



BARGAINING UPDATE: SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING

At the bargaining table this week, the Union and Employer presented starkly clashing visions for the futures of Urban Article 41 and RSMC Article 30, covering surveillance and monitoring.

Currently, our collective agreements ensure Canada Post cannot use security camera footage, Global Positioning Systems (GPS), or other electronic monitoring systems to gather evidence to discipline employees. The Employer's surveillance systems can only be used to protect the mail and corporate property against criminal acts, such as theft.

They cannot be used to monitor employees or evaluate work performance. But this week, under the veil of promoting health and safety, the Corporation demanded we open Urban Article 41 and RSMC Article 30 to let supervisors discipline members for infractions identified by "telematics" systems installed on corporate vehicles.

The Corporation's demand was the complete opposite of our own. Our demand called for greater protections against new forms of surveillance and monitoring, including telematics, in-vehicle cameras, and private security cameras at private residences and businesses.

Members need strong protection against the growing number of surveillance technologies that threaten our privacy as well as our physical and mental health.

What is Telematics?

Telematics is an increasingly common way for employers to track vehicle fleets and drivers. Using GPS systems and on-board diagnostics, telematics systems can gather and transmit huge amounts of data in real time.

Telematics systems can track everything from a driver's location and speed, to whether a vehicle is turned on or off, the seatbelt is buckled, or the doors are open or closed. These systems are like digital supervisors, constantly monitoring and recording drivers' every move.

Already, Canada Post has installed these systems on thousands of vehicles, with plans to reach the entire fleet in the near future.

At the bargaining table, the negotiating committees strongly challenged Canada Post's approach to health and safety and its insistence on the need for telematics. We urged the Employer to address the root cause of vehicle accidents and to consider the negative mental health impacts of being under constant surveillance.

On one thing, we did agree with Canada Post: Ensuring the health and safety of employees is our greatest priority. But putting members under constant digital surveillance is no way to achieve it.

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In Solidarity,

Jan Simpson
National President

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