

Postal Worker West

ISSUED BY

OMAR M. GONZALEZ

REGIONAL COORDINATOR

April 2018

Most Impacts Cancelled

PACIFIC/WESTERN AREAS– Many of the involuntary reassignments of employees (i.e., excessing) slated for May 2018 has been cancelled with only few impacts remaining open.

At press time the Union's Western Region Office has recently received notice of the cancellation of the Los Angeles, City of Industry, L.A. NDC, Santa Ana District and Medford OR excessing impacts. At press time the Regional Union is pursuing unconfirmed information that the Seattle impact has been modified. Seattle's move date has changed, it is now in August.

The Region is also pursuing the failure of management to comply with the provisions outlined in the CBA/JCIM to minimize the impact on FT Regulars in those few outstanding excessing events. "Even though most of the impacts in the west have been cancelled make no mistake that USPS HQ is **'not'** done with realigning the workforce", warned Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez. Locals should not let their guard down!

"With White House calls to better manage postal expenses, continued reports of Fiscal Year losses, and the added pressure of bad publicity and purported mail volume decline we should expect management to go to plan B or C or D etc....", said Gonzalez.



"Postal Service Will Not Realize Savings From Staff Realignments" - OIG Report

WASHINGTON DC– The mail processing facilities are not optimally staffed based on F1 Scheduler use and when not combined with the budget process the Postal Service will not realize savings from staff realignments, reveals a recent OIG report.

The OIG report concluded that the F1 Scheduler is a useful tool in staffing mail processing operations, but, management did not complete a VV&A (Verification, Validation and Accreditation) process to check if the F1 Scheduler was working as intended.

The VV&A process is a three fold documented process, which according to the report, management claimed they were not aware of the VV&A process.



The bosses are always up to something to "optimize operations". They now have automated OT scheduling, Function 1 Scheduler, which the OIG has reported on and is rolling out a daily scheduling application (see page 3)

VV&A process includes the following to ensure that F1 scheduler:

1. is executed (this is the verification)
2. operates as intended (this is the validation)
3. is acknowledged by a process owner as appropriate for its intended purpose, (this is the accreditation).

The OIG issued recommendations to management which included the establishment of nationwide criteria for using Function 1 Scheduler results; the inclusion of F1 Scheduler results in their annual budget process and the implementation of VV&A.

Bosses Reject Recommendations

So how does management respond? They disagreed with the monetary impact and in essence blamed the union contract bidding provisions. The bosses also disagreed on establishing nationwide criteria for using F1 scheduler results as that would be irresponsible and would not allow local management the ability to create "efficient operations." The big shots from Postal HQ even disagreed with the validation process and see no benefit in using the VV&A.

The OIG responded to management's "strong disagreements" stating among other things USPS is at risk of incurring higher OT rates and lower productivity; using SPLY baseline hours assures there are no inefficiencies in workhours, and by rejecting the use of VV&A management seemingly contradict themselves. The OIG declared the issues as unresolved. *Continued on page 2*

DON'T BLAME THE UNION, SUPPORT THE UNION-FIGHT BACK!

HANDLING THE MONSTER AT WORK

Just about every postal worker has come across a monster supervisor or manager. If you have not, count your blessings. No boss has the right to mistreat workers, harass them or bully them at the P.O..

Far too often employees try to ignore these evil creatures in the hope they will bypass them or just go away. While the Big Shots are anointing "safety ambassadors" they do very little to contain these invidious bullies that lurk on the workroom floors.

Postal regulations that prohibit the culture of bully management include:

Administrative Support Manual 273.132– *To assure postal safety...employees must report ANY disturbance or improper conduct on the part of individuals while on postal premises.*

Post Office Manual 124.51– *Disturbances: disorderly conduct, loud and unusually noisy conduct...or conduct that tends to impede or disturb public employees while working....is prohibited.*

Employee & Labor Relations Manual 811.23– *the guiding principles of the Postal Serviceare that employees are our most valued resources. Our employees **MUST** be provided a safe and healthful workplace.*

Employee & Labor Relations Manual 665.24– *The Postal Service is committed to the principle that ALL employees have a basic RIGHT to a SAFE and HUMANE working environment. In order to ensure this right, it is the UNEQUIVOCAL policy of the Postal Service that there **MUST BE NO TOLERANCE** of harassment, intimidation, threats or bullying by ANYONE at ANY level. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including removal...*

Both the ELM 811.24C and the Supervisor's Safety Handbook EL 801 contain the requirement that management, including the line supervisor maintain good employee relations and accept their responsibility for the safety and HEALTH of employees.

With such strong anti harassment rules why do the monsters still exist at work? Mostly because we tolerate them. One thing most monsters hate is LIGHT. We have to expose them and then depose them properly. It takes a village to destroy monsters. **We need to fight against these abusers.** We can use the torch of "safety" as one means of dealing with them



Report the misconduct on a PS-1767 citing Chap 6 and 8 of the ELM and describing the harassing and bullying. Follow through on the process. If not resolved on site by the end of the Tour file a grievance directly to Step 2 in accordance with Article 2, 14, 15 and 19 of the contract. Make sure the case is fully developed (who, what, when, where, why and how?) Meet no later than 7 days after Step 2 appeal is received. If not resolved at Step 2 appeal to the Joint Labor Management Committee. If the committee is not functional or fails to resolve the issue **appeal to arbitration (not Step 3). Ask the NBA to place the case on top of the docket. [In addition file an EEO complaint and write to your US Senator for help.]** As Case B10C-4B-C 15121183 reveals if everyone does what is right arbitrators can declare that management violates their responsibilities to respond to complaints of work place harassment and hostile work environments and find the supervisor(s) guilty. **Fight Together and Follow Through !**

Realignments and the OIG continued from page 1

Because the issues are not resolved the OIG declared they will remain open as they coordinate resolution with management.

What Does All This Mean to Employees?

Thousands of postal workers had their work and home lives disrupted with multiple realignment of their tours, coupled by abolishments and forced schedule changes. Most, if not all, these disruptions were as a result of local management's use of the Function 1 Scheduler.

The F1 Scheduler tool is supposed to use mail volume, transportation, sorting machine utilization, mail types and productivity to come up with what is supposed to be "optimal complement" of employees needed to be used so that productivity improves and OT is cut. Or so they claim. The Union has been trying to get full disclosure on the F1 Scheduler while the Mail Handler Union has filed charges with the Labor Board over such information not being provided by management.

"Look, adjustments to bids and schedules are nothing new to postal

workers, but the chaos caused to the lives of employees, their morale and subsequently to operations by the F1 Scheduler in the hands of local bosses following orders of data driven big shots can not be denied," said Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez.

"While the PMG claims that higher than expected mail volume loss dictates the need to match workhours to complement, this translates to massive schedule changes that make no sense, even the OIG and USPS are at odds," said the Coordinator. Postal workers can continue to expect their bosses to make "calculated guesses" at how to staff their operations with little or no concern to the impact on employees quality of work life.

"The Union will continue to fight violations of the contract bidding process as well as, the requirement to create jobs from all available work hours as opposed to so called "earned hours," said the Union's Regional Coordinator. (see page 4) Meanwhile the Union is preparing to negotiate a new contract in the face of alleged mail and revenue declines and a management determined to gut work hours and change conditions.

"We are going to need the full 100% SUPPORT of every single member if we are to prevail in this year's contract talks," declared Omar.

BEWARE THE I.V.E.S. OF MARCH

NO this isn't about basketball brackets, nor Roman history for that matter but, it is about possible madness.

In early March news, issued on the very last day of February, began to filter out that a new management "tool" was being rolled out to "help managers improve" employee scheduling. The Informed Visibility Employee Scheduler (IVES) is an online application that they claim will standardize scheduling throughout USPS. It is going to automate staffing and scheduling beginning with mail processing.

It is a management tool that is going to be used to 'create optimized, lean and accurate' schedules for employees. "Anytime bosses use the words 'optimize' or 'lean' it usually means cuts or downsizing. Another alphabet plan (see page 1)," warned Coordinator Omar Gonzalez.

Omar raised the issue at a meeting in DC. It was later revealed the National Union was notified at the end of December and told IVES will help create supposed timely posts of weekly and daily schedules based on leave, operational projections and scheduled OT. [More info to follow ???]



OIG And Maintenance Bosses At Odds Over Optimization Plan

In an effort to reduce operating expenses the USPS 5 Year Strategic Plan contains a maintenance optimization plan that is to upgrade, realign and standardize operations in all five postal areas.

In a recent audit report the OIG found that local managers at the audited facilities did not fully understand or were not aware of the optimization initiative, its goals and how to reach the savings. The OIG made three recommendations which management disagreed with claiming that HQ uses the term "maintenance optimization" while the field uses the term "MS-1" among other things. The bosses also claimed that they code assignments by assigned work in the MS-1 and the CBA and that employees are allowed to do work assigned in different Labor Distribution Codes based on work load and job qualifications. (Blame the union again)

The OIG rejected the bosses responses and repeated there was a need to communicate a plan to ensure supervisors monitor and correct employee operation LDC codes. The OIG did not close out their recommendations.

"While there is more to the findings the OIG got a taste of what maintenance employees face with managers. We will see who prevails," said Coordinator Omar Gonzalez.

GOING DOWN THE HATCH



Activists attentively participate in the California State Legislative Summits' presentations by (L-R) Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez; Phil Warlick, CA State Legislative Director; Mike Evans, CA State President and Judy Beard, National Political & Legislative Director.

With midterm elections looming and in accord with the union's stated objective to educate members and develop an intelligent and dignified membership to vote, work for the repeal of unjust laws and educate all members in the area of economic, political and social justice the California State Union conducted Legislative Summits at the Oakland Local and Southwest Coastal Local Union halls.

Under the Hatch Act members can: **VOTE**; Express their opinions on political subjects and candidates [but not while at work, in the post office, or in uniform] and take an active part in the political campaign of a partisan candidate [but not at work, in P.O., in uniform, or use official title, with no soliciting of campaign funds]. Under the law employees are permitted, and encouraged to endorse candidates, support electoral agendas, and maintain Political Action Committee's *on their own time*.

"What is important is to **not**: be on duty, use postal equipment like vehicles, in uniform, or use postal titles, when politically active," stressed Coordinator Omar Gonzalez. An employee cannot advocate the success or failure of a candidate for partisan political office at work!

Management Files Grievance Against the Union ??

WASHINGTON DC– In an effort to stop or stall the Union's success in fighting for clerical jobs and winning at all levels, USPS has filed an interpretative issue dispute.

The review is apparently a referral from Eastern Area regional arbitration. The April 9th "Interpretative Review" evolves from management's determination that there is a dispute over Article 37.3.A.1 and whether that provision limits management's right to determine if /when to create newly established full-time clerk craft career assignments or its right to full use of the negotiated percentage of Postal Support Employees.

"That is just their legalise way of saying- 'Help, we are getting out butts kicked' and taking a shot at getting away with violating our contract," said Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez.

The management generated dispute emanates from Article 15 Section 5.B.5 of the CBA which permits either party to refer a regular arbitration to the Headquarters level if either party believes there is an interpretative issue which may be of general application. Pursuant to Article 15 Section 5 D only cases involving interpretative issues under the contract are arbitrated at the National level.

WHAT THE FUSS IS ABOUT

Since embarking in the battle over the elimination of clerical jobs, the Union, fighting tooth and nail, has had a relatively high rate of success especially in the East. *"We are very proud of our collective efforts regarding 37.3.A.1, as our true team effort has prevented excessing, produced career conversions for many PSEs; conversion to FT for PTFs; protecting/preserved work; secured many newly created traditional desirable duty assignments; while reestablishing many improperly reverted and abolished duty assignments,"* said Northeast Region NBA Pete Coradi.

"The National Union is mobilizing and will soon release an updated version of MDAT (Union Scheduling tool) ; conduct nationwide telecoms with Regional Coordinators, NBAs and Locals and continue fighting", declared Coordinator Gonzalez. He applauds the efforts of the NBAs and recognized Western NBA Locke for a recent 37.3.A.1 arbitration win in Folsom, CA.

National Assistant Clerk Director Lamont Brooks stated "We have to keep Locals encouraged and continue the same fight with the same resolve. NBAs have to continue to meet at Step Three and write their Additions and Corrections" **Stay tuned.....**



The Postal Service has served notice it intends to revise the Supervisor's Safety Handbook EL 801 to allow for the dispensing of the anti-opioid medicine *Narcan*.

Us Postal employees are currently prohibited from dispensing medication without the supervision of a medical professional such as a doctor or a nurse.

The intent of the revisions to EL 801 Section 8-6.2 is to permit trained personnel to administer *Narcan* nasal spray to an employee suffering from an opioid overdose.

Management intends to deploy supplies of *Narcan* to all mail processing facilities and Level 24 and above post offices nationwide. The National Union met in early April with USPS to discuss the issue and the training course. At press time there was no deployment date as to when the training course would be made available and for that matter who would select employees and when.

The issue is a critical one for the Union as there is a concern over the amount of drugs being transported through the mail system.

The National Union's Safety Representatives Clerk Asst. Director Lynn Pallas-Barber; MVS Asst. Director Javier Pineres and Terry Martinez Maint Asst. Director, have been meeting with postal officials. Much more information is needed and will be made available upon final determination.

"The opioid crisis is a major concern to everyone in this country and I am confident our National Craft Safety Officers will stay on top of USPS efforts to be ready in case of a work floor emergency,. I just hope we don't have to fight management over the manner in which they implement the effort," said Coordinator Omar Gonzalez.

Currently authorized First Aid Kits must include:

a) band aids; b) disposable gloves, c) gauze pads of various sizes, sterile and nonsterile, d) adhesive tape, 1 inch and 2 inches wide, e) Ammonia inhalants, f) CPR mask (micro shield), g) Antiseptic ointment, h) eye pads, i) arm sling. j) non adherent dressing (adaptic), k) eye irrigation solution, l) individually wrapped alcohol wipes, m) individually wrapped Betadine wipes, n) logbook.

[please see EL 801 8-6.2 for reference]