

September 17, 2009

Conservatives Unveil Canadian Postal Services Charter

On Saturday, September 12, 2009, the federal Conservatives quietly announced a Canadian Postal Service Charter which outlines the government's expectations for Canada Post in regard to service standards and other matters.

The Charter largely reiterates existing policy and includes an expectation that Canada Post will maintain "the moratorium on the closure of *rural* post offices" (emphasis added).

Looks like a Victory on the Moratorium

The moratorium that has been in effect since 1994 protects public post offices in rural *and* small one-post-office towns.

Canada Post says that the corporation will maintain the 1994 moratorium on post office closures as per the Charter, but the actual Charter only mentions rural post offices and doesn't say anything about maintaining the 1994 moratorium.

In other words, it *looks* like rural and small communities get to keep their public post offices and that all our hard work has paid off, not to mention the incredible work done by hundreds of communities. Since June, approximately 500 municipalities have sent resolutions to the government urging it to maintain the moratorium on post office closures in rural and small one-post-office towns. It appears that we have a victory on our hands. Nevertheless, the union has written a letter to Rob Merrifield, minister responsible for Canada Post, to make sure the government's Charter does what Canada Post says it does.

The union has also asked Canada Post for the list of post offices that are covered by the moratorium.

Charter Expectations on Consultation Need Work

The "Community Outreach and Consultation" section of the Charter is a step in the right direction but needs to be strengthened.

The Charter says that the government expects Canada Post to inform people at least one month prior to closing, moving or amalgamating their public post office or changing their method of delivery. The corporation is also expected to explore options that address people's concerns.

One month notice is enough notice to return library books, but hardly enough time for a whole community to discuss a public post office closure or figure out where a rural mail box should go.

Need Public Consultations on Charter

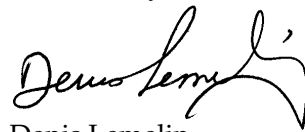
A service charter *should* be based on public consultations.

Unfortunately, the federal government did not consult with the public on its Charter. CUPW has urged the government to get input.

You can view the Charter at:

<http://www.tc.gc.ca/mediaroom/infosheets/canadapost.htm>.

In Solidarity,



Denis Lemelin
National President

