

Ombudsman's Message

IN ACCORDANCE WITH MY *MISSION STATEMENT*, I INDEPENDENTLY REVIEW CUSTOMER CONCERNS UNRESOLVED BY ALL OTHER AVENUES OFFERED BY CANADA POST IN A FAIR, UNBIASED AND TIMELY MANNER TO IMPROVE POSTAL SERVICE FOR ALL CANADIANS.



I act as an impartial mediator committed to maintaining confidentiality on issues that are brought to my attention and I recommend actions that are equitable to all parties.

In 2007, my office processed 6,921 requests for assistance, representing a decrease of 5% from last year. We examined 6,572 complaints

and processed 349 requests for information. Of the complaints examined, we processed 1,718 complaints at intake, resolved 1,847 complaints at the initial stages of the investigative process, and conducted 3,007 in-depth investigations. These investigations resulted in 1,242 recommendations where Canada Post modified its original decision and 601 recommendations where I concluded that Canada Post's original decision should be maintained as I found no cause or justification to recommend a different resolution.

The complaint resolution process ensures that Canada Post has every opportunity to resolve customer complaints. As such, customers may only appeal to my office once Canada Post has completed its review of their complaint and they are not satisfied with the proposed solutions. With this in mind, in late 2006, we incorporated this process into our integrated voice response system. Given that my office receives in excess of 10,000 calls per year, this initiative has had a positive impact on intake staff, as our statistics revealed a 53% decrease in the number of premature calls processed over the previous year.

My office operates at arms-length from Canada Post and does not have access to Canada Post files. Therefore, before customer complaints can be assessed, we ask that customers provide us with the details pertaining to their complaint, including copies of all relevant documentation. As we noted an increasing number of customers who did not provide all the necessary information, we encountered delays in initiating the investigative process. To minimize these delays, our Request for Review form was modified to include a number of prompting questions aimed at drawing more product/service specific information from customers.

We also undertook a two-phased approach to reviewing our website. Phase one involved redesigning and amending its contents to provide concise information to customers, and phase two consists of introducing an On-line Request for Review form, which is currently being developed.

Again this year, Canada Post played a fundamental role to the success of my office, as it continued to be receptive to settling customer complaints. Also, I am very pleased with the ongoing dedication of my staff as they have consistently demonstrated a firm commitment to the values described in my *Mission Statement*. Their sustained effort undoubtedly contributed to the success of the office.

Michel Tremblay

Effective March 31, 2008, Michel Tremblay is retiring from his position as Ombudsman for Canada Post. The Corporation wishes to acknowledge his ten years of excellent service and dedication.