four working groups of the national human rights committee, assist regions to pursue an equity agenda, as well as ensure an equity eye on all of the work of the organization.

⁹ (In contrast, 31.2% of Canada Post managers are women.)

¹⁰ Furthermore, two of these work in one region.

- B. Reduce the frequency of national human rights committee meetings to one per year, with teleconferencing between meetings as needed.
- C. As for all other national committees, establish a budget for human rights. The National Secretary-Treasurer to publish an annual report on how the money was spent.

21. YOUTH

The generation issue is affecting many unions – including CUPW. As of July 1, 2008, the median age of Canada’s population was 39.4 years. The median age in CUPW is 48, and thousands of activists, including many activists and Union leaders, will retire from Canada Post in the next five to 10 years.

According to the 2007 Area Council Discussion Paper, “many younger workers are taking on leadership roles in the Union as shop stewards, local executive members, facilitators and advocates. Younger members represent CUPW in UNI, at the Canadian Labour Congress and the Quebec Federation of Labour and at provincial and territorial Federations of Labour.”

It is in the Union’s interest to stimulate younger workers to become active in the Union.

RECOMMENDATION

- A. Experiment with creating a Facebook or other social network approach to provide opportunities for young workers to network prior to regional and national conferences.

F. THE DEMOCRATIC FUNCTIONING OF THE UNION

22. THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF THE QUEBEC NATION

CUPW has adopted a strong position with respect to the role of its Quebec members in the Union. Specifically, National Policy C-1 affirms CUPW's support for the principle of the right of self-determination for Quebec.

The same policy also recognizes that the role of CUPW within the Quebec Federation of Labour (FTQ), as well as « all social and political issues » in Quebec are under the jurisdiction of the Metro-Montreal and Quebec regions.

Finally, it also accords the Quebec regions greater autonomy with respect to Union education, women's issues and international solidarity, amongst others.

Most of the large pan-Canadian unions give significant powers to their Quebec regional organizations, including full power to participate as appropriate in the Quebec union movement which is largely organized under the FTQ. This autonomy allows the Union to be responsive to the evolving political situation and also encourages their Union and its members to participate in the Quebec labour movement.

However, while the principle of « self-determination » for Quebec within the CUPW seems very clear, it is less clear what that principle means in practice. The two National Directors from Quebec seem to have exactly the same powers as those of the other National Directors. Similarly, the two regional offices seem to operate under the same rules as those of the other regions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. The two current Quebec regions (Quebec and Montreal) should be combined into one region, with regional offices in Montreal and another in Quebec City.¹¹

¹¹ This recommendation is made on the basis of a newly constituted National Board of Directors, on which the Montreal local would be represented. We feel that whatever arrangement is finally agreed to, Quebec should have no fewer than three representatives on the highest policy making body. It might have several more.

- B. There should be one Regional Vice-President for the whole Quebec region responsible for providing political leadership to the region and ensuring the efficient administration and service delivery within a budget agreed to by the National Board of Directors. He/she should have the responsibility for making decisions on issues regarding Quebec. He/she has the responsibility for the administration of grievances, social issues, equity issues, and education within the merged Quebec region.
- C. The newly merged Quebec region should be managed as a whole from a service delivery point of view (for example education, grievances, organizing, etc.)

23. THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

The CUPW national convention is the highest decision-making body of the organization. The convention delegates elect all the National Executive officers and the National Union Representatives. In addition, the various regional caucuses at convention each elect their own regional executives (including their own National Director) and Union Representatives.

The national delegates also pass motions governing the finances and policies of the organization.

The national convention takes place every three years. At the last convention, there were approximately 650 delegates. Each of the Union's 210 locals has an automatic right to send one delegate. An additional delegate is authorized for every 100 more members.¹²

The national convention normally takes five days. Resolutions come forward from all areas of the Union. Of course, not all resolutions can be brought to the floor. The resolutions committee, which includes representatives from each region, reviews all the resolutions submitted and prioritizes resolutions or prepares "synthesis resolutions" to be brought forward for discussion.

The cost of the triennial convention, including the preparatory conferences, is approximately \$5 million.¹³

¹² Approximately 60 elected officers who are "ex-officio" delegates to the convention are included in this total.

¹³ This works out to approximately \$1.6 million annually

Because it is the highest decision-making body, the convention is where the debate is sharpest. It is also to be expected that the various groups and subgroups within the CUPW membership would like to see their influence expand at the convention.

The Independent Working Group would like to suggest four broad objectives for making changes to the convention process.

- The convention should be smaller. The CUPW convention is the size of unions two or three times the size of CUPW.¹⁴ A smaller convention would not only be cheaper, but also more efficient.
- The convention should be made more democratic by reducing the current disparity between small and large locals. Because every local gets at least one delegate, the members in very small locals are far over-represented on a per capita basis at the convention. This obviously has an influence on where the Union puts its priorities. It means, for example, that minorities are underrepresented because they are concentrated in the metropolitan areas. This disparity should be reduced.
- At the same time, recognizing that small and remote locals have difficulty participating effectively in the Union, a certain degree of compensating representation should be awarded.
- Help should be provided for groups of members who are not in the mainstream of the Union and often not well represented at convention, to better prepare themselves to participate in the convention. These include RSMCs, PSBUs and the “equity seeking groups.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Reduce the size of the national convention by about one-third to approximately 450 delegates.

¹⁴ By way of reference, at the recent Public Service Alliance of Canada convention there were 460 delegates for 170,000 members. That is one delegate per 400 members. CUPW’s ratio is one delegate per 85 members.

B. The reduction to be effected in two elements:

- i. No delegate to represent fewer than 50 members. Locals with fewer members than 50 will have to join together to field a delegate.
- ii. One additional delegate per local to be authorized for every 150 members beyond the first 50.

C. Organize one-day caucuses for specific groups on the day prior to convention. These could include RSMCs, PSBUs, and various “equity seeking groups”. The extra costs to be shared 50/50 between the national and the local Unions from which the delegates are attending.

24. GETTING AND KEEPING THE BEST STAFF WE CAN: ELECTION VERSUS PROFESSIONAL RECRUITING

Until 1983, technical specialists at the national level and regional level were all appointed, full-time staff. At the 1983 convention, as a result of widespread dissatisfaction with the appointed officers, the decision was made that, with the exception of a few specialists and support staff, all full-time CUPW officers and Union Representatives would come from the membership and be elected at convention. The merger with LCUC did not change this decision.

Currently 18 national positions – resident officers, National Union Representatives plus Alternate Union Representatives – are elected at convention. In addition, eight National Directors, and 41 Regional Union Representatives plus alternates are also elected by regional caucuses.¹⁵ In summary, the CUPW convention elects a minimum of 75 representatives plus alternates to various positions.

Broadly speaking the CUPW membership feels very proud that most of their staff are elected and come from the membership. This is unique to CUPW. When we look at other unions, none of them have nearly so many elected positions.

¹⁵ This is not all. A number of other positions, including membership in the National Board of Trustees, are also filled by election at the convention.

However, those active in the organization also recognize that this creates a heavy political environment that is part of their daily activities. Convention is all politics and election could go on until middle of the night.

Electing so many Union staffers, while giving the membership a high degree of control over the selection of officers, also has a number of inconveniences. Among these are the fact that the officers elected may not have the experience necessary to accomplish the tasks at hand. It also means that for the whole year prior to annual convention, elected officers are actually in “election mode”, which may or may not be helpful to the Union. Finally, it can also mean a long “breaking in” period when newly elected staff are learning their new jobs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. CUPW retain the general principle of electing many officers from the work floor for positions at national and regional levels.
- B. For four specific positions, which require a high degree of technical skill, create permanent specialist positions. These are:
 - i. One Organizing Specialist, to work under the direction of the National Vice-President responsible for organizing.
 - ii. One Human Rights Specialist, to work under the direction of the National Vice-President responsible for human rights.
 - iii. One Executive Assistant to the National President. (This position to be filled at the National President’s discretion and on contract not to exceed the mandate of the current president.) The Executive Assistant to work on any issue as directed by the National President, including as appropriate, the national convention, international solidarity or relations with the trade union movement in Canada.)
 - iv. One Bilingual Specialist in Curriculum Development to work under the direction of the National Vice-President responsible for education.

- C. Eliminate six National Union Representatives positions at National Office (two in Grievance, one at NEC, one in Organizing, two in Education)
- D. Evaluate the utility of the National Union Representatives positions' assigned to Health and Safety and to Staffing, in the context of the review of the National Committees.
- E. All permanent staff to be recruited (where possible from among the CUPW membership) through a transparent, merit-based, hiring process, based on clearly stated criteria.
- F. Ensure that all new staff (whether elected or recruited) receive appropriate training within three months of taking up their new positions, and that opportunities for training upgrading are made available.
- G. A succession plan be developed to ensure the smooth replacement of staff due to retirement, promotions or quits.

25. CREATING A HEALTHY ATMOSPHERE WITHIN THE UNION: ADDRESSING HARASSMENT

The CUPW culture appears to be highly combative – not only with the employer but also internally, among members. While our work was under way, several incidents were reported which left people feeling upset with how tensions and even harassment between Union members/leadership is being dealt with in the Union.

A specific issue raised in the course of our investigations was that when relationships between officers, activists or members turn nasty, there is no process of mediation prior to charging someone under Article 8¹⁶, which is a serious step to take and can result in long-standing damage to the organization.

¹⁶ Article 8 (Discipline) is the mechanism for charging a Union member or officer with an offence. It does not specifically deal with harassment. Offences and penalties are listed and three levels of disciplinary committees set up at the local, regional and national level. Committee members receive a manual, but no training is provided. The process is described in some detail in Article 8– including an Appeal process to an elected appeal board.

However, during the period of our structural review process, the National Executive Board discussed and adopted a recommendation submitted by its Anti-Violence Sub-Committee. This recommendation deals with many of the issues raised during our review process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. The NEC to review the impact of the recommendations of the Anti-Violence Sub-Committee within 12 months to determine whether further steps seem warranted.
- B. The NEC to develop a draft code of conduct for Union members, activists and officers, and suggest it be discussed at the local level.

G. CUPW AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD

26. LABOUR AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The CUPW has a reputation for active involvement in joint work with other unions as well as coalition work with other civil society organizations. There is a clear recognition at the national and local levels, that supporting other organizations and groups in their struggles, creates a solid foundation for the moment when CUPW will need support in its own struggles.

In line with Union policy (B8) to strengthen central labour bodies, the CUPW National President sits on the CLC Executive Council; the Union is active in labour federations in all provinces and locals are encouraged to participate in local labour councils. Last year the Union spent \$134,624 on support to this work.

The CUPW also provides funding for community and national organizations at the national level. The national level spent \$88,850 in 2007-2008 to support coalition work.

However, at the local level, there appear to be some weaknesses.

Section 9.36 defines what locals can spend their money on. This does not include support to community organizations. As a result, any local wishing to make a contribution to a local coalition, or participate in some community building event, has to seek the permission of the National Executive Board – a time consuming process.

In addition, locals who participate in Local labour councils, often feel they would like more guidance from the national or regional office.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Locals to have freedom to choose areas and methods of community involvement (including financial involvement using local funds), subject to approval of the Regional Vice-President.
- B. The Regional Vice-President to have the responsibility of giving guidance to local Unions in his/her region with respect to their role in local coalitions and labour bodies.

27. INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

BACKGROUND

The CUPW recognizes the importance of developing links with workers in other countries in the context of an increasingly globalized world. The NEB “*policy paper on international solidarity work and the international postal fund*” produced in 2003 lays out the objectives of CUPW’s international work:

- to strengthen other postal unions or labour organizations with a postal component
- to strengthen CUPW through our international work
- to build international solidarity work in the regions and locals.

The Union also has a policy (B14) on international workers’ solidarity, as well as specific policies on Colombia and Cuba and on global issues such as peace and disarmament, pollution and nuclear energy.

There is widespread consensus among the activists and senior officers within the Union on the usefulness of developing and maintaining links with other postal workers around the world. These links can be helpful, not only in learning about new developments in the postal sector, but also in developing solidarity with postal workers in other parts of the globe.

However the Union's activities in broader international workers' solidarity are less well understood by the membership. While much of the international solidarity work takes place in Canada (such as the June 2009 Modern Post Conference), what draws the attention of many members and activists are the international delegations that the CUPW sends abroad. In 2008-2009, 68 members – most in leadership positions – traveled outside Canada to participate in 28 different events. Many members are unclear about how much money the Union spends on international solidarity, why it chooses particular causes or who gets to travel on international delegations.

In our view, if the CUPW wants to continue, or even strengthen, its present level of support to international solidarity work, and particularly to join efforts within the labour movement and with other sectors of the popular movement, it will be crucial to improve education and communication with the membership base to explain its importance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Make CUPW involvement in international delegations more effective and transparent to members by:
 - i. establishing clear, strategic objectives for delegations, linking international solidarity work with Union priorities;
 - ii. sending fewer people on delegations but offering more support in doing follow-up information and education sessions with members;
 - iii. developing an application process for delegations with clear selection criteria and follow-up requirements.
- B. Increase communications about **ALL** the international work of the Union, not just delegations.

- C. The NEC should increase transparency around the costs of International Solidarity by creating a budget for this item. All expenses incurred (travel, salaries, accommodation) to be attributed to the International Solidarity budget, and published by the National Secretary-Treasurer each year.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Canadians and their families are experiencing a time of broad social and economic change. Change in the global economic environment impacts where work is done and who does it. Change in the technological environment impacts how information is transmitted. Change in the political and regulatory environment affects traditional state monopolies and by ricochet the bargaining power of their workers. Change in social values and patterns of interaction toward a more individualistic approach to families and work affect how people see their work and their Union.

The postal sector and postal workers are not immune to these changes. Organizations, including Canada Post and CUPW, that do not adapt to these changes will soon find themselves no longer able to function effectively.

We have made a large number of recommendations which we believe will help CUPW better structure itself to face these coming changes.

However any change is difficult – let alone undertaking to make upwards of 75 recommendations simultaneously. So how to proceed?

We do not think it would be useful to bring our whole report to convention for debate. There are just too many different recommendations for things to be decided so quickly.

We propose instead that CUPW members think of our recommendations as a “library” or “menu” of possible changes, some of which could be implemented right away, by a simple change of practice, and others which should be discussed over some period of time prior to any decision.

For example, it might make sense to consider some of the major elements – like the restructuring of the NEB into a National Board of Directors – or the restructuring of responsibilities for the handling of grievances – by a referendum. If the referendum is approved then specific wording for constitutional changes can be worked out and eventually presented to convention.

Prior to undertaking such a massive change, however, we would recommend to the leadership of the CUPW that it first take a look at what is happening elsewhere in the Canadian (and global) union movement. It rapidly becomes clear that the changing nature of work and society is pushing unions towards amalgamation. For example, the largest union in Canada CUPE, now has 600,000 members, about 12 times that of CUPW.

We think that while undertaking its structural review, CUPW should also consider the option of merging with another Canadian union. A well planned merger could result in a stronger labour body, and also result in significant economies of scale.

In any event, we remain convinced that CUPW will have to change if it is to remain a strong and respected defender of the rights of its members and of social justice in Canada. Not changing is not an option. Up to you to choose whether to make your own changes or to have change forced upon your organization by outside forces beyond your control.

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