



Syndicat des Douanes et de l'Immigration
Customs and Immigration Union

February 10, 2011

Luc Portelance
President
Canada Border Services Agency
191 Laurier Ave. W., 6th Floor
Ottawa, ON K1A 0L8

Email: luc.portelance@cbsa.asfc.gc.ca

Subject: CBSA Name Tag Initiative

Dear Mr. Portelance,

As predicted when we met with the CBSA senior managers who are heading the aforementioned initiative, the related reaction from Front-Line and Inland Enforcement Immigration Officers has been, to say the least, extremely negative. In fact, from the hundreds of communications I have received from Union activists as well as from members at large on this matter, none were even remotely supportive; the reaction has been one of disbelief, disgust, and defiance.

Among a countless number of extremely valid Officer safety reasons, the fact that we are currently in a period of financial restraint, also logically leads to the question as to why the CBSA is prepared to spend almost two hundred thousand dollars on such a questionable initiative.

Many CBSA senior officials, including yourself, based on the misguided notion that all CBSA Officers are "want-to-be" Police Officers, continuously declare that *'we are not a police force'*. For these same officials to now rationalize the initiative at hand using nothing more than "police force" references, makes the entire undertaking insulting to the point of being absurd.

While it is not for me to comment on the appropriateness of the use of name tags in other non-unionized sectors of the law-enforcement community, you are nonetheless, at least somewhat correct in saying that we are, particularly in this instance, nothing like a police force. One of the most significant differences is that CBSA Front-Line Officers interact with approximately 100 million travelers every year. Regardless of how professional, polite, and straight-forward an Officer can be in revealing who he or she is through their badge number, you will always have clients outraged at Officers who are, more often than not, only guilty of having duly carried-out their mandated duties. To knowingly create a controversy which only results in catering to this segment of the traveling public is what Officers find most offensive. Further, given the wide-spread and ever-growing use of today's social-network technologies, by introducing name tags you would also be promoting that Officer's names be abused through the pusillanimous use of these cyber networks.

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I have been informed that your officials have accepted to include this issue on the agenda of the upcoming National Health & Safety Policy Committee meeting. I was pleased by this development in spite of the fact that Part II of the Canada Labour Code makes it abundantly clear that announcing your intent to go to tender on such an initiative prior to consulting with the Union is an unarguable violation of said Code. In order to provide you the opportunity to demonstrate you are fully interested in complying with Acts of Parliament, we are requesting that you personally commit that the initiative will be immediately halted until further notice and, at minimum, until these consultations have taken place.

As is always the case, I would be pleased to further discuss the matter with you and will accordingly remain available.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ron Moran', written in a cursive style.

Ron Moran
National President

c.c. Members of the CIU National Board of Directors