

CANADIAN POSTMASTERS AND ASSISTANTS ASSOCIATION

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR BRANCH

The Newfoundland and Labrador Branch of the Canadian Postmasters and Assistants Association would like to express their concerns in the following submission, on the Canada Post Strategic Review which is currently being conducted by the Conservative Government.

The Newfoundland & Labrador Branch consists of 492 members and 197 term assistants who staff 309 post offices throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. There are 166 full time employees, 67 working less than 5 hours a week, 32 working less than 15 hours a week, 103 working less than 30 hours a week and 124 working less than 40 hours a week. Out of the 309 offices there are 190 Group offices, where it is a condition of employment that the postmaster provide a premise to house the post office. All cost of providing the premise ,eg: heat, light, insurances, snow clearing, cleaning are born by the postmaster.

As in many parts of Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador have isolated areas that depend on the link to the rest of Canada that the post office gives them. Canada currently has one of the lowest standard postage rates in the industrial world and our Postal Services are universal and affordable. While providing postal services to isolated and rural communities along with urban areas, Canada Post has recorded a profit for 13 consecutive years. The existing network provides all Canadians with uniform, secure postal services.

The post office, in many of our Rural Communities, is the only Federal presence in that community. The Federal Government Presence in NL Report prepared by Leslie Harris Centre of Regional and Development states:

“the most significant decline in federal presence has been the disproportionate reduction in jobs and the associated office downgrades and closures. Not only do these have a negative effect on spending in the economy, but they contribute to a greater disconnect between, on the one hand, the people of the province and, on the other hand, the providers of federal public services and those federal policy makers that make decisions affecting Newfoundland and Labrador’s future.”

Canada Post currently has an exclusive privilege to handle letters. If the decision of the Government will be to eliminate this exclusive privilege, then the private sector competitors will be focusing on urban and profitable areas. Rural Canadians will lose a vital affordable link to the rest of Canada and will face an uncertain private delivery network

CPAA offices are staffed by trained, competent, and reliable employees. CPAA members have the ability to meet the needs of the communities we serve. We know and understand our communities and have earned the trust and respect of our customers. Well over half the post office premises in Newfoundland and Labrador are provided by the post master and these postmasters take pride in serving the people in their community and providing them with a place to conduct their business and serve their postal needs. CPAA, whether in postmaster provided premises or in Corporate provided premises, are proud of who we are and the services we provide.

We have the network. Let's use it. Let's improve it by enhancing the existing network. It is not only logical but cost effective.

In conclusion, CPAA Newfoundland and Labrador Branch members ask that you keep our federal post offices open and continue to provide all Canadians with affordable postal service.

We ask that access to Federal and Provincial government programs and information be offered through our rural post offices.

We ask that the viability of our offices be improved with the introduction of new products and with the enhancement of the existing ones.

We ask that Canada Post Corporation be allowed to maintain their exclusive privilege.

We ask that universality of services be sustained.

We ask that Canada Post Corporation be allowed to maintain its services for today's market and continued access to communications market of the future.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Branch of the Canadian Postmasters and Assistants Association thank you for the opportunity to participate in this review

“KEEP THE HEART BEATING IN RURAL CANADA”.