

COLORADO



LOCAL 321

## NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

Division of the Laborer's International Union of North America,  
AFL-CIO

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### ~ ~ FOR YOUR INFORMATION ~ ~

April 09, 2008

#### More Changes Are Coming For the Denver Mail Processing Annex Crews

The state of our economy is driving mail volume down and management is reacting to this with drastic changes at the Mail Processing Annex. Let me make it clear, the Union does not support these drastic reductions in Tour 2 staffing. We are doing everything possible to preserve our T-2 presence. We have no choice but to react to management's proposals. It is up to the Union to mitigate these changes where possible, and keep the membership updated with as much information as possible. We will do whatever we can to minimize the negative impact of management's actions. Please permit me to update you with the latest information.

A few weeks ago, management removed operations 112 and 125 mail from T-2/MPA. Some of this work went to the BMC; some of it went to the APPS. While it is true that mail handler craft did not lose work, moving it was not without negative impact to the Tour 2 MPA crews. In addition, management plans an early morning maintenance window for the APPS machines. In response to these changes and reductions in drop shipments, management is proposing to excess and abolish all mail handlers in the T-2 SPBS/APPS section.

*Article 12.2D7*

*Abolishment is defined as a management decision to reduce the number of occupied duty assignment(s) in an established section and/or installation.*

This looks to impact 14 mail handlers. Management is also proposing the elimination of the AAA Tour 2 Section. If this happens, this will impact 2 mail handlers. By contract, this process is governed by 12.6C4 which reads:

*Article 12.6C4*

*Reassignment within an Installation of Employees Excess to the Needs of a Section.*

*C4a The identification of assignments comprising for this purpose a section shall be determined locally by local negotiations. If no sections are established by local negotiations, the entire installation shall comprise the section.*

*C4b Full-time employees, excess to the needs of a section, starting with that employee who is junior in the same craft or occupational group and in the same level assigned in that section, shall be reassigned outside the section but within the same craft or occupational group. They shall retain their seniority and may bid on any existing vacancies for which they are eligible to bid. If they do not bid, they may be assigned any vacant duty assignment for which there was no senior bidder in the same craft and installation. Their preference is to be considered if more than one such assignment is available.*

Finally, you should know that management is reviewing the T-2 tow/forklift/dock section at the MPA for possible reductions. If all 14 SPBS/APPS mail handlers and

both AAA mail handlers are excessed and abolished, the question is.... How many powered equipment operator positions will management retain? The answer to this question depends on who you ask. The Union is vehemently arguing for a significant T-2 powered equipment operator presence, while senior managers are arguing for aggressive reductions.

If management does reduce the number of occupied duty assignments in the Docks/Tow section, the junior employees are excessed by level as governed by 12.6C4. Article 12.6C4d explains the reassignment procedures for any remaining mail handlers in the section.

*C4d When full-time duty assignment(s) in the same craft or occupational group and the same level in the section are to be abolished and the junior employee(s) from the Section are to be reassigned, the following shall apply:*

*C4d1 The appropriate duty assignment(s) shall be identified and abolished.*

*C4d2 The junior full-time employee(s) excess to the needs of the section shall be identified and reassigned.*

*C4d3 The duty assignment(s) encumbered by the employee(s) junior to the senior employee whose duty assignment is abolished will be offered, in seniority order, and in an expedited selection process, to the employee(s) remaining in the section beginning with the senior employee whose duty assignment was abolished. An employee(s) declining to make a selection when canvassed shall be assigned to the duty assignment(s) remaining in the section after the expedited selection process has been completed.*

*C4d4 The results of the above-listed actions shall be effective at the beginning of the succeeding pay period*

The Union maintains that the trucks will still be coming and going, despite the fact that the SPBS/APPS machines are not starting up until noon. We need a dock/platform presence so the mail handlers can safely

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load, unload, transport and stage this mail and equipment. We are doing everything possible to minimize

the reduction in the MPA T-2 dock/tow section. There will be additional meetings with management to further argue these numbers in the near future.

#### Tour 3 Mail Processing Annex

Management also proposed to move the T-3 SBPS/APPS start times to 1900. After heated debate, this idea was shelved. It is possible that the T-3 APPS/SBPS start times will be shifted by something less than 1 hour, but this has not been determined yet. Management did commit to establishing more T-3 priority bids and APPS group leader positions at the MPA.

I understand that we are in difficult times, and senior mail handlers may lose their 7AM start times. I would ask you to consider the alternative. If there were no Union to

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enforce your negotiated rights, everyone would get 1 day notice of a shift change, and you might otherwise be sent to a different installation in another city.

Without a Union, this could alternatively be a reduction in hours or a lay-off. As it is, the Union is fighting to mitigate these changes. We will do everything possible to minimize the harmful impact, but certain provisions of the contract do cut both ways. When all is said and done, you will still have a job. Some changes cannot be prevented.

### Retreat Rights

After extended deliberations with management, the Union was able to preserve retreat rights for all mail handlers that are excessed and abolished from T-2 at the MPA. Retreat rights are linked to abolishment and one's involuntary reassignments from their section. Management is proposing to reduce the number of AAA, APPS/SPBS, and Tow/Dock section positions on Tour 2 at the MPA. If you are abolished, you have retreat rights to your section. Article 12.6C4c governs these retreat rights. It reads:

*C4c Such reassigned full-time employee retains the right to retreat to the section from which withdrawn only upon the occurrence of the first residual vacancy in the salary level after employees in the section have completed bidding. Such bidding in the section is limited to employees in the same salary level as the vacancy. Failure to bid for the first available vacancy will end such retreat right. The right to retreat to the section is optional with the employee who has retreat rights with respect to a vacancy in a lower salary level. Failure to exercise the option does not terminate the retreat rights in the salary level in which the employee was reassigned away from the section.*

Retreat rights are afforded to those mail handlers that are actually excessed. If you voluntarily bid before being excessed, you will not have retreat rights.

The Union will ensure that these changes come with as much notice as possible, and we will monitor the situation after the change. We will enforce retreat rights for those excessed and abolished, and we will track hours to ensure that someone else is not performing duties that you previously performed before the changes. It is important to note that if management acts on these proposals, you will be afforded an opportunity to bid before becoming unassigned. We are negotiating for as much time as necessary.

These proposals are being shared with you to give you as much time as possible to react. I call them "proposals" because I would never attempt to predict what management will do. They could change their collective minds at the last minute and dump the plan, but realistically this is not expected.

As it stands now, the Postal Service is planning to change the report times of the T-2 APPS/SPBS section by more than 4 hours, in effect making them Tour 3 positions with Noon or 12:30 report times. They are also going to abolish the T-2 AAA section. The impact on the T-2 dock/Powered Equipment Operators section at the MPA is unknown, but reductions are likely. This is expected to occur within the next 1-2 months. Please know that you have an experienced group of Union leaders working to protect your rights during these trying times. Additional details will be posted as they become available.

### Management Reinstates Centralized Time Card Control in the Denver P&DC

If you know the name *Sam Ruden* then you have seen it before; he was the last Plant Manager to attempt rigid Centralized Time Card control. Once again, management notified the Union on April 3, 2008 of their decision to re-implement centralized timecard control measures. You will soon be hearing about this new plan in stand-up talks. The last time this brilliant idea was floated, employees were forced to pick their time cards up in location A, and travel to location B to punch in. This resulted in suffered work, worthy of compensation. This was resolved by way of a pre-arbitration settlement. This time, you will have immediate access to time clocks at each timecard rack location.

Management will be assigning you to 1 of 5 timecard rack locations (that will be closest to your work area). Your card will be stored and secured there, and made available to you 5 minutes before your start time. Basically management is implementing tighter control of timecards in order to avoid clock-ring errors resulting from unauthorized overtime or leave (in the form of time deviations greater than .08 units). Lesser deviations are covered by the *5 minute leeway* rule.

Management claims that they are implementing this control to reduce costly administrative burdens resulting from daily clock deviations greater than .08 units. The Union believes these strict changes will only make things worse. This process will require that a supervisor be present at, and unlock each of the 5 time card racks 10 minutes (5 before & 5 after) for every single BT (begin tour) time of the day. This might make sense if the P&DC had only a few start times like the BMC, but that is not the case. The staggered report times will require a supervisor's presence at these racks at all hours throughout the entire day. What does this mean for the craft?

Management is expecting you to be at *your* timecard rack at your BT time to secure your card and punch in. If the rack is not open, you will not have access to your card and you will not be able to get on the clock. Managers will grow tired of locking and unlocking the timecard racks, and eventually they will either just leave the racks open, or will not show up at all. If you arrive prepared to punch in and the timecard rack is locked, please request and submit a PS Form 1260 to your supervisor. This form will get your BT manually entered.

**Do not punch in late because a supervisor was not present to unlock the timecard rack. After this new process is implemented, if you are denied timely access to your timecard, please request to see a Union steward. We will secure a statement and a grievance will be filed.**

These procedures do not change your right to be on the clock when completing a 3971. So if you return from leave and your timecard is not available, submit a 1260 to your supervisor. This will force your supervisor to manually input your BT. If your timecard disappears during the course of the day; submit your clock ring(s) to your supervisor on a 1260. These manual entries are the administrative burdens that management claims to be avoiding.

In Unity,

*Mike*

Michael J Hora  
President,  
NPMHU Local 321