

## **Bill C- 509 and the Library Book Rate – Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the Library Book Rate?**

The Library Book Rate is a highly discounted postal rate offered by Canada Post. This discounted rate has existed since 1939. It is used by libraries to reduce the cost of offering inter-library loans and helps to provide equal access to printed library books for all Canadian readers regardless of their location whether they live in a rural, remote or urban area of Canada.

### **What is the purpose of the Bill?**

This Bill seeks to enshrine not only the Library Book Rate in the Canada Post Corporation Act (it has hitherto been approved year-by-year), but it also seeks to enshrine a wider definition of library materials including new media materials beyond books.

### **How many libraries does it help?**

Over 2000 libraries actively use the Library Book Rate and an estimated one million Canadians benefit from it annually. Approximately 65% of volumes mailed under the Library Book Rate are destined for libraries and library users in small towns, rural locations and remote communities, thereby allowing these users to access the collections held in libraries across the country.

### **How many books are shipped?**

In 2009, Canada Post handled 713000 shipments of books under the Library Book rate  
(Source: Canada Post 2009 Annual Report)

Each shipment may include more than one library book.

(Source: Canadian Library Association's submission to the Review Panel on the Canada Post Corporation)

### **How many products can we expect to ship with the changes?**

Neither Canada Post nor the Canadian Library Association was able to estimate how many products might be shipped if the Library Book Rate was expanded, as Bill C-509 proposes, to include materials such as audio and video cassettes, CDs and DVDs.

### **How much has it cost in the past?**

Canada Post reported that if it charged commercial rates rather than the reduced Library Book Rate in 2009, it would have earned an estimated \$6 million more than the \$772,000 it collected from libraries under the existing rate.

(Source: Canada Post 2009 Annual Report)