Canada Post Strategic Review

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For:

The Canada Post Corporation Strategic Review

Dr. Robert M. Campbell, Chairperson

On this 29th day of August, 2008

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Introduction

In 1902 Ira Stratton, Postmaster in Stonewall Manitoba, had the initial idea of how to ensure better working conditions for all postal employees across Canada. Mr Stratton and 13 other postmasters from Manitoba met and formed what is today known as The Canadian Postmasters and Assistants Association
Our objectives have remained the same for over 100 years!!
"The objectives of the Postmasters Association are to build up and not to destroy, to improve the system, not hinder it".

The Manitoba Branch of CPAA appreciates the invitation to present our brief in this review. We endeavour to outline some of our past achievements and what we foresee as attainable goals in the future.

Our brief will target seven main categories:

1: CPAA Membership in Manitoba
2. Labour Relations
3: Exclusive Privilege
4: Universality of Services
5: Existing Network
6: Enhancing the Services Available
7: Social Impact

The federal presence in rural communities in the province of Manitoba is a vital part of Canada and must be maintained.
We recognize there are opportunities to improve this presence in Manitoba in the overall presentation of this brief.

CPAA Manitoba Membership

The Postmasters and Assistants that work in the **340** Federal Post Offices in Manitoba, situated in our towns and villages, serve in excess of **450,000** rural customers on a daily basis.

The Manitoba Branch membership is made of up **408** full time and part-time employees**,** **161** group postmasters**,** **100** semi-staff postmasters and 4**38** Term employees.

Full Time employees work 40 hours per week and the Part Time employees may vary from 4 hours per week to 39 hours per week.

In Manitoba we have **149** Group Post Offices in which the Postmasters are required to provide premise and receive a leasing allowance.
We wish to point out the dedication that all our members exhibit and many who work less than 20 hours per week and have these hours scheduled over 5 or 6 days. Some shifts are as small as 1 hour in duration.

As a point of interest term employees are only hired on a temporary basis and are not eligible to be appointed to an indeterminate position.

The Manitoba Branch Board of CPAA consists of 6 officers, a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary-Treasurer and 3 Directors who are elected by the membership at large for a 3-year term.
They usually reside in rural communities throughout the Province and perform their duties from their own private residences as they are not full-time union representatives

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Labour Relations

In the past Labour Relations between CPAA and Canada Post in Manitoba had generally been good.

In 1986 the Pride that our members took in the service they provided to our customers, in being an employee of the corporation, was destroyed.
This came about because the Government of Canada approved the Canada Post Business Plan, which called for privatization, amalgamation and/or closure of all **5,220** rural Post Offices across Canada.

The results of this devastating plan in Manitoba alone saw the loss of **200 rural jobs** and the closure of **115 CPAA rural Post Offices**. This had a huge impact on the financial well being of these communities leaving the citizens in these rural communities without services or access to a Federally Operated Post Office.

In the past 10 years there has been a constant decline in the effective working relationships with the corporation and their managers. Consultations on hour's reductions and demands for Saturday closures have seen further erosion to the services being provided in our rural communities.

Our members in Manitoba remain dedicated to providing service to our customers in our rural communities. We remain the only Federal presence in many of our rural communities and even that is threatened.

The very fact that our members have never had a strike mandate or work stoppage for over 100 years demonstrates the dedication these rural employees possess.

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Exclusive Privilege

Maintaining exclusive privilege for Canada Post Corporation lettermail is a top priority for all our rural communities.

The competition would like to see the exclusive privilege abolished and obtain the lucrative market high volume mailers in large urban centres at the expense of rural Canadians.

Today many courier companies are openly competing for these time sensitive products.

Canada Post presently possesses the capabilities to serve **all rural citizens** and should maintain their exclusive privilege, as the courier companies do not possess that capability

Universal Postal Services

Canada Post serves in excess of **33 Million** people across Canada.

Their monopoly to transport and deliver letters has ensured a guaranteed source of revenues allowing them to ensure the universality of services.

The universality of postal services allows:

- for the maintenance of a quality postal service

- for the continuity of postal services

- the accessibility of products, regardless of the place of residence, at a reasonable price.

This service is accountable to the customers and the government.

Universality of postal services and the exclusive privilege of lettermail have maintained the viability of the entire system and ensured a standard system across Canada. The members of CPAA remain the link in providing access to these universal services.

Existing Network

CPAA serves **340** rural communities in Manitoba, which are all entitled to receive standardised mail services in rural offices served by members of CPAA.

All CPAA offices have qualified, trained, competent, reliable employees. They possess and demonstrate these abilities in the communities they serve. The rural customers have respect and trust in our CPAA employees.

It would only be common sense to maintain and further enhance the existing network at the same time keeping it cost effective. It is there now, why not utilize it to it's full potential by expanding and building on what we have now?

CPAA members are proud members of the communities in which they work. Their dedication to their customers' remains as strong fast as it has been demonstrated in the past 100 years plus.

We have confidence that our Federal Government will reinforce and continue to support the Canada Post Mandate to provide **ALL CANADIANS** with accessible, affordable, reliable mail service regardless of where they reside.

Enhancing Products and Services

As the corporation is constantly looking for new products and services to enhance their viability and a more reliable means to deliver their mail on time, the addition of new products and services in our rural offices would assist in financial security for Canada Post.

It would be more cost effective to improve and utilize the existing network we have today rather than restructure.

Our rural Post Offices are the hub of all communities and as previously stated are very likely the only Federal presence in these communities. These offices could become reference centres for Federal and Provincial departments.

Following are some examples of forms and services that could be supplied:

Canada Pension Plan Applications
Old Age Security Applications
Passports
Social Insurance Number Kits
Employment Insurance Applications
Specialized Income Tax Forms (general tax forms now available)
Gun Registration
Student Loans
Motor Vehicle & Drivers Licences
Fishing Licences
Hunting Licences
Travel Insurance
Marriage licences
Vital statistics information and forms
Health Service forms (Change of name/address)
Sales Tax rebates
Etc, Etc, Etc.

We as members of CPAA would openly support the availability of these forms and services in all our Rural Post Offices, which would benefit greatly the residents of remote and rural communities.

Social Impact

Rural customers depend and expect to receive the same as or comparable mail service that is provided to larger urban centres. Privatizing or deregulating Canada Post would mean a further loss of decent paying jobs now and in the future to the already struggling rural economies. CPAA are of the firm belief that Rural Federally operated Post Offices are vital to **ALL CANADIANS**.

The respect for rural postal services and the jobs done by CPAA members was very evident in the quality and quantity of actions taken by rural communities who continue to support a Federal postal network.

These rural residents have the right to expect affordable communications in mail delivery and the corporation must remain accountable to all rural Canadians and to the people through their members of Parliament.

Our ever-increasing senior population in our rural communities rely on our CPAA members not only to process their mail but also to assist them with information required in completing forms and documents. CPAA members always have gone far beyond the call of duty to assist our customers. These customers know that they will always be treated courteously and with confidentiality.

We must build on, not tear down!!! We must strengthen, not weaken!!!

Rural Post Offices and their employees have always demonstrated a security and fairness to their customers. The very fact that the Canadian flag flies proudly over all our rural Post Offices reflects the Federal presence and the sense of ownership felt by all Canadians to their rural Post Office.

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In Conclusion

It has been our aim to portray an overview of the services we provide and goals for the future.

The Manitoba Branch of CPAA and its members have worked hard to maintain an accessible postal system in this province, a postal system as efficient, accountable and viable in the future as it is today.

We further request that the Federal Government endorse our suggestions of offering governmental forms, new products and other services in our rural Post Offices.

And that Canada Post is allowed to maintain their exclusive privilege and universality of services to be sustained in today's market and in the future.

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HELP KEEP RURAL CITIZENS AN EQUAL PART OF THIS WONDERFUL COUNTRY WE CALL CANADA