

**Submission to Canada Post Corporation Strategic Review
Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union, Local 378
July 18, 2008**

The Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union Local 378 (COPE 378) welcomes this opportunity to make a submission to the Canada Post Corporation Strategic Review (CPCSR).

COPE 378 is a BC-based union that represents over 11,000 workers in a number of private and public sector workplaces.

We are writing because we are very concerned about the future of universal, public postal service in this country.

As users of the mail, we are concerned by the kind of changes being considered by the CPCSR, such as deregulation of our public post office. COPE 378 relies on the mail for our communication with our members, including quarterly magazines to each member's household, and regular information packages sent to our entire membership. In addition, our union elections are conducted almost entirely by mail, with ballots and information packages distributed to all members, and completed ballots returned via mail also.

Overall, full-scale postal deregulation has not worked well. We are very concerned that deregulation would negatively affect our members because so much of our communication is of a sensitive and personal nature. In addition, our communications often need to be delivered in a timely manner and require quick responses. This is very much the case with our union elections, which we conduct entirely by mail. To date, we have always been pleased with the timeliness and security provided by Canada Post, which is due largely to it being an efficiently run public entity that is accountable to the people of Canada. We would be very concerned about the essential and necessary security of this process if Canada Post were to see any further privatization of its services.

- Postal deregulation in other countries has largely led to fewer jobs, less service and higher postal rates for the public and small businesses.
- An independent review of the United Kingdom's deregulated postal sector found that "there have been no significant benefits from liberalization for smaller businesses and domestic consumers.
- Only a few countries have had any long-term experience with postal deregulation. It would make sense to wait and see what happens in other countries before making irrevocable changes to our universal, public post office.
- There is no good reason to change the mechanism that funds universal postal service – the exclusive privilege. We currently have one of the lowest standard postage rates in the industrial world. Our postal services are universal and affordable, no small feat in the second largest country in the world.
- Deregulation elsewhere has not proven to be a good thing for the public. People who use deregulated post offices tend to pay a higher postage rate than we do. The standard postage rate in Sweden has increased by 90% since its post office was

- deregulated in 1993 while the Canadian rate has increased by only 21% during the same period (1993 to 2005).
- The United Kingdom's Royal Mail has faced intense pressure from competitors since it was deregulated in 2006, resulting in falling mail volumes and revenues. Royal Mail says higher prices for stamped letters are inevitable and universal service is at risk.
 - Our post office is not broken. It does not need to be fixed, only improved.
 - It will be difficult for Canada Post to improve public postal service if the government erodes or eliminates the mechanism that funds this service (i.e. the exclusive privilege).

Members of COPE 378 are also members of the public with a real stake in our public post office. We are concerned, from this perspective, that the government is not holding public hearings as part of its review of Canada Post. Any review of our public post office should include public hearings. The government should not make any decisions about our public post office until it has properly consulted with the public. The government should also extend the deadline for submissions.

Thank you for considering our submission.



Andy Ross
President