



Canadian Association of Movers

Association canadienne des déménageurs

PO Box 30039, RPO New Westminster, Thornhill, Ontario, Canada L4J 0C6

Tel/Tél: 905.848.6579 • Toll free: 866.860.0065 • Sans frais: 877.656.4993 • Fax/Télé: 866.601.8499

admin@mover.net • www.mover.net

A letter from the Canadian Association of Movers to the Ombudsman for the Canadian Armed Forces regarding the Letter of Interest (LOI)/Request for Proposal (RFP) for Household Goods Moving Service that is currently being formulated by the Interdepartmental Committee of Public Works & Government Services Canada

March 19, 2013

Office of the Ombudsman

Attn: Mr. Marc Rouleau, Special Advisor (Consultant)

Dear Mr. Rouleau:

I am writing to follow up on your recent meeting with Anne Martin of United Van Lines and Glenn Warner of Capital Movers & Storage. They expressed industry-wide concerns.

The members of the Canadian Association of Movers and the Canadian moving industry as a whole are proud to serve the men and women of Canada's Armed Forces. We admire their willingness to put their lives at risk to achieve Canada's international goals and commitments. We are keenly aware of the stress that is present in their lives – the stress that a posting to a combat zone imposes on a family.

A move is also an extremely stressful time for a family. Moving ranks among the most stressful events in any person's life. It should not be one of the factors that adversely affect the stability of military families. And it does not have to be one of those factors. Under the current system, military families are successfully served by the moving industry.

Canada's movers move hundreds of Canadian families every day and, properly handled, these moves can be a challenging experience, but not an overly stressful one. Contrast, if you will, the difference between a move for a Government Employee (GE) and one for a Non-Government Employee (NGE):

- The NGE is not facing a mandatory move every five years – a GE is.
- The NGE has had weeks, if not months of notice of the move – a GE often has had five days.
- The NGE's move is conducted by professionals who understand the pressure a family is under and work to deliver fast and professional moving services – a GE's move is often supervised by inspectors who are seemingly compelled to find fault and who stress the moving crew and the family, which, in turn, adds unnecessary stress to the situation.
- In an NGE's move, the mover performs the required tasks, and more, to deliver the best service possible – in the GE's move, the mover is required to perform unnecessary tasks in order to pass inspection, some of which fail to improve the quality of the move.
- The NGE's move is not characterized by huge penalties that significantly reduce the reward for the mover's efforts – the GE's move is.
- The NGE's move is frequently scheduled for non-peak times during which a mover's full-time crews are available to do the job – the GE's move is scheduled for the moving industry's busiest time when temporary crews have to be engaged.

- The mover's access to the NGE's home to properly complete the move is agreed upon for the mutual convenience of the family and the mover – the length of time the mover has access to the GE's home is restricted.
- NGEs have the ability customize the move to fit their needs – GEs do not.
- The NGE's opinion is usually the highest factor in rating the performance of the mover – contract compliance is the highest factor in the GE's move.

As an industry, our ability to meet the needs of the men and women of Canada's Armed Forces is a major concern. Across the industry, companies are trying to come up with methods to meet the standards and conditions of the document that may become the Request for Proposal (RFP) for Household Goods Moving Service. We do understand that your role is not to assist the industry in achieving a more reasonable contract, but to act on behalf of the employees of the Government of Canada to ensure that they have the opportunity within their career to preserve the stability of their family lives. As mobility is a given in a military career, moving must be considered a key element in the preservation of this stability at an already stressful time. A quality move by the professionals in our industry is essential.

I offer a few thoughts:

- The proposed bidding process could reduce the number of contractors available to perform these essential tasks. The hardship to the industry aside, there would be less capacity to do the job and therefore potential failures to deliver service.
- The industry has a shortage of drivers and labour, and must meet the peak loads imposed by the Government of Canada in the one-month period – June 20 to July 20 – every year. The process does not recognize this and does not allow the industry to modernize its methods. This is not sustainable.
- We see a need for significant moving-industry input into the development of the Request for Proposal rather than the current process that excludes those who best know the industry and its contract obligations with Government.
- We have met with the Interdepartmental Committee and are concerned that the RFP will be published in its current form.

We do understand your role and would like to enlist your assistance in representing Canada's military in this process. Could we meet in the near future either in person or on a conference call to discuss this?

Sincerely,

John Levi

On behalf of the members of the Canadian Association of Movers