

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

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~ ~ FOR YOUR INFORMATION ~ ~

October 10, 2008

More Changes and Reductions on the Horizon for the Denver P&DC Employees

Brace yourself; we are in store for more changes in the near future. The impact on the Mail Handler craft will affect T-2 manual/030, patching, and flat operations. We are not alone in this battle. The clerks were hit very hard with even more severe reductions and this trend is not unique to the Denver metro area. These reductions are occurring nationwide. This is coupled with the requirement to equally reduce Sunday workhours. In 2009, all remaining Tour 2 positions must be approved by Area level officials.

Specifically on Tour 2:

- Both 030 mail handlers will be abolished and excessed, most likely to Tour 1.
- The FSM1000 will not be utilized on Tour 2. Our lone Mail Handlers assigned to the FSM1000s will continue to work in the flat section as this action will not change his duties by more than 50%.
- (MPA) SPBS operations will cease on Tour 2. All affected mail handlers will be absorbed and utilized on the APPS. SPBS mail handlers will not be excessed because they are not losing their section assignment and their duties will not change by more than 50%.
- Tour 2 patching reductions will occur on a case-by-case basis. All affected employees will receive new job offers consistent with their individual medical limitations. The Union will respond to each job offer individually.

Tour 2 Flat Operations

The good news is that no mail handlers were excessed, the bad news is that everyone's start times will change. Management advised the Union that the flat section will have two start times, 0400 and 1015. No one's days off were changed and this adjustment in start times amounts to less than 4 hours, therefore by contract, all affected mail handlers are permitted to accept the permanent changes to their schedule in they desire.

This is much better than management's initial plan to move all flat operations start times to 11AM or noon. It is also better than their secondary option of changing scheduled days off or an all out reduction in the size of the unit. In those scenarios, the affected bids must be reposted for installation wide bidding and reductions would trigger in section bidding with abolishments and excessing to Tour 1. I know everyone is not pleased, but it could have been much

worse. More changes tied to the FSS machines are imminent.

Changes at the MPA on the Drawing Board

The burdens of the Postal Service's large manual priority operation at the MPA are taking their toll on the bottom line. Senior Managers have advised the Unions that they are considering 2 options at the MPA:

1. The first and preferred plan is to acquire a second APPS machine for the MPA.
2. The second option is to move MPA operations to the BMC.

It is too early to speculate about the impact of these options on the mail handler craft. Additional details will be posted and shared as soon as they become available.

Automatic Pallet Un-Loader & De-Sleever

In the coming weeks/months, operation 030 will be relocated in the Denver GMF and a new automatic pallet unloading and de-sleever machine will be installed. We are told that eventually this will permit automated unloading and de-sleeving of letter trays to the LTS and CTS operations from the same location (where 030 is currently located). The tray lines will be installed and incorporated into the existing system.

The Union is considering the ramifications of these GMF sections as they relate to our LMOU. Currently, the LTS and CTS are 2 separate sections. Management claims that this system will combine that work, promising more changes. The Union will do everything possible to minimize the impact of these machines.

Flat Preperation Injuries & ERRP

Due to the disproportionately high number of musculoskeletal injuries associated with flat prep duties on the AFSM100s, the Union has requested a site visit from OSHA's ergonomist. I have asked OSHA's ergonomist to review the flat prep stations on the AFSM100 to make recommendations. Specifically, the Union questions *what is the maximum length of time one should be required to perform flat prep duties before rotating to other tasks?*

The Ergonomic Risk Reduction Process (ERRP) Team in the Denver P&DC wants more rotation with shorter durations on the flat prep work stations, and senior Postal managers maintain that the current rotation methodology is sufficient.

In addition to the Union's call to OSHA, the National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH) has been contacted. It looks like OSHA will

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defer the request to NIOSH officials. Additional information will be posted as it becomes available.

Please remember that it is your responsibility to report job related injuries immediately. The way you report and categorize your injury will affect how your recovery is managed. When injured, you will be required to complete a CA-1 or a CA-2. Management may want to assist you, but this is YOUR CLAIM. It is also YOUR DECISION as to which form you use; so what is the difference? A CA-1 is used to report a traumatic injury; a CA-2 is used to report an occupational disease. It is imperative that you file the correct claim from the beginning.

(CA-1) A traumatic injury is a wound or other condition of the body caused by external force, including stress or strain. The injury must occur at a specific time and place, and it must affect a specific member or function of the body. The injury must be caused by a specific event or incident, or a series of events or incidents, within a single day or work shift.

(CA-2) An occupational disease or illness is a condition produced by the work environment over a period longer than one work day or shift. The condition may result from infection, repeated stress or strain, or repeated exposure to toxins, poisons, fumes or other continuing conditions of the work environment.

It has been reported to the Union that our AFSM100/flat prep mail handlers are being persuaded not to file CA-1s in situations of traumatic injuries. Employees are being told to simply submit a statement "noting the injury," but are not being provided with immediate medical care. When the injury persists and is again reported in the coming days, management then asserts that the injury occurred over a period of several days, and pushes the employee to file a CA-2. This is a problem.

The misrepresentation and/or inaccurate reporting of injuries in the AI/Flat Prep operation are largely responsible for the disagreement over proper rotation. If your job related injury occurs at a specific time and place, and affects a specific member or function of the body, when reporting your injury to your supervisor, demand to complete a CA-1. If you are ever told that you cannot have a CA-1 or you are forced to use a CA-2 against your wishes, contact a Union steward immediately. If you have questions about which form to complete, ask a Union official in advance.

Postal Layoffs

I have received many questions about the possibility of layoffs in the Postal Service. Rumors are running like wildfire. The Union does not anticipate layoffs in the mail handler craft and management has given the Union no indication that this is a consideration in Colorado. Management is still utilizing casuals to the tune of 3.6% in the state and our PTFs and PTRs have not experienced major reductions in their hours. Layoffs are an absolute last

resort. The Union is doing everything possible to forgo that possibility.

Generally speaking, upon the completion of six years of continuous service and having worked in at least 20 pay periods during each of the six years and/or each employee who is employed in the regular work force as of November 20, 2006 is protected against any involuntary layoff or force reduction during the term of the current National Agreement.

Station Review Update

In the last FYI publication, I reported that management was conducting a statewide review of all 70 mail handlers in our customer service operations. Since then they bailed out, trashed the results and started over. These reviews just resumed and are ongoing. Please do not let your guard down. Stay busy and do your job; assume someone is watching.

Colorado Springs

In the Colorado Springs GMF, management changed the report times of our 010 mail handlers to 1800, only to have someone else perform their duties on overtime. I am pleased to report that the start-times in question were returned to 1600 hours.

Thanks to all for writing statements and doing proper clock rings. This makes it possible to document and prove the grievance.

Voting Information/ Deadlines

Table with 2 columns: Date and Description of voting event.

Protect Your Job and Benefits

As members of the AFL-CIO Federal Caucus, representing Postal and Federal Union members, we have joined efforts with the Denver Metro APWU for a day of Politics and Eats. Stop by before or after work for a burrito and coffee or a brat and pop to discuss the upcoming Election and our future.

Event details box containing When, Where, Why, and a call to action: Our future depends on it!

In Unity, Mike

Michael J Hora
President,
NPMHU Local 321