



## Abstracts/Résumés

### Contractors Or Disguised Employees? : A Case Study Of Couriers In Winnipeg

Geoff Bickerton,  
Research Director,  
Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW),  
Ottawa, Canada and  
Rosemary Warskett  
Department Of Law,  
Carleton University,  
Ottawa, Canada

The courier industry in Canada is rapidly expanding. This is due to a number of factors including greater international trade in goods; more use of just-in-time inventory strategies; and the rapid development of internet commerce. Significant technological and organizational developments within the industry have led to greater segmentation of markets. As a result, large national and international parcel delivery firms dominate the international and intercity markets, while there has been a proliferation of smaller firms in the same-city, same-day markets. The research findings from a case study conducted in Winnipeg reveal that couriers in certain parts of the industry are relatively well paid, with benefits and employment conditions negotiated by their union, while others are independent contractors with low incomes, no benefits and insecure tenure. The article compares the experience of these two types of couriers and examines what is being done to improve the terms and conditions of work for same-day couriers. It is concluded that nature of the same day courier industry means that union organizing will be very difficult and there is no guarantee of success. Unionization, however, is a necessary prerequisite for the improvement of conditions and wages in this growing industry.

[Full Article \(PDF\)](#)