

*Staff - approx 25
Minister's Office*



GPO

Summary of Key Concerns

The meeting between the Bermuda Public Services Union (BPSU), the Bermuda Industrial Union (BIU) and employees of the Bermuda Post Office (BPO) held at BIU Headquarters, 49 Union Square, Hamilton on Wednesday, 17th June, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. highlighted these key concerns:

I. ST. GEORGES POST OFFICE

- The relief post person is currently covering areas which means that there is no one to cover for persons who are on vacation, sick leave, etc.
- Some staff not taking lunch due to workload
- Mold in kitchen. This is a 15yr old issue but unsure if has been reported to H&S.
- St. David's - vacation covered by current staff. For 2 weeks, one (1) person doing five (5) districts due to overlapping vacations + sick leave in April/May. One (1) staff member had to have both hips removed and was out for 3 months for each procedure.
- No steady delivery in St. David's. This is not a one-off occurrence and happened last year as well.
- Network/system goes down repeatedly
- No visits from management

II. CRAWL/HARRINGTON SOUND POST OFFICE

- Main concern is lack of adequate staff coverage. No relief for vacations, leave, lunch hours, sick leave, etc.
- Sick leave - two (2) persons have been out since the amalgamation
- Server down - operating manually
- There are concerns about the air quality
- Staff do not have the necessary tools required to do job
- Currently, staff is learning each other's routes
- Lack of adequate coverage means that some staff are working from 7:15 - 7:30am to 6:30/7pm

- PO closes at 5pm but staff often stay behind to complete tasks that could not be addressed during normal working hours. No overtime pay for this work.
- Problems surrounding deputizing staff

III. FLATTS POST OFFICE

- Staffing shortages
- No relief staff
- Only has one (1) CSR and no relief for this person
- System issues – system crashes and the recovered data had gaps due to lost information. In addition, the merging of the recovered data with existing data has, in some instances, lead to duplication of data.
- PM working above her pay grade due to deputizing

IV. PEROT POST OFFICE

- No coverage – only one person working
- No relief for lunch or for bathroom breaks

V. DEVONSHIRE POST OFFICE

- Two (2) CSRs
- Start work at 7:30/7:45am and closes doors at 4pm in order to get the work done
- Currently leaves work at 5:30pm but used to stay until 6:30pm
- No compensation for these extra hours
- CSR covers over 800 boxes, processes packages, works the counter, answers phones (overlapping roles)
- One (1) person out for six (6) weeks' vacation which means that there is only two (2) to cover these duties
- Manager can't get time in lieu
- The sub-coordinator has been informed that the door is being closed to customers
- A mail handler may come in to assist but the coverage is sporadic

VI. PAGET POST OFFICE

- Key concerns were the issues surrounding staff shortages and staff being required to perform tasks outside their job descriptions JD issue with the PM

- JDs for relief staff clearly state that their role was to provide cover for leave including vacation and sick leave
- One staff member refused to be re-deployed
- Termination of a staff member is not considered leave ie not to be covered by a relief person
- All re-deployment needs to be negotiate and that this has not been done.
- Staff is struggling to manage workload
- PM has indicated that they need 3 persons but they only have 2
- It was noted that there were complaints coming from the public regarding the failure to receive their mail in a timely matter e.g. return notices for Paget Primary and RSVPs for a wedding.
- The decrease in consumer confidence was attributed to poor leadership.
- It also highlighted that the Postmaster General was tasked with making a 5% cut but took it upon himself to cut the budget by 35% and that the Postmaster General was a one-man SAGE Commission.
- It was felt that GPO was the poster boy for privatization.
- Savings can be found within the GPO but that these savings must be acceptable savings.
- Members were reminded that they were the experts and the professionals.
- Members were urged to follow their collective bargaining agreements.

VII. WARWICK POST OFFICE

- Down two (2) postman due to vacation and an unexpected leave
- Currently has three (3) persons covering 10 areas
- A lot of in-house bickering due to stress of the workload
- Request clarification of what staff is required to do. Union members were told that first duty is to cover their own district. Once their work is complete, they can assist with coverage
- Concern that there are no contingencies plans in place as there is no relief person
- A/C has not worked properly for months
- No coverage for lunches
- Using CSR for a relief person
- The leak by mailboxes has been fixed but not yet painted
- Some staff (2 persons) have been complaining of both burning eyes and respiratory problems
- Air quality was tested but showed no issues

VIII. SOUTHAMPTON POST OFFICE

- Security concerns - anyone can walk in via the back entrance as doors aren't working properly
- Staff shortages as some staff have been moved to Mangrove Bay. Currently only the PM and one (1) CSR are stationed at this branch.
- PM is currently working from 7:15am to 5:30/6pm
- No spare bikes and have to travel to Somerset Bridge to get a spare. Ineffectual and a waste of time
- A/C not working properly
- One (1) person working all four (4) areas

IX. MANGROVE BAY POST OFFICE

- Issues with bike (part is on order)
- Had no water for one (1) day but issue has been addressed
- Floor has also been fixed
- Staff shortages with one (1) person on vacation. Currently, staff are sharing this person's workload
- Always as shortage of CSR staffing which means that often the CSR is left alone. This is a serious safety issue.
- Lack of effective communication

X. BMPC

- Concerns regarding workplace conditions. Hurricane in October 2014 left two (2) holes in the roof. As there were concerns about asbestos and air quality, segments of the building have limited access with some areas being blocked using plastic sheeting. This has caused staff to run between buildings in the rain to bag mail. Staff are also forced to be diverted to gain access to bathrooms via leaving the building. The temporary repairs are of poor quality with some areas still leaking. With substantial rains, both the mail sorting area and compliance area experiencing flooding. Concerns that the building has or will be condemned.
- For approx. 8 months, there has been no regular cleaners resulting in bathrooms only being cleaned approx., two (2) times per week.
- Have only had one (1) visit from management to view the work conditions (Mar/April)

- Only have one (1) truck which leaves staff dependent on the morning driver. There are other trucks but they are not licensed as they need to be repaired. One truck leaks when it rains.
- Currently moving mail using airport baggage carts as operating manager does not think a proper trolley is needed

XI. PARCEL POST

- A/C vents have been blocked off to accommodate the wishes of one (1) staff member who has complained that it is too cold, leaving all other staff to suffer in the heat.
- Staff shortages with no coverage for leave, vacation, sick leave, lunch, breaks, etc.
- Currently only have two (2) cashiers – previously had four (4)
- Assigned porter is currently out which negatively impacts the remaining staff as well as the customer as they are forced to carry heavy packages
- No relief person as this person is filling in for courier
- Reduction in the number couriers
- Senior clerks moved to other branches
- PM is often needed to fill in for CSR-related duties, front counter and cash. Starts work at 7am, does not take lunch and sometimes stays until 7pm in order to complete her duties.
- Staff are not equipped or trained to take on additional duties.
- The addition of the Paget PO work has put a strain on staff and on space. No additional staff were assigned with the additional work.
- There is not enough space to accommodate all of Paget PO's packages.
- Currently, there are packages from January still in storage as there has not been enough time nor staff to send out notices
- Health & Safety concerns:
 - staff working in such tight quarters
 - with so much added mail, there are concerns about fire hazards,
 - there is not enough room for staff to safely maneuver around bins,
 - the area is too hot with not enough air,
 - evidence of rodents
- Customer service has suffered as a result of being short-staffed
- Repeated network failures – approx. 3 to 4 per day – which impacts customer service and quality of job performance

XII. PHILATETIC

- Dated system – losing data as a result
- No POS system in place – all handwritten transactions
- As of June 16th, staff have refused to sell to customers without a POS implemented due to their concerns about financial controls, financial instructions being breached and accountability
- Staff shortages – previously had three (3) but now only have one (1)

XIII. ACCOUNTS DEPT

- Staff shortages – currently short two (2) clerks
- With holidays, it leaves only two (2) persons working
- One person has 48.5 extra hours logged in one month due to added responsibilities
- Some staff working from 7:15am to 5:30/7pm often with no lunch
- No one is working to their job descriptions
- Receiving emails from management accountant at 3am
- Added pressure to meet year-end commitments
- Have invited management to view workload
- System issues
- A/C has not been working since October 2014
- Electrical wires hanging from ceiling

XIV. ITO

- Large turnover in IT managers
- Only one (1) person covering all Post Offices (14 buildings)
- Management is making promises to staff regarding IT but failing to inform or liaise with IT
- Management fails to seriously consider revenue-generating suggestions e.g. sell minutes for cellphones. Provided all the documentation but management fails to follow-through
- IT found a system for Philatelic but management expanded it to a big system
- Need money for new computers
- Currently stripping old computers for parts
- The PO Management System does not work
- Sewage floods into IT room
- Poor communication e.g. only given 30 days notice to close Paget PO
- Complaint that there was a PO that was experiencing slow internet coverage. Spent time and resources to fix this issue only to have PO closed down.

- Have repeatedly told management that they are paying for extra TELCO lines that are not being used and for TELCO equipment that department does not have possession of e.g. being charged for rotary phones. This has still not been addressed
- Lack of consultation
- No hurricane plan - serious concern. There was a promise to implement a hurricane plan immediately following the last hurricane.
- Staff request equipment without giving enough notice which leads to an ineffectual use of time
- Often stays late to help to lock-up at end of the day but due to poor communication, the alarm is often triggered. PM Smith, on occasion, allows friends to use his parking space. Once, after locking up, IT was called back at 7pm to unlock the area so that one such acquaintance could be let out.

XV. JANITORS

- Homeless continue to be an issue. This is a serious health and security concern.
- Homeless are urinating in plants and leaving bags of urine in building
- Bottles of miniatures are left throughout the area
- Customers express concerns about their safety
- Customers continue to complain about smell and trash
- Cameras are in place but are not positioned in a way to capture where homeless are sleeping
- This has been taken to the courts but the judge has ruled it a community issue
- Police are supposed to monitor this area

XVI. LETTER HANDLERS

- Staff working outside their job descriptions with an increase in duties e.g. boxing, data inputting, POS system
- No remuneration for performing extra duties
- Four (4) mail handlers seconded to CSR posts
- There is an implied threat to job security if additional duties are not accepted
- Staff shortages - four (4) vacated post not filled
- Staff feel that it makes no sense to complain because nothing ever changes
- Staff believe problem lies with top management who enable poor performance

- Not enough room to perform duties
- Not enough bathrooms
- A/C in registration room not working
- Layout of floor is a fire hazard
- Fire Dept. has not been in to check the working conditions since the implementation of the new layout. Health & Safety Committee executive members agreed to have the Fire Dept. to come out to visit site.
- Postmaster General Smith has been invited to sit with staff to witness their concerns
- In response to these concerns, Postmaster General Smith told staff, *"I make no apologies for what I am about to say...suck it up or you can leave and get a job in the private sector and see how you make out."*
- Brangman told staff, *"I know that me and my management team are inefficient."*