



October 17, 2016

## PAY EQUITY REVIEW FOR RURAL AND SUBURBAN MAIL CARRIERS

Following the appointment of the special mediator by the government, CUPW and CPC agreed to a Pay Equity Review Process to deal with the significant difference in remuneration between Urban Postal Operation (UPO) letter carriers and RSMC workers. As we know, Canada Post does not have a reputation for speedy settlements of pay equity complaints. The Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) complaint filed in 1983 was finally settled by the Supreme Court of Canada in 2012. Resolution payments to all those affected or their estates continue to this day. The original complaint filed in 1993 by the Canadian Postmasters and Assistants Association (CPAA) is only now proceeding to the Human Rights Commission Tribunal.

Before and during negotiations CUPW has been very clear that RSMCs should not be subjected to decades of delay in being recognized under pay equity law. Our demands at the bargaining table for equity were rejected by the Canada Post negotiators. During mediation, the Union achieved improvements to different areas of the collective agreement, maintained the Defined Benefit Pension for current and future hires, and agreed to a pay equity resolution process with a fixed schedule of 19 months for a final decision.

Additionally, both collective agreements would be for a duration of 2 years, which would allow the Union to continue fighting for improvements. The majority of the National Executive Board (NEB) agreed to both tentative collective agreements, which will now be dealt with in referendum votes.

Pay equity is the law and there are solid arguments that it should be implemented outside of the normal negotiations process. With this in mind the Review has started and is not subject to the ratification votes on the tentative agreements.

The Pay Equity Process between CUPW and CPC follows pay equity as defined under the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and the *Equal Wages Guidelines*. The parties are required to appoint three Pay Equity Committee representatives each to the Committee and each appoint an independent Pay Equity Consultant. An experienced arbitrator must also be agreed upon to resolve differences during the process as well as the final decision if necessary. The Minister of Labour will appoint the arbitrator if there is no agreement.

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CUPW is committed to achieving pay equity for the RSMC membership and will dedicate the necessary resources required to this effort.

The National Executive Board has appointed three sisters from the Negotiations Committee as the Union's representatives on the Joint Pay Equity Committee – Nancy Beauchamp, Cathy Kennedy and Barb McMillan. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> National Vice Presidents have been designated as liaisons between the Review process and the National Executive Board. The NEB has also approved the appointment of Paul Durber as the independent Pay Equity Consultant. Mr. Durber has extensive experience in the pay equity process and was highly recommended by many legal practitioners and equity consultants contacted by the Union.

This will not be an easy review. Canada Post is likely to maintain their position on the differences in work functions and compensation. We will use the expertise of RSMC and UPO representatives and members to assist our Committee members, our Consultant, and, if necessary, the arbitration process to achieve justice for RSMCs.

We also support changes to the current pay equity system that will provide a more proactive mechanism to achieve equity in other workplaces. Too many women have been undervalued and underpaid for far too long.

The Memorandum of Understanding is available at:

<http://www.cupw.ca/RSMCPayEquityMOU>

In Solidarity,



Mike Palecek  
National President

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