



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF CUPW 730 / FEBRUARY 2022

INSIDE OUT

**HOW TO PREPARE OUR UNION FOR THE
IMPORTANT BATTLES AHEAD**

RESTRUCTURING THE REALITIES OF DELIVERY

**IMPORTANT INFO ON BENEFITS FOR
MEMBERS ON LWOP/CONSIDERING RETIREMENT**

**THE "MULTI-INJURY PROGRAM:"
THERE IS NO PROGRAM**





INSIDEOUT is the monthly publication of the Edmonton Local of CUPW.

This newsletter aspires to educate and inform members and affiliates about our union's activities, opportunities, and challenges, as well as to raise awareness regarding all things labour.

Opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily the official views of the Local.

The Communications Committee (responsible for this publication) is always interested in submissions of original articles, photographs, or illustrations. Prospective material must always concern CUPW or the labour movement, but submissions of general interest to the membership will also be considered.

We will also publish Letters to the Editor should you feel an issue requires further discussion. All submissions are subject to editing for brevity, clarity, etc.

To make a submission, or to get involved, contact the Communications Committee at communications730@gmail.com.

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EMPOWER ORGANIZE RESIST

FEBRUARY 2022 CONTENTS

- 4** [President's Report February 2022 GMM: Hindsight 2021](#) - Roland Schmidt
- 7** [Make a Difference - Get Involved with our Union](#) - Devon Rundvall
- 8** [It Won't Grow If You Don't Delegate](#) - By Nick Driedger/Organizing.work
- 11** [Route Measurement By the Numbers: Restructuring the Realities of Delivery](#) - Kathleen Mpulubusi
- 12** [Important Information Regarding Benefits for those in LWOP or Considering Retirement](#) - Karry Biri
- 14** [The "Multi-Injury Program:" There Is No Program](#) - James Ball
- 15** [Save The Date! International Women's Day March](#) - Kathleen Mpulubusi
- 16** [Worker Solidarity](#) - Kyle Turner
- 17** [Comic: No Relief - The Initiative, Part 2](#) - Kyle Turner
- 18** [My \(Merry?\) Christmas](#) - Laura Fuller

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT FEBRUARY 2022 GMM

HINDSIGHT 2021: HOW TO PREPARE OUR UNION FOR THE IMPORTANT BATTLES AHEAD

CUPW has faced a crisis of purpose for almost four decades because we are unwilling to embrace the power of our membership to collectively mobilize to improve our lives as workers.

Last January we said “Good riddance!” to 2020, imagining that the worst of this pandemic was behind us. After finally breaking through the Delta wave, we are somehow facing our biggest challenge yet with the Omicron variant. The theory is that between ever-increasing vaccination rates and greater availability of the Paxlovid tablets to treat COVID symptoms, our health care system can stay stabilized long enough for restrictions to be eased.

The vaccine mandate continues to be a polarizing issue for a fraction of our members. As it stands, roughly 5.4% (3000 out of our 55,573) of our entire CUPW membership are on LWOP for vaccine-related reasons, with Edmonton reporting a ratio of 3.3% (77 out of around 2300). Everyone wants this pandemic over as soon as possible but, unfortunately, our society is still too fractured to successfully buy-in to an exit strategy. Until that happens, we just roll the dice and hope a more destructive variant doesn't come along. As always, our office is here to update members on important developments and help you navigate the ever-changing landscape.

Everyone is suffering in this situation and is frustrated with the mixed-messaging from health authorities and

governments but that pain only deepens when it is misdirected at our co-workers or union officers. As explained in my last President's report, CUPW only currently only has two coherent options to confront the vaccine mandate: 1) the slow, procedural route via arbitration and court challenges (which was just extended to late March); and 2) a mobilization effort requiring mass buy-in from the membership. Bluntly, I feel the legal challenges will fail because the courts will uphold government

“If unionism is now structured to only incentivize individual specialists or non-elected staffers...why would anyone look at a union as anything more than another ineffectual bureaucracy?”

crisis protocol during an international health emergency. Mass mobilization is also a non-starter because 95% of our members are already vaccinated and aren't worried about vaccines enough to risk fines or other penalties.

Feeling Powerless

Between the contract extension referendum, the vaccine mandate, or the lack of a general plan on how to effectively fight to make things better, it feels like our entire membership is

frustrated with our union. When people feel powerless, the resulting anger is often misplaced at those least deserving and least capable of resolving the problems. Despite persistent efforts to explain otherwise, many of our members still think a union is just a group of officers that have the power to protect them from anything the company throws at them, and blame those same officers for the hardships they experience instead of the company or government actually inflicting those hardships. It is not commonly understood that a union is only as powerful as the extent its members are willing to organize and mobilize to achieve their demands. This level of solidarity is difficult to establish unless all levels of the union are deliberately trying to nurture workforce empowerment by training workers to organize themselves. Understanding how CUPW, and unions generally, have fallen away from this approach requires a deeper look into our labour history.

It is no coincidence that the plummeting rate of worker unionization in North America parallels basic misunderstandings among unionized and non-unionized workers of what the actual role of a union is. Circumstances may not be as dire for workers as they were 100 years ago but the underlying power dynamic in our workplaces remains the same: a worker has no power to successfully demand workplace improvements from a company as an individual. Very simply, a labour union is a collective way for workers to create leverage to demand improvements. When unions

first came into existence in the 1800s, this collective power was expressed primarily through direct job actions or strikes. Didn't like how a boss was treating you or a co-worker? Slow down production. Felt like you were not being paid fairly? Picket lines would be deployed.

Sensing they were losing their monopoly on power, business and government interests devised a legal apparatus to enforce labour peace and de-tooth the labour movement. In the USA this began as the Wagner Act (1935) which later served as a sinister inspiration for the Rand Formula in Canada (1946). In each case, the labour bureaucracies of the day formally agreed to not conduct any work stoppages outside of sanctioned strikes in exchange for automatic dues and the “obey now, grieve later” procedural model. At the time, most unions welcomed this trade because the prospect of automatic dues guaranteeing revenue for union activities seemed too good to be true – they should have read the fine print.

Power: Collective VS. Individual

Before the Wagner Act and the Rand Formula, responsibility to create change could only come from a workforce collectively willing to organize and mobilize; after, this responsibility was diffused into a procedural system where you can, for example, file a grievance about a boss harassing workers, have to suffer those same conditions until the grievance receives a final hearing months or years later, then have an arbitrator, not the workers who suffered this treatment, decide on a “fair” outcome for the victim. In hindsight, it is easy to see how giving up our greatest expression of power as workers would have a detrimental effect.

This trade-off enshrines a major way the role of unions are misunderstood. If unionism is now structured to incentivize individual specialists, or non-elected staffers to draft, process and arbitrate labour disputes, as well

as avoid mass workforce action against management, why would anyone look at a union as anything more than another ineffectual bureaucracy? This is a deeply uncomfortable realization that can be seen played out at most major union conferences and conventions: every delegate will give a standing ovation at the mention of general strike or defying back-to-work legislation, but as soon as a delegate advocates concretely building capacity to do something similar, everyone stops making eye contact with them and backs away slowly. If this is how the commanding heights of our labour movement perceive the struggle, it is no surprise that our rank & file members, and society at large, do not view the work of unions as credible or impactful.

“If our union officers had the power to solve every problem by themselves, help their members out of a hardship, and then be acknowledged for their efforts, they would gladly do so at every opportunity.”

Playing The Blame Game

By trading our collective power for individual procedure, unions are like a hockey team insisting on playing in the Stanley Cup finals without skates and sticks – a self-sabotage so perfect that no one has any illusions as to what the outcome could be. While it would be tempting to lay the initial blame for this disempowerment on compromises made by the labour bureaucracies almost 100 years ago, it would be more constructive to take them as lessons on why we should never, under any circumstance, surrender our collective power and, instead, focus on the best way to fight forward.

Due to relying exclusively on the proceduralism of court appeals and grievances for decades, the current union leadership of most major labour unions have not directly experienced the true transformative might of the working class. As a result, these leadership groups either do not believe in the collective power of their members; or, they aren't against the idea, but have no plan on how to build the capacity for that power to assert itself. Alternatively, the membership, who have been coached into relying on advocates and staffers to navigate problems on their behalf, seldom consider what they could accomplish organizing together, among themselves. Instead, they blame the union leaders for not solving all the problems they face. As cathartic as we may think it feels, blaming each other accomplishes absolutely nothing.

Reasonable Expectations of Union Leadership

If our union officers had the power to solve every problem by themselves, help their members out of a hardship, and then be acknowledged for their efforts, they would gladly do so at every opportunity. The reality is that a ranking union officer, such as myself, is a figurehead at worst, or a mere facilitator at best. We have absolutely no influence outside what is explicitly stated in the collective agreement or the mass pressure exerted on management by membership. Sadly, our union has a clear timeline stretching back 37 years showing what happens when our members stop exerting that mass pressure. In 1985 the Trudeau Sr. government signaled that the only answer it had for unions prepared to go on prolonged strikes to win substantial gains, like we had in 1981 for maternity leave, would be back-to-work legislation. Our jobs have only gotten worse since.

Here lies the heart of the problem: Canadian labour promised labour peace from 1946 on in exchange for

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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legalized collective bargaining and a grievance model despite not having an ability to enforce the terms. When this deal was repeatedly twisted or broken by government and business, labour generally did nothing but unsuccessfully appeal to the courts committed to maintaining the status quo. We can all lament how unfair this is and we can blame our union leaders for not doing more but, if we're being honest, outside of a mass uprising, nothing will stop this trajectory of defeat.

Our leadership has no power on their own to out-smart or legally out-maneuver the trap set for us but they could play an invaluable role in preparing our union to finally fight back. If the true power of a union resides in the workforce organizing capacity of its members, the true mark of union leadership is to do everything it can to facilitate this empowerment. Reasonable expectations that should be demanded of our union leaders include:

1. Are they being honest about the obstacles our union is facing to achieve better conditions?
2. Are they prioritizing opportunities to train members to build workforce direct action organizing capacity to overcome these obstacles?
3. Are they fully supporting, and amplifying, elements that are already pursuing this strategy?

It must be repeated until it is fully understood: back-to-work legislation is the reason that we are not able to freely collectively bargain and, if necessary, strike to win our demands. If our leadership was willing to acknowledge this and spare no effort to build up our internal organizing capacity as well as support activists and locals already doing so, they have done the expected minimum to help restore the purpose of our union.

The Role Of A Member

The bad news is that no one is ever coming to fight for us to make our working lives better; the good news is that the source of our strength as workers has always been, literally, all around us. If our leaders are up to the task, they will provide ample opportunities for members to volunteer, train and develop as organizers in service of building the collective strength of our union. Conversely, if our leaders are lacking, we should primarily invest most of our energy into leading by example at the local level and building alliances with others in the union fully committed to an workforce organizing-first strategy (like the collaboration between Edmonton and Winnipeg locals).

“...the good news is that the source of our strength as workers has always been, literally, all around us.”

It isn't fair if you are a member of a union, or a specific local, where your leadership group has no ambition or inclination to support empowering your workforces to confront management directly to resolve problems. If faced with this unfortunate reality, the best thing is to focus on what you are willing to do to make a difference where you are instead of roiling in resentment. CUPW has an exceptional democratic structure that persists despite years of relative inactivity from our members. A tremendous vacuum exists at most levels of this union that could easily be filled by any group of activists willing to band together and get involved.

Fighting Forward

The crisis of purpose facing CUPW can be solved by returning to the fundamentals of true unionism: leadership must do everything it can to develop and nurture the organizing capacity of our membership, and our

membership must go about growing our own organizing capacity whether supported by our leadership or not. This is the only direction forward that will equip us with the skills and confidence to collectively confront the bad bosses, governments and laws aligned against us. Anything less means CUPW persisting in the same ineffectual way we have for the past 37 years.

The next 16 months may be one of the most important hinge points in the history of our union as we prepare for our CUPW National Convention and our next (post-extension) round of negotiations. As CPC's business model collapses, and their parcel market share is increasingly devoured by Amazon, we will need something monumental like a public postal bank to subsidize their operations to maintain our jobs. Without a dedicated strategy to confront back-to-work legislation, we have no hope of winning any substantial gains, let alone a game-changer like public postal banking.

Now, more than ever, we need our members to get involved in our union. Three hours a month to attend a GMM is a small commitment when compared to the possible benefits of an invigorated local supporting our workforces. Attend meetings, get ready to apply for paid educationals as they roll out, share information with your co-workers, and encourage them to see where they can contribute in some small way to our shared cause. As always, without struggle, there can be no victory, and more hands make lighter work. ✉

In solidarity,



ROLAND SCHMIDT
(HE/HIM)
PRESIDENT
CUPW 730

MAKE A DIFFERENCE - GET INVOLVED WITH OUR UNION

Devon Rundvall - 1st VP Organizing, EDDD

**More hands make lighter work!
A couple hours a month can have a huge impact when we all get informed and get involved.**

You don't have to look very far to realize that we live in a broken world. Many believe that this sense of injustice we feel is evidence that things are not meant to be this way. I have a fundamental, core belief that this world can be changed.

We have been raised in a society that values the idea of the strong person. Those unique, forceful individuals who grab hold of power or positions of influence and try to shape the world to reflect their own ideals. But an individual does not change a system. They can't change society – not on their own, at least. It takes many individuals believing and supporting that ideal to make that change.

This happens all the time, and it happens at every level of our society - from how a family runs their home all the way up to how governments run countries. It relies on individuals supporting the systems that are in place.

The flip side of this is true as well. For that system to be disrupted, it takes individuals actively changing their behaviour. In a family, this might just mean one individual. But to change a nation, you need a multitude.

This is why I became involved in our Union in the first place. It wasn't solely to confront the garbage style of management we see daily at Canada Post but to confront the entire rotten

“When I realized I was powerless to stop this system on my own, I simultaneously knew I was responsible to fight it nonetheless.”

system: an individualistic system set on the destruction of everything from the human soul to the planet itself. This unchecked capitalist system is willing to destroy it all for a quick buck.

When I realized I was powerless to stop this system on my own, I simultaneously knew I was responsible to fight it nonetheless. I also realized that the one thing I could do was also the greatest

threat to the system: becoming involved, specifically with our Union.

It seems so simple, but that's how it works. The only chance we have against organized greed is organized labour. The labour movement is only as powerful as the unions within it, and those unions are only as strong as their members willingness to get involved.

If you are interested at all in making a real difference in this world, start where you are at. Talk to your co-workers, apply for a Union educational, speak up at a workforce safety meeting, become a Shop Steward, or attend a Local general membership meeting. It doesn't take much to do your part and, at most, it's only a couple of hours per month.

If you have any questions, comments, or ideas for how you can make a difference, reach out to the Organizing Committee at organize730@gmail.com or contact the Local office at (780) 423-9000. ✉

IT WON'T GROW IF YOU DON'T DELEGATE

Nick Driedger argues for the importance of delegating union tasks.

By Nick Driedger

Originally posted on organizing.work

The work of the union never ends. As soon as you start being seen as effective by your coworkers, it seems like the workload only goes up. The only way to get on top of this is to delegate work.

Delegating, like everything in organizing, is a skill — it's something you practice, and the more you do it, the better you get at it. The surest sign you are becoming a veteran organizer is that your first move in any situation is to task work to other people and explain how it is done.

Not delegating leads to a smaller and smaller circle doing more and more work, which leads to burnout. The active few find themselves really busy and yet the campaign isn't really advancing. Once this dynamic sets in, they start to blame each other (and get angry at the membership).

The more you delegate, the more you can replace yourself, and the larger a pool of people there is to take on the tasks. The union or campaign becomes more competent with a greater number of competent people overall.

Delegating means assigning tasks to others but that doesn't mean it is any less work for the organizer. In fact,

delegating is more work at first, because you are simultaneously developing people while still making sure (from afar) that tasks get done. Building up other people takes more effort than just doing a task yourself. After doing that enough, however, your own workload goes down a bit, and eventually you can take that step back. And that's good, because organizing is something you should be able to step back from without it collapsing.

“There is not a job in the union that should not eventually have a member directing the work and knowing how to do it...if workers are going to run the world they need to start by running their own unions.”

How to Delegate

I remember being a young shop steward at Canada Post and telling an older veteran about all of the problems in my local, the apathy of the workers, the arrogance of management, and the fact that no one was circulating information from the local to the floor.

She smiled and walked over to a stack of bulletins and put them in my hands, and told me I should go to work 20 minutes early tomorrow and drop a bulletin off at every case, then use my break to talk to one row of letter

carriers a day until I had covered the whole depot. She took my complaining and turned it around on me. I was already agitated but she made me put my money where my mouth is.

It does not take much for a conversation about work to turn to complaining; organizing is the art of taking that energy and directing it somewhere useful.

Delegating has a few components to it:

Always start with Agitation. If a coworker approaches you with an issue, rile them up and then transform that into a task. If they're not already approaching you, go to them. Ask a lot of questions, until you find out what they care about. Make them feel heard and make the issue feel urgent. Then task them with work related to that, even if it's asking other coworkers if they have the same issue.

Trust others. This work is not just for people who “get it.” You can't delegate if you don't respect someone's abilities, and if you don't respect their abilities, get over yourself — organizing is not rocket science and if someone is smart enough to be doing a job alongside you, they can organize it too. Trust also builds over time, and with the trust you build, you can start giving tasks that are more ambitious but also more outside what that particular member cares about. That way they become more invested in the organization and not just in the demands that affect them.

Break the job down into manageable tasks. Think about what you are trying to get someone to do and take each

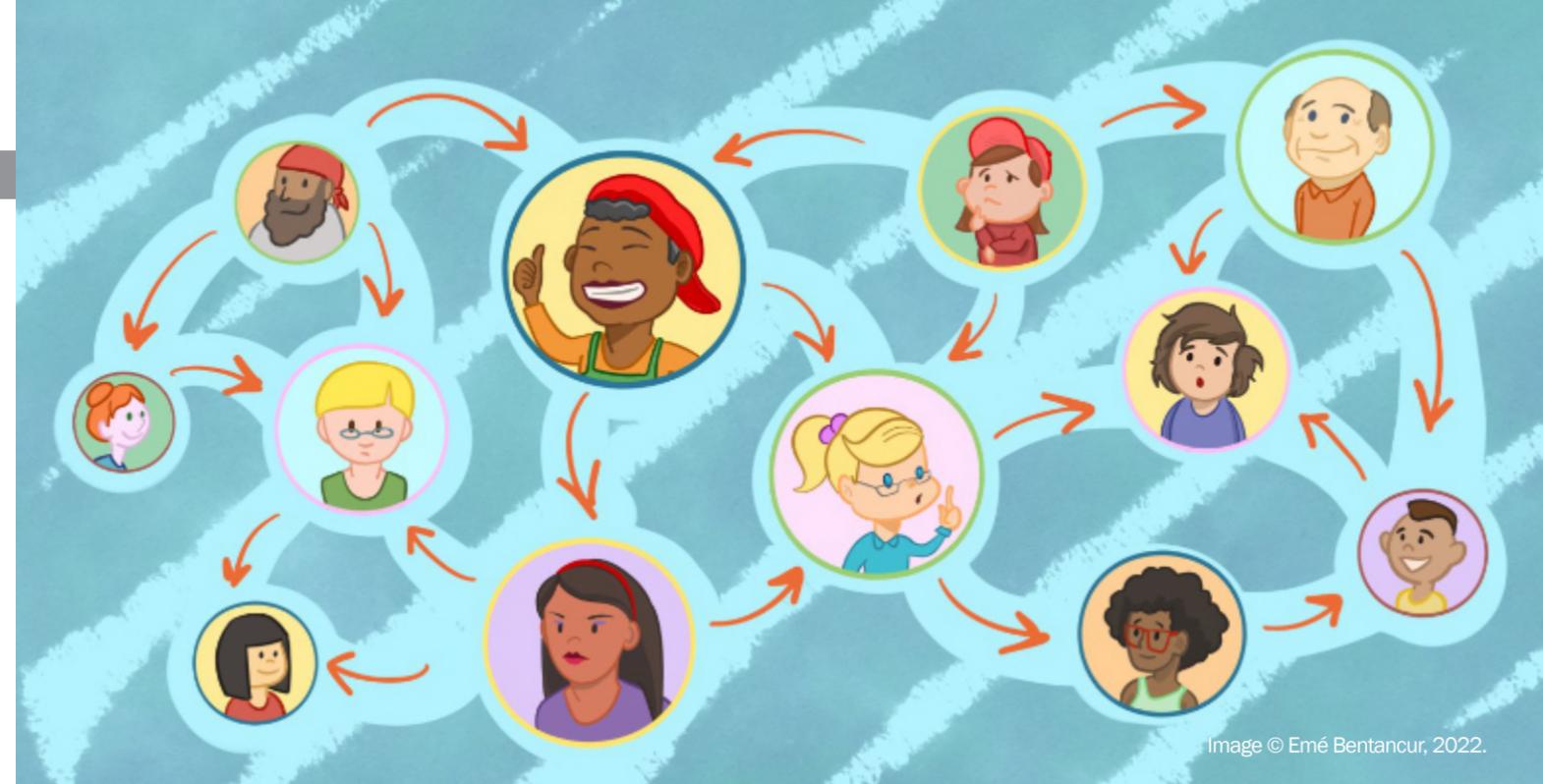


Image © Emé Bentancur, 2022.

step and spell it out. What seems like a thousand mile journey seems more manageable when you take it one step at a time. The bigger your organizing goal and the more workers being organized, the more tasks there are to reach it, and the more hands are needed to do the work.

Delegate delegating. Delegating starts with not doing the work for people. But it has to move quickly to also making sure other people are not taking everything on themselves. It's okay to intervene and tell some that they have too much on their plate and suggest someone else does it. It's also okay to tell someone that something that you want done should not be done by them. If you need to, role play and plan how you are going to ask someone to do something. Practice it — it's not easy for everyone to ask someone else to do something but it's a skill people in a campaign need to learn if the campaign is going to grow.

The bigger the struggle, the more logistics matters. Planning out the different tasks and delegating on a large scale requires coordination. This

coordination usually happens through a committee, and the bigger the job the more the work gets pushed out into sub committees. Tasks can be tracked through spreadsheets and regular check-ins but if you are going to have levels of committees you are going to want to decide what decisions are made at what level. Bylaws, minutes, and reports all become very important for this process.

Follow Up. Did someone fail to do a task? Call them and ask what happened, dig deeper than their first answer. When in doubt go back to agitation — get them talking about their problems at work again. Sometimes you have to hand the work off to someone else to get it done; people are busy. Sometimes it just won't get done and that's okay. A lot of us are the kinds of people who just find it easier to do things ourselves: resist that temptation. Delegating isn't just about pushing the work out, it's also about building people up so find a new task that may be a better fit for that person. If the job doesn't get done that's a problem but a worker losing confidence in their ability to do

something about the problems they face is a bigger problem. It's longer and harder to get people to do things on their own but it's the only way people gain the confidence to act independently.

Opportunities to delegate

Every job that needs to be done, including figuring out what jobs need to be done, is an opportunity to delegate.

A lot of radical unions back in the good old days rotated the chair of the meeting and minute-taker. If everyone needs to learn the rules of order, everyone is on an even playing field. Tasks like booking the room to meet, setting up the online meeting space, or sending out the announcement email are all great jobs for someone just getting involved.

Coordinating making the signs for a picket, coordinating rides to and from an event are all great jobs to delegate

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IT WON'T GROW

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because they get people to build relationships. Most people find talking to strangers hard but it gets easier the more you do it.

Workshops and trainings are also a great way to divide up tasks and get different people to do the work. If lots of people are counting on it getting done make sure you check in lots and have a backup to step in if someone has something come up.

Public speaking is always a good job to rotate; make sure you have people help prepare the speech together. Coffee break meetings or parking lot meetings are where almost every great trade unionist learned to do public speaking. Switching up who speaks builds everyone up and also lets you give each other pointers.

Why people don't complete tasks, and what to do about it

In general there are really only a handful of reasons that people did not follow through.

You didn't delegate properly. If you call someone up and try and drop something on their lap at the last minute they are not going to have the time and probably resent you for doing so. If you give someone a really long time to do something and never check back in they are going to forget about it and feel abandoned. You don't delegate because it's less work for you; you delegate because it means work gets done by more people. Checking in with the people you delegate work to every week or two is reasonable.

The task was not clear. As an organizer sometimes people just don't

understand what you are asking and sometimes the task isn't as obvious as it looked at first. They don't want to argue with you so they just agree because it's easier than feeling dumb by asking a bunch of questions. When that happens the main problem you need to address is them feeling like you care what they think, then you can circle back to what needs to be done.

Something came up. People have lives and children or eldercare; maybe they have another job or their car broke down. Check in with them, ask them about how they are doing and try again. Being patient with people and developing a strategy that lets you be patient with people by not imposing unnecessary deadlines on the work makes this a lot easier.

The person didn't care about it as much as you did. You're the one with the big ideas, you're the one who wants to change the world. You either need to make people care about this as much as you do (and this is hard and takes time and a lot of trust) or work on what the workers care about (this is much easier). What is revolutionary about the working class is not that they are all potential converts to your cause; what is revolutionary about them is that they can only improve their lives in this world by working together in solidarity and that creates a new world. So what do you do when someone doesn't follow through and there is no one to pick up the job? Wait and listen. Either people just aren't ready yet or the issue that will push the organizing forward is something you haven't identified yet. Never let the urgency we all feel about the need for a better world get in the way of letting it happen.

Delegating builds the kind of unionism we want

The biggest question people have about direct action-based unionism is: how does it scale? They can understand the need for militancy and they see lots of examples of small groups taking action and winning but the larger groups, big militant unions, are treated as if there is a certain kind of magic. There isn't. A few factors go into big militant organizations but the biggest one you can actually control is the culture of having the work done by the rank and file. This doesn't necessarily mean there is no role for officers and staff but it does mean the spotlight should be on the workers doing it themselves.

There is not a job in the union that should not eventually have a member directing the work and knowing how to do it. This is an important part of the political content of our kind of unionism: if workers are going to run the world they need to start by running their own unions. 

Nick Driedger is the Director of Labour Relations and Organizing for the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees and a frequent contributor to Organizing Work.



ROUTE MEASUREMENT BY THE NUMBERS

RESTRUCTURING THE REALITIES OF DELIVERY

Kathleen Mpulubusi - LC/Shop Steward, Delton

Despite the continuing pandemic, the Corporation is still looking for its pound of flesh in our vehicle loading times - what else awaits in the upcoming Mayfield and Depot 2 restructures?

Members of the Route Measurement Committee have been hard at work looking over route files and getting ready for the upcoming restructures of Mayfield and Depot 2. We raised concerns about the feasibility and accuracy of a volume count during the Omicron wave of COVID-19 with uncovered routes, short-staffing, and bringing in extra people to the depots.

The Corporation did acknowledge these concerns and have since moved the Mayfield volume count back to March 14-25. However, the Depot 2 volume count is still scheduled to go ahead from February 7-18. Any bets on if it will be postponed? Stay tuned.

The review of the Mayfield depot revealed some surprising results. Overall, the pacing information was generally up-to-date, but there are still some issues that need attention. What we did see was that the load/unload times were randomly changed to lower values than what they were supposed

to be. There were only 3 routes with the correct times.

We immediately filed a grievance on this and CPC has agreed to reinstate the correct Load/Unload values, which should increase individual route values.

We have suspected that this is Route Optimization's way of attempting to downgrade route values so as to justify route cuts in the next restructure and to take away over-assessment values. This information, along with parcel and pickups values are not found in the Edit Book, so Route Optimization can easily manipulate this data and it wouldn't be easily caught. We will check other depots and see if this has happened elsewhere.

There are two major areas of concern that need to be addressed going forward with restructures: the % Coverage Formula and On-Demand Pickups. If these areas are not addressed, there will be route cuts, job losses, and major overburdening on the routes that remain.

The % Coverage Formula

First is the % Coverage Formula, which is used by CPC to determine how many Points of Call (POC) are actually delivered to on a route daily. The lower the % of Coverage, the longer the route in both time and distance. It was developed for use back when the 3

portion delivery of Neighbourhood Mail (NM) was not enforced. Now, the 1/3 portion of NM delivery is considered the highest priority for delivery and Letter Carriers are subject to discipline up to termination for failure to deliver.

Because of this, the % of Coverage formula must be amended to incorporate the current model of delivery where 1/3 of a route must be delivered daily due to NM delivery. Under the current formula, the determinants are mail volume and vacant POCs, so there is no limit on the length in kilometres a walking route can be or how many Community Mailboxes could be on a route.

The base value of any route should not be lower than 1/3 (33%) route coverage, with the volume formula only applied to the remaining 2/3 (66%) of a given route. If there is no change in the application of the % Coverage Formula, there will be cuts to the number of routes before anything else happens, just based on the drop in mail volume that we have seen over the last 5 years. It is absolutely imperative to have a coverage formula that accurately reflects our current delivery realities, not what happened in the past.

On-Demand Pickups

Scheduled and On-Demand Pickups are an essential part of our work. The

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ROUTE MEASUREMENT

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formula and procedures for timing pickups is part of the MSCWSS (the MSC Workload System). Route Optimization uses the MSCWSS when it comes to giving time values for On-Demand Pickups.

There is a well-established procedure for adding On-Demand Pickups onto routes that already have the flex time to be able to incorporate a pickup into a day of delivery. Instead, CPC wants to be able to add On-Demand Pickups onto routes as they see fit with no or negligible time values and to tell Carriers to just charge 15.08 overtime if they have OT. This leads to stress and overburdening of carriers.

We demand that CPC follows the established procedures for incorporating On-Demand Pickups onto routes.

Conclusion

Ideally, we would like to see CPC stop the restructure process until these and other issues can be resolved. Unfortunately, with the extension of our current Collective Agreement, CPC has no reason to address these issues and can continue to give us vague promises of forming a committee with no accountability to “discuss.”

So the question is, What do we do? How can we push both CPC and our national Union to take these concerns seriously? The numbers on route forms are not just numbers on a sheet. They represent kilometres walked, stairs climbed, time spent driving. It's our sweat and the wear and tear on our bodies that is at stake.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

REGARDING BENEFITS FOR THOSE ON LWOP OR CONSIDERING RETIREMENT



Karry Biri, Secretary/Treasurer CUPW 730

For members who are currently on Leave Without Pay (LWOP), here is some important information regarding your benefits and pension if you will be off for more than 30 days. This information was taken directly from Intrapost and can be found under the 'Make it Safe, Make it Home' tab.

- **Extended Health Care Plan (EHCP)** (optional benefit coverage) – Coverage is optional and will continue unless it is cancelled by you. You will be responsible for 100% of the cost of the premiums for these benefits (for both employee and employer share). You can choose to cancel this coverage at any time by submitting the Application for Coverage/Amendment to Current Extended Health Care Application form to AccessHR. If you choose to discontinue your EHCP coverage, you can reapply only when you return to work.
- **Dental Care Plan, and Vision and Hearing Care** (mandatory benefit coverage) – You will have no coverage during the period of the leave. Coverage will automatically resume when you return to work.
- **Basic Life Insurance Plan** (mandatory benefit) – Coverage under the Basic Life Insurance plan will continue while you are on leave. You will be responsible for

100% of the cost of the premiums for these benefits (for both employee and employer share).

- **Disability Insurance/Long-Term Disability Insurance Plans** (mandatory benefit coverage) – Coverage under the Disability Insurance/Long-Term Disability Insurance plans will continue while you are on leave. You will be responsible for 100% of the cost of the premiums for these benefits (for both employee and employer share).
- **Life and Accident Insurance Plan (LAIP)** (optional benefit coverage) – Coverage is optional for those who enrolled and will continue unless it is cancelled by you. You will continue to be responsible for 100% of the cost of the premiums for these benefits. You can choose to cancel this coverage at any time by submitting the Life and Accident Insurance Program (Beneficiary Designation) application form to AccessHR. If you choose to discontinue your LAIP coverage, you can reapply only when you return to work.
- **Defined Benefit (DB) Component of the Canada Post Corporation Registered Pension Plan** – Pension contributions for the first three months of LWOP are mandatory and repaid at single rate. Pension contributions for the period beyond the first three months are optional and repaid at double rate. The Pension Centre

will provide additional details once the leave has started. For further details regarding your pension contributions while on LWOP, please contact the Pension Centre at 1-877-480-9220 (1-866-370-2725 TTY) or visit cpcpension.com.

- **Defined Contribution (DC) Component of the Canada Post Corporation Registered Pension Plan** – Canada Post will cease to make its base contributions towards your pension. Your optional contributions will stop, as will Canada Post's matching contributions for the period while you are on leave. For further details regarding pension contributions, please visit cpcpension.com or contact AccessHR at 1-877-807-9090.

For members who might be considering retirement, here is some important information from the Corporation about that.

Retiring after November 27, 2021 (while on a non-legislated leave like other LWOP):

To be eligible to post-retirement Extended Health Care Plan (EHCP) and/or the Dental Care Plan, one of the requirements is that you must have been a qualified employee eligible to be covered under the Canada Post EHCP and/or the Dental Care Plan the day before the date of retirement.

For EHCP, coverage is optional and will continue unless it is cancelled by you (or you never opted in prior to the leave). You will be responsible for

100% of the cost of the premiums for these EHCP benefits (for both employee and employer share) once on a LWOP for greater than 30 days. As a result, if you previously opted in for EHCP coverage and did not cancel while on LWOP, you will be eligible the day before retiring, therefore eligible to Post-Retirement Benefits for EHCP (assuming all other criteria are met).

For Dental, there is no coverage following the first 30 days of LWOP. As a result, if you select a retirement date after November 26, you would not have been eligible the day before retiring and therefore not eligible for Post-Retirement Benefits for Dental.



2022 POCKET CALENDARS



By now you should have received the pocket calendars supplied by our Local. If not, please contact a Shop Steward or get in touch with the Local Office at (780) 423-9000 and every effort will be made to provide you with a calendar.

This new calendar design was a volunteer initiative taken on by members of the Communications Committee. Going forward, there is the opportunity to make suggestions for how to improve the calendar. If you have any suggestions, or if you'd like to volunteer to help with next year's calendar, you can email the Committee at communications730@gmail.com.

THE “MULTI-INJURY PROGRAM:” THERE IS NO PROGRAM

We have the highest injury rate in the federal sector and the Corporation wants to blame us for it, so what do we do when we are invited to attend mandatory meetings about the injuries and incidents we've experienced?

James Ball - Education Officer/Shop Steward, Depot 2

I received a request about a month ago to attend a meeting with the Manager. The intent, the letter said, was to “...determine the fundamental cause of these injuries to ensure that employees have all the knowledge, training and tools they need to perform their work safely.”

The timing was interesting. It was not presented to me when I was injured at work in October. It was presented to me in December after my Article 50 grievance was presented to the same Manager. I knew I would be receiving the letter before it even came because in that grievance I included a demand for the Corporation to accept all responsibility for my injuries I incurred as a result of past, fraudulent, route implementation to the present.

I hear that during the grievance hearing,

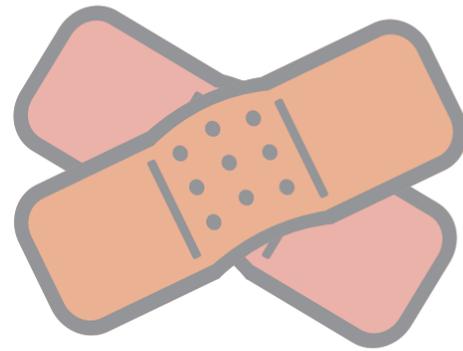
the Manager said that he would have me in the Frequently Injured Employee program soon. I consulted with the CUPW Local and after a Shop Steward meeting with our CUPW Regional, I chose to politely decline their request.

Unfortunately, many people have been a part of these meetings. Most of them have been removed from their job duties for extended periods of time without sufficient cause. One

“If it's a national program, why isn't there an outline? ...This program is a made-up tool to bypass our Collective Agreement and intimidate and punish hardworking people, to silence them and “reduce” injuries.”

employee that I'm aware of has been off their route for several months even though they were never in need of accommodation; it was a no lost-time injury. They reported that they fell, as required by Canada Post, and this has only led to harassment and intimidation.

While in the second meeting, this Letter Carrier was asked the same question again and again, but her answers were ignored because they



implicated supervisors in intimidation to perform work that was dangerous. Work that had been refused until supervisors intimidated the Carrier into doing it.

Throughout the meeting, the Manager stressed the need for “cooperation,” but management refused to do the same. When the member asked why they were being singled out, management pointed to a list that contained dog bites, bee stings, scrapes, bruises, and one lost-time injury from a decade before. When the member asked to know how this history compared to that of their peers, they had no data to provide. When asked what the Corporation had to offer, they repeatedly stated, “we want to hear your perspective on your safety.”

This is phishing. I suspect the intent is for the employee to volunteer something – a goal or metric – that the company can use to judge the employee by in the future and potentially use it to terminate them.

The Manager emphasized that this is a “national safety program,” so I asked for a copy of the program. The Manager was shocked and said, “You want me to give you the instructions on how to run an interview? That's internal. I'm not sharing that!”

If it's a national program, why isn't there an outline? What are the courses of action and the potential outcomes? CPC loves a good flow

chart! I suspect there isn't one. This program is a made-up tool to bypass our Collective Agreement and intimidate and punish hardworking people, to silence them and “reduce” injuries.

It is my recommendation to politely decline these meetings in the presence of a Shop Steward. The investigation of any injury or accident already has a procedure that happens within a few hours of reporting the event.

When we get down to it, the reason they are giving these mandatory “requests” is to bypass your legally binding Collective Agreement. Everyone should read “Article 10 – Discipline, Suspension and Discharge.” The employer can only discipline you during a short time frame after they become aware and they can only discuss previous incidents in your file that have occurred within the last 12 months. You also only have ONE file. Most, if not all, of the injuries they want to use

against you are not in that time frame, they are over 12 months old, and they are not in your file.

Protect yourself from these acts of intimidation. Some of our members wish they had known to refuse earlier. If you receive such a mandatory request, speak to a Shop Steward immediately. If there isn't one present, please contact our Union office at (780) 423-9000. 



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARCH SUNDAY MARCH 6 @ 1:30 PM CORBETT HALL, U OF A

We are taking to the streets! Celebrate women on the frontlines and voice our demands to create a better future for all! Women & All Humans Welcome!

The Women for Rights and Empowerment (W4RE) are hosting a forum and kick-off discussion leading up to International Women's Day. The forum will be held via Zoom on **Wednesday February 17th 2022 at 6:30 pm.** Meeting ID: 366 323 8420. Women & All Humans Welcome!

Stay tuned for more details! Contact Sister Kathleen Mpulubusi for more information.

WORKER SOLIDARITY

Workers are meeting unfair working conditions with unity and collective action!

Kyle Turner - Shop Steward, Rosedale

Kellogg's - The Kellogg's strike in the US lasted from October 5th to December 21st, 2021. Workers rejected a proposal on December 5th because it maintained a two-tier wage and benefits plan. On December 7th, Kellogg's announced that it would replace all striking workers. After this announcement, Reddit users of the Antiwork subreddit programmed scripts to flood Kellogg's with fake applications. On December 21st, workers voted to accept a new collective agreement.

Concordia University of Edmonton Faculty Association - CUEFA went on strike on January 4th, 2022. Representing professors, librarians, and lab instructors, this was the first time in Alberta's history that a faculty association went on strike. The job action lasted for almost 12 days before CUEFA members ratified a new tentative agreement.

John Deere - The John Deere strike in the US lasted from October 14th to November 17th, 2021, when workers voted to accept a third proposal from John Deere.

McGill School of Social Worker Student Strike - Social work students attending a general assembly voted to strike from attending in person classes, which were due to resume on January 24th. The current plan is to attend online classes until February 24th and re-evaluate the situation then. The concerns are not only about their own risk of COVID-19 infection, but the risk of infecting their clients as well, as third and fourth year students spend time working in the community.

Starbucks - In mid-December, 2021, after what has been described as a "shock and awe" anti-union campaign by Starbucks, Workers United won a landmark unionization vote at a Starbucks in Buffalo, New York. Since then, 15 more locations have petitioned for union elections. As of late January, one Starbucks in Calgary has also sought to unionize with the United Steelworkers. 🗳️



Raina Dakus



Siobhan Vipond/Facebook



Raina Dakus



Kyle Turner & Megan Doyle, 2021

MY (MERRY?) CHRISTMAS

Content warning: discussion of emotions, mental wellness

Laura Fuller - LC, Rosedale

It was a cold, dark evening in Edmonton. I was on yet another new route. A Monday. Into overtime hours, trying to push out a few more parcels before I headed back to the depot. As I walked, the snow glistened under the reach of the streetlight's cast. I safe-dropped at the final house as I could see they were home. On the other side of the window pane they lay reading a book on their sofa; warm and cozy with their fully lit Christmas tree in sight. The stark contrast to my evening hit me like a sack of China packets.

In the seconds that followed I felt many emotions: envy, sadness, isolation. But a sense of revelation cleared all that away in an instant. This is part of the reason the holiday season is hard on postal workers, and others who find themselves in similar lines of work. We are delivering joy to others, more so than we are receiving it. Of course we are happy to spread this joy and happiness, but the imbalance between giving and getting is real. And the winter work conditions while carrying out our duties can add a level of dread to an already difficult 'day at the office'.

This last month has been humbling and hard for me. I have been moving around a lot as an interim employee. It reminds me of being a temporary worker; new routes, delivery in the dark, feeling the pressure by management to do better, fear of making mistakes. All while the temperatures drop and people snap at me for parcels or mail they've been waiting for. 'We've all had a tough year' I tell them as they apologize for 'taking it out on me'.

I cried at work yesterday. While out on my route. A lot. It was a combination of things, but mostly what I consider a build-up of micro-aggressions from management.

I'm not ashamed of those tears by the way. It felt so good. It was more than cathartic. It was healing. I could turn the taps off and greet people in the neighbourhood, but when they'd bellow "Merry Christmas," I would turn away and the waterworks commenced once more. The kindly man meant well, and it is a merry time for many. But I'm not feeling it. I'm secretly waiting for it to be over.

Maybe you're feeling the same way. You are not alone. If you are feeling overwhelmed, or in a dangerous mental or physical state please call the EFAP. Don't hesitate. Tell someone right now.

I want to talk about it. I want to share how I'm feeling with my co-workers and friends about Christmas 2021. One of the most powerful tools we have as a workforce is our voice. But it also felt good to shut my mouth that day and let my heart take over. Warm, salty tears of release on a cold December day reminded me of the power to be real and to be okay with how I was feeling. It's okay to not be okay. It's okay to not see the merriment in the holiday season over the mountain of parcels and mail that need to be delivered. Let's talk about it. Let's be real. 

The holiday season is hard on everyone, especially those of us who are tasked with delivering it. If you find yourself struggling, please contact EFAP and you can find someone to talk to 24 hours per day (1-866-565-4903). If you are in Edmonton, there is also a 24/7 mental health and addictions clinic that can be reached by phone at 780-424-2424 or in person at 10959 102 street.



YOUR MOST UP-TO-DATE INFO SOURCE

TWITTER @CUPW730 FACEBOOK.COM/CUPW730

YOUTUBE: CUPW LOCAL 730 - EDMONTON & AFFILIATES

NEWSLETTER E-MAIL: COMMUNICATIONS730@GMAIL.COM

SOLIDARITY STYLE OFFICIAL CUPW 730 SHIRTS



To order: email union@cupwedm.net with your shipping address and size. Please note that the XS-L shirts are a more tight fit. The XL-XXL sizes fit as normal. All extra proceeds from a 'comrade' sale goes to our local Goods & Welfare Committee to help members facing sudden hardship.

REGULAR - \$30
COMRADE - \$40
SHIPPING - \$5

**CUPW 730 EDMONTON & AFFILIATES
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

**SUNDAY, MARCH 6, 2022
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM**

**REGISTER @
CUPW730.CA/CALENDAR
BY MARCH 4 @ NOON**

**STAND AGAINST
BULLYING**

**PINK SHIRT DAY
FEBRUARY 23**

