

# As Safe As Our Cargo

## The voices of workers and their families...

“When my husband started working for Brink’s all the crews had guards on board... there was a driver and there was two armed personnel exiting the vehicle. A few years after the company started clawing back on the guards my husband and I decided that he would drive, even if it meant working weekends and a cut in pay. We couldn’t afford the cut, but it meant my husband would be locked in the truck safely, not going into stores or banks without a partner with him.

After 26 years I still worry for my husband’s safety and I always will... with all the changes that these companies are doing, or are looking to do, it seems that security and the safety of the employees is being overlooked.”

**Monique Desjardins, Ottawa**

“... As we prepared to take the receipts... to a waiting armoured car we were gunned down at point blank range and disarmed. My partner was shot in the chest... he was unable to return to this type of work after the incident. The bullet entered my right side... I was in intensive care for ten days, and hospitalized for twenty-eight. It took me ten months to recover” **Bruce McKay, Ottawa**

“I was physically assaulted during a robbery attempt, while performing my duties as an armed messenger on a two-person crew consisting of myself and my driver. My driver had become distracted and failed to warn me of a man running towards me... he tried to steal my carry bag. When the assailant fled I asked my driver to radio dispatch and report the robbery attempt. She had no idea what I was talking about. That’s how fast these incidents can happen.

If my assailant had been armed... I would have likely been seriously injured, possibly killed or forced to use deadly force to protect myself. That incident happened fifteen years ago, but still haunts me to this day. I firmly believe all armoured car crews should be mandated to consist of three people and any employee involved in a critical incident must be given counselling.” **Terry Lenaghan, Vancouver**

“My partner and I had to restrain a violent assailant, while our driver tried in vain to radio for help. No one answered the calls at our dispatch base and after calling 911 ourselves, waiting forty minutes for police to arrive. This situation would not have occurred in our company had a 24-hour dispatcher on hand. I understand why dispatch was done away with from a financial point of view, but this policy has led to crews being put in serious danger. On a number of occasions since this incident a driver had radioed dispatch with no response.” **Steve Armstrong, Alliston**



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