

Two New Signoffs Settle DBCS Staffing and Employee Orientation Disputes

08/24/2016 - APWU Industrial Relations Department Director, Tony D. McKinnon Sr. and the Postal Service signed two documents; one on August 23rd and the other on August 24th. These Step 4 Settlement Agreements address two long standing issues that have resulted in numerous grievances being filed nation-wide. Step 4 discussions on these disputes were conducted on several occasions, leading to the Settlement Agreements being reached during the timeframe that the APWU national convention was in session in Orlando, FL. Announcement of these two Step 4 Settlement Agreements was widely cheered by the delegates in attendance at the convention.

Re: Q10C-4Q-C 16130532 – APWU #HQTG20160085 – DBCS Staffing

With the assistance of Assistant Clerk Craft Director (B), Lynn Pallas-Barber, Tony D. McKinnon, Sr., Industrial Relations Director and the Postal Service reached agreement on the primary issue of whether the current Delivery Bar Code Sorter System (DBCS) staffing of two (2) clerks per machine will be a minimum requirement, to address certain safety and ergonomic issues as addressed by the APWU.

- The Settlement Agreement is bolstered by specific references to safety, as outlined in Article 14, Section 1 and the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM), as Section 891.
- In addition, the Settlement Agreement puts to rest management's arguments that the 2012 JCIM, Article 37, page 76, OCR-BCS-DBCS STAFFING, Questions & Answers, recognized "Normal" staffing for the OCR, BCS and/or DBCS to be two (2) Mail Processing Clerks, but allowed them to schedule only one (1) Mail Processing Clerk during certain exceptions; e.g., when the machines were at the start of the run, during close out, or because of limited volume for that sort program. In clear and unambiguous language, the Settlement Agreement states: "***The exceptions described in the JCIM Q&As must not be considered an alternative to the scheduling of 2 Mail Processing Clerks on the DBCS. During the periods described in the JCIM Q&As, the parties further agree the second Mail Processing Clerk may perform allied duties as assigned in the OCR-BCS-DBCS area***".
- The Settlement Agreement also establishes a special meeting of the Safety & Health Committee at the national level, which is scheduled to meet within ninety (90) days after the signing of this agreement (on or before November 24, 2016) to discuss the

establishment of a task force to investigate and address safety issues specific to the DBCS.

Industrial Relations Director, Tony McKinnon, requests that locals continually monitor management's compliance with this Settlement Agreement and send reports of non-compliance directly to his office so they may be communicated with management at the national level for quick resolutions.

Re: Q10C-4Q-C 16130411/HQTC20160081 - Orientations

In a second Step 4 Settlement Agreement the parties agreed to the ongoing disputes concerning the employer's obligation to provide union representatives an opportunity to address employees during orientation. This was particularly a cause of concern when current USPS employees were excessed into or transferred into a position represented by the APWU, or when PSEs were re-employed following their 360-day threshold, as well as when PSEs were converted to career status (thereby qualifying for FEHB benefits).

As a result of this Settlement Agreement the parties agree that, in accordance with Article 17, Section 6, management shall provide Union representative ample opportunity to address new employees under the following circumstances:

- New career or non-career employees
- Current postal employees that are reassigned to an APWU bargaining unit
- At the time any non-career employees become eligible for either the Postal Service Non-Career Health Care Plan (USPS Plan) or FEHB.

Previously managers weren't living up to their obligation to provide orientation in these circumstances