

UNI Post & Logistics Universal Service Conference



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At the beginning of May, I attended a series of meetings about the state of the postal sector at UNI Global Union's headquarters in Nyon, Switzerland. The primary topic of these meetings, with one day especially dedicated to the topic, was the status of universal service worldwide.

For those not familiar, UNI Global Union is a federation of labor unions from around the world representing more than 20 million workers.

NALC is affiliated to UNI under its Post & Logistics sector, along with more than 50 postal and delivery unions from 40-plus countries. NALC's affiliation with UNI is not only important as a way of building global solidarity with other postal employees around the world, but also as a way of learning about what is happening at those post offices. Being able to get a global view of the sector helps us identify what industry trends we might need to look out for in our own countries and share strategies for protecting postal employees' jobs as the sector changes.

The May meetings brought together several trends that postal affiliates have been discussing in recent years: the rise of private competition (as a result of increased parcel volumes), the increase in non-union gig and independent contractor jobs in the sector, and the detrimental impacts both of those trends are having on legacy postal systems. Increased competition from private companies that pay low wages has almost universally hurt the financial condition of post offices around the world, and post offices are reacting by reducing service and cutting jobs.

Significant changes to universal service have recently occurred in specific countries such as Denmark, which ended letter mail delivery last year, and Canada, which has begun the process of ending door delivery (see the November 2025 issue of *The Postal Record* for more). But these changes are far more widespread, touching countries all over the world. Perhaps the most telling example is the fact that the European Commission has committed to reforming the regulations surrounding postal and delivery services across the European Union (EU).

While the contents of the EU reform are not yet certain, the Commission's goals include "modernising universal service" and "promoting fair competition," which are often codewords for supporting private industry's interests. The Commission has completed both a research period and a public consultation period and has identified

three policy options that are under consideration. The options range from maintaining the status quo, which has allowed significant unregulated private competition and poor working conditions into the sector, to comprehensive reform, which would require both public and private delivery companies to contribute to maintaining the cost of universal service and require collective-bargaining coverage for all delivery workers.

As you might expect, European postal unions and UNI strongly support comprehensive reform, while private companies across the continent are pushing to keep the sector as unregulated as possible. In organizing its campaign and building support for comprehensive reform, UNI developed a list of workers demands with the aid of European postal unions. The demands include:

1. Expanding the EU's universal service obligation to include parcels;
2. Implementing a sectoral solidarity financing model, where every delivery company benefiting from the increase in parcel volumes must contribute to the cost of providing universal service, to prevent private companies from cherry-picking profitable deliveries for themselves and leaving unprofitable deliveries to public post offices;
3. Requiring collective-bargaining rights for all delivery workers, no matter if they are directly employed or independent contractors;
4. Controlling which private companies can enter the sector by implementing a licensing system with requirements for minimum labor standards and;
5. Applying the same labor and pricing regulations to all delivery companies, not just the public post offices.

UNI has allied with the European Trade Union Confederation and other labor and community groups to lobby the European Commission to implement these demands and "Save Our Post." The Commission expects to adopt a new EU Delivery Act at the end of this year. With the help of UNI, NALC will monitor what is included in this reform and any impact these reforms have on workers.

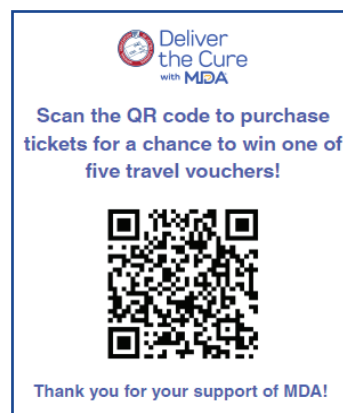
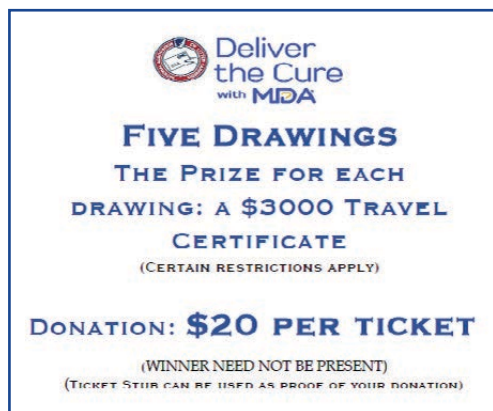
In an uncanny coincidence, the UNI meetings overlapped with Amazon's announcement that it is launching Amazon Supply Chain Services, which allows any shipper to use Amazon's delivery network regardless of whether they sell on Amazon's marketplace. Industry experts expect that

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MDA raffle tickets

As NALC members know, the national convention is right around the corner. NALC will sell raffle tickets for MDA at the national convention, but you can get them beforehand. The tickets are \$20 each and there will be five drawings.

NALCConvention26, and the QR code is below. Thank you in advance! See you at the convention.



Each winner will win a \$3,000 travel voucher. Here is the link for electronic sales: mda.donordrive.com/

Also, if there are any events you want NALC to promote or for MDA Coordinator Christina Vela Davidson to attend, send a letter or an email. Have questions or need assistance? Contact the MDA service team member at nalc@mداusa.org or 719-640-8625.

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serial process they are not equipped to deal with.

Because of the new mandatory requirement for SECOPs in cases involving degenerative conditions, it is in the interest of injured letter carriers filing such claims to seek out a board-certified orthopedic surgeon for their attending physician

right at the beginning of the claims process. (The April, May, June and July 2024 issues of *The Postal Record* discuss the medical evidence required to respond to adverse SECOPs.

Next month's column will continue the discussion of the changes to the FECA Procedure Manual that FECA Transmittal 26-2 has created.

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this will substantially increase Amazon's already large presence in the delivery market. In just 12 years, Amazon has built a massive delivery network that directly competes with the Postal Service, benefitting from a largely unregulated delivery market in the United States that allows it to cherry-pick where it delivers and to use employment structures that evade attempts at unionization of its delivery drivers. Amazon Supply Chain Services further threatens the Postal Service's already precarious financial position.

It is clear that reductions in universal service are becoming more appealing to post offices and governments

as a way to address financial crises, and this includes our own. Postmaster General Steiner said recently during a USPS Board of Governors meeting that the agency intends to consider pursuing legislative reform to "remove the mandates that ensure the Postal Service loses money... [like] days and levels of service, the ability to close unprofitable post offices."

UNI's worker demands call into question the message that the expense of universal service is the cause of financial crisis, or at least the sole cause. As this debate heats up in the United States, the country will need to consider what kind of Postal Service it wants. NALC, like UNI, can help shape this debate.