

COLORADO



LOCAL 321

## NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

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

1833 WEST ELK PLACE - DENVER, COLORADO 80211

Office 1-303-455-6400 Fax 1-303-455-5810 Watts 1-800-521-5094 TDD 1-303-455-6400



### ~~FOR YOUR INFORMATION~~

*March 1, 2007*

#### Mail Handler Hiring

The writing is on the wall; the Postal Service cannot reduce Colorado's excessive overtime levels without hiring. There is a long list of excuses, and they have all expired. Let's see: there was *the fall mailing season, the election, the pre-holiday push, and the actual holiday rush*; then there is the *post-holiday/New Years flats increase* or the *pre-rate increase crunch*. And let us not forget the excessive use of mail handlers as 204Bs or our four consecutive Friday winter storms, 3 of which fell on *holiday weekends*.

The Mail Handler Union applied endless pressure on management challenging cross-craft violations, casual cap issues and casuals used in lieu of career mail handlers, this while management tried to defend their ongoing performance our work. Colorado's delivery and performance scores are in the tank. All said - this is a recipe for disaster. The solution:

**HIRE SUFFICIENT CAREER MAIL HANDLERS TO MOVE THE MAIL.**

The USPS has approved a hiring package that should provide some relief to much of the state. Please join me in thanking every Mail Handler Union steward for their diligence and hard work. Without them and your written statements, we would not be able to apply the necessary pressures to encourage career hiring. Management has notified the Union that they will be hiring 51 part-time regulars (PTRs) as shown below very soon.

Colorado Springs P&DC	Denver BMC	Denver P&DC
<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>30</b>

These part-time regular mail handlers will be hired with specific hours of duty, consisting of less than eight (8) hours in a service day and less than forty (40) hours in a service week and zero overtime. If you are currently a PTF or FTR and this reduced schedule appeals to you, by contract management must entertain transfer requests between part-time and fulltime rosters. This option may appeal to our mail handlers who are approaching retirement and do not want the overtime.

**If you are interested in transferring to the ranks of a part-time regular, you should provide written notice to Char Ehrensft in the District Human resources office indicating your desire to transfer from a FTR or PTF schedule to that of a PTR. If you are interested, you should act promptly!**

You will be permitted one opportunity to decline an offer. If you decline a second offer, no further consideration will be given to your request during the life of the contract.

Employees converting to a part-time regular schedule or to a part-time flexible schedule will begin a new period of seniority. There are other pros and cons that will be explored in greater detail in our next Union newsletter.

#### Local 321 Scholarship Program

CORRECTION NOTICE: Original edition scholarship packets were printed with the wrong year in

two places. New packets have been printed and distributed. If used, the old packets will be accepted. The deadline for submission is April 16, 2007.

#### Retroactive Wage Increases

The first negotiated 1.2% wage increase is retroactively effective on November 25, 2006. This wage increase was implemented during PP04-2007 and was received in paychecks issued on February 23, 2007. The retroactive portion of this 1.2% increase (from PP25-2006 thru PP03-2007) will be paid in PP12-2007, in paychecks to be issued on June 15, 2007.

The new Step P on the wage scales also is retroactively effective on November 25, 2006. For those Mail Handlers who have satisfied the 24 week in Step O requirement, this new Step P will be implemented and reflected in PP12-2007, in paychecks to be issued on June 15, 2007. Retroactive amounts related to the new Step P also will be reflected in those paychecks for PP12-2007.

The shorter waiting periods in Steps A and B (to be advanced to Steps B and C, respectively) are retroactively effective on November 25, 2006. These adjustments in pay also should be reflected in paychecks for PP12-2007.

#### BMC ERRP

I am pleased to report that the Denver BMC mail handlers have agreed to reenter the Ergonomic Risk Reduction Process (ERRP). We have worked through some problems, and we are confident that management has done the same. The Denver BMC Plant Manager invited the Mail Handlers Union to reconsider our involvement in the Denver BMC ERRP venture. We accepted the invitation and we look forward to a positive and productive role in Denver's BMC ERRP partnership.

BMC Branch President Mark Lofthouse is in the process of selecting applicants and he will be posting the new ERRP teams very shortly.

In addition, Chris Jarisch has been appointed as the new BMC safety representative for the mail handler Union. I would like to thank everyone that expressed an interest in the open positions.

#### Anti-Fatigue Anti-Static Mats on AFSMs

These have been numerous complaints regarding electrostatic discharge received by the AFSM/AI operators from the Prep Station Induct photocell when inducting full Automated Compatible Trays (ACT) into the AI system. The Union has championed these concerns at many levels. As a remedy, maintenance has directed the immediate replacement of the AFSM-AI Prep Station anti-fatigue mats with anti-static/anti-fatigue mats. The new anti-static/anti-fatigue mats have been tested in the field and have proven to dissipate the electrostatic discharge. They will be installed very soon.

#### National Reassessment Process

As previously stated, the USPS is conducting a comprehensive nationwide review of all light and limited duty employees. Management is re-evaluating limited duty and rehabilitation positions assigned to

injured workers. Many letters have gone out over the past week. Generally speaking, management is soliciting updated medical information to ensure limited duty employees are in proper modified/rehabilitation positions. Management is also working to confirm that employees are actually performing duties in their job offers.

If you receive a letter and you have questions or concerns, you should raise these with your immediate supervisor. Medical questions can be addressed to USPS Nurse Jo Walker at 303-853-6409 and administrative questions should go to Adriann Taylor at 303-853-6140. In addition, if you feel the letter is inappropriate, contact a Union representative for assistance.

The Union is monitoring these changes and developments. This reassessment review may pass with little or no impact to the craft, but only time will tell. If you hold a modified rehab position, DO NOT IGNORE THE LETTER. Please keep the Union informed of any adverse changes or developments in your accommodations or job offer. Each situation will be different; adverse actions will require individual grievances on a case-by-case determination.

### **Blizzard Settlement**

On December 20, 2006 the state was hit with the second worst blizzard in recorded history. Management suspended operations for 3 shifts. The magnitude of the storm varied across the state; other settlements will vary. For the most part the Union argued that the Act of God went beyond the 3 shifts that have already been paid.

The Union has reached a settlement in the Denver P&DC and Denver BMC that will make those affected whole for time lost on Tour 3 for December 21, 2006; on Tour 1 for December 21, 2006 (time card day December 22, 2006); and Tour 2 for December 22, 2006. Mail Handlers will have their annual leave re-credited if they requested and were paid annual or they will be paid administrative leave if they requested LWOP not to exceed eight (8) hours. As part of this settlement the Union has agreed to withdraw Denver's Act of God grievance(s) for the second lesser storm of December 29, 2006. Finally, management has agreed not to cite or reference absences in discipline that occurred from December 20, 2006 thru January 1, 2007 (inclusive).

### **Denver P&DC Casual Settlement**

***All Denver P&DC PTFs to be Converted to Full-Time Regular by April 14, 2007***

The Union has reached settlement with management on two casual related grievances in the Denver P&DC. In settlement, management has agreed to a monetary payment of \$30,000. This settlement will be equally distributed to each Denver P&DC mail handler on the January 2007 seniority roster.

In addition, the Union has successfully negotiated the conversion of every part-time flexible mail handler in the Denver P&DC. We currently have 44 PTFs in the Denver P&DC. Half will be converted to full-time regular on March 17, 2007 and the remaining half will be converted on April 14, 2007. This is another clear example of your Union working for the betterment of the craft. Please join me in thanking your representatives for their work and dedication.

### **AMC Closure**

The Union will soon be notified of the agencies' decision to close the Denver Air Mail Center and subcontract related work. Management has advised us locally that the *official* notification is forthcoming. By contract, management is required to notify the Union of

sub-contracting decisions at the National level (Article 32.1). This decision to "close the facility" sounds clean and unambiguous. In reality, management is subcontracting our work to another company. The USPS is giving the mail handler duties of tender & receipt, simple-sort, containerization, transportation, and the loading/unloading of trucks to Matheson/THS. The Union is fighting these actions.

We have been informed that management intends to lease the AMC property to Terminal Handling Services (THS). THS currently performs ground handling duties required by FedEx. Management intends to remove craft employees from the AMC by Memorial Day; there will be a brief period of construction and THS will occupy the AMC in August of 2007.

This issue of sub-contracting Air Mail Centers is being challenged at the national level. It is affecting mail handlers in major air transport locations across the country. Unfortunately our challenge to this process is painstakingly slow. There is nothing that can be done to immediately stop this closure. We will undoubtedly challenge it in Washington D.C., but a decision will not come for years.

In the meantime local management must figure out what to do with the AMC mail handlers. The AAA system and much of the AMC work is being moved to the MPA. It seems likely that the mail handlers will be afforded an opportunity to also move to the MPA, but the details of this transition have not yet been worked out. As soon as the NPMHU receives official notification, we will meet with management to discuss the movement of AMC mail handlers. We will post regular and current information as this situation develops. Please watch the boards.

### **High Mar**

As you may have learned from local media reports, Boulder's High Mar station will be closed while asbestos is removed from the facility. Management initially contracted this asbestos removal to occur within isolated areas while the facility remained open, but air monitors recorded higher than acceptable levels of asbestos prompting the decision to temporarily close the facility. All mail and personal items have been removed from the facility and operations have been moved to Boulder's National Institute of Technology.

The clean-up is expected to take 2-3 months. Management intends to remove and replace all ceiling tiles, floor tiles, carpet; the HVAC system, all duct-work and the lighting will be replaced. The USPS has leased the building thru 2112 with an option for additional 5 years. The USPS has told the Union that they every intention of returning to the High Mar facility.

A handful of mail handlers have had the occasion to work in High Mar and have been afforded the opportunity to participate in testing to establish and document a current medical baseline. These test results are necessary to document and prove any future adverse affect of the exposure which can take 15 years or more to manifest. The Union is encouraging all affected employees to participate in this medical evaluation. After you complete the evaluation, request a copy of the results and store them in a safe place. Management is establishing records storage procedures to ensure these test results are stored LONG-TERM, but I'd encourage you to keep your own copy just in case.

In Unity, *Mike*  
Michael J Hora  
President,  
NPMHU Local 321