



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS

NAPS/USPS Consultative Meeting Agenda

October 21, 2013 @ NAPS HQ

In conjunction with 2013 Fall Executive Board Meeting

USPS Representatives

Bruce Nicholson, Labor Relations
John Cavallo, Labor Relations
Debbie Judy, Customer Care Centers
Jenny Utterback, Organizational Effectiveness
David Colon, Training Development, Team Lead

NAPS Representatives

Resident Officers
Executive Board Members

Agenda

Item 1

On April 25, 2012, USPS COO Megan Brennan issued instructions to the field as a response to NAPS' concerns that the Postal Service was scheduling Exempt EAS employees excessively both on their regularly scheduled days and their non-scheduled days.

It is our understanding that the practice of requiring Exempt EAS employees to work outside of their regular schedule and on their non-scheduled days is not only continuing, but the instances of excessive work scheduling is increasing well above 8/40. Can the Postal Service take further steps to inform the field that excessive scheduling of exempt employees is not appropriate and violates the letter issued by Megan Brennan?

USPS Response: Regulations state that an exempt EAS employee may be required to work longer than 40 hours in a week. Ms. Brennan recognizes that this is practical and reasonable. The conflict is case by case in the field. USPS will not state exempt EAS will only work 8 hours a day /40 hours a week. Work schedules must be reasonable for exempt EAS and needs to be addressed in the field where the issue is occurring.

NAPS: There are instructions in the field that Managers must stay until the carriers are all back, when the mail arrives late. There are instructions to managers to work 6-days a week until their unit's scans are above the goal. Is the USPS changing the conditions of a person's employment when a USPS manager mandates the working of 60 hours a week for Exempt EAS?

USPS Response: FLSA does not apply to exempt when it addresses a person's condition of employment. EAS postings are not the same as bargaining unit bids. If a person is FLSA exempt that does not mean they cannot be required to work more hours than 40 in a week. However, it should not be abused.

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Item 2

The FY 2013 Pay for Performance Program provided no payout for EAS field employees. Many EAS employees did not receive goals and objectives for FY 2013 and simply entered accomplishments in a self-evaluation process at the mid-year and are expected to do the same thing at the end-of-year. NAPS requests that all field EAS employees be given a PFP adjective rating of "Contributor".

USPS Response: This issue is under consideration by the Postal Service.

Item 3

NAPS is requesting an update on the New Supervisor Program, including data on the number of people in the program, the current status of the classroom and on-line training and any other information the USPS is relying on to determine the success of the program to date.

We are particularly interested in the progress of the classroom training and the computer-based training conducted at the work location. NAPS is receiving reports of problems in both classroom and computer-based training.

USPS Response: Craft employees promoted to Supervisor Customer Services positions were 1,751 and Craft to SDO 327. There have been 411 new promotions since September 1, 2013.

NAPS is concerned about new supervisors not getting the necessary training. How do the NSP coaches play a part?

USPS Response: There are two types of New Supervisor Program (NSP) coaches; immediate manager and peer coaches. The idea is to have the supervisor off the floor in the beginning to learn their initial content. As time goes on, less off floor time is required to complete the training. The concept of the blended learning does not keep a supervisor from going into eLearning to do more training and possibly complete the training before the 52 weeks. The Immediate Manager, but not the peer coach, can see the progress of the new supervisor. The immediate manager is responsible for making sure the new supervisor is taking and completing the training. The peer coach is the person assigned to the new supervisor to coach them on the workroom floor.

NAPS asked if there was a tracking system to show if someone is behind schedule on their NSP training. *USPS is working on this issue at the District Level.*

Item 4

What criteria and process will be used for our members to have their Corporate and Unit goals established through meetings with their immediate managers? Will management be conducting one-on-one meetings at the start of FY 2014 along with mid-year and end-of-year meetings with immediate managers to discuss performance and achievements?

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Item 4-continued

USPS Response: 2014 PFP is based on Corporate/Unit Goals. PES continues even though Core Requirements are gone. EAS are required to enter goals into PES. However, the USPS Board of Governors (BOG) approves Corporate Indicators. The BOG could modify Corporate indicators and NAPS was advised of this during the consultative process. In PES it requires the employee to meet with their manager.

NAPS asked why there are no individual performance awards for EAS. The USPS responded until financial conditions of the USPS improves EAS awards are frozen. NAPS stated that members deserve to be recognized and rewarded for their efforts.

Item 5

With respect to the implementation of the FY 2014 PFP, are there any changes in the Administrative Rules from FY 2013 that our members should be aware?

USPS Response: At this time, there are no changes. FY 2013 PFP Administrative rules apply in FY 2014.

Item 6

The USPS has established Customer Care Centers (CCC) to support and enhance Customer Service. Since the recent establishment of the Care Centers, our members have reported an increase in customer calls received in delivery offices. Our members have found that the customers were referred by the USPS Customer Care Centers to call the delivery unit. This is especially the case in tracking down parcels that are being tracked by customers on usps.com.

NAPS would like an updated briefing on the Customer Care Centers as to how they are handling customer inquiries and what the protocol is for referring customer calls to local offices so NAPS can address the concerns received from our members about the increased number of customer calls received in their offices.

USPS Response: The USPS interpretation of NAPS' agenda item is that Customer Care Centers are just diverting calls to the field rather than having them addressed by the Care Center. NAPS asked for the process of how calls are handled and referred. The Care Centers are insourcing 66 million calls a year, in FY 12 and FY 13 there were over 76 million calls handled. Most calls are due to more scanning of various products.

Call agents are trained to resolve the customer inquiry. At least twice, the agent tries to resolve the case before sending the customer inquiry, not the customer, to the field office. In training, the agent is instructed not to give the post office number to the customer. The goal is to resolve all calls coming into the Care Center. Customer Care Center agents are trained to ensure correct information is provided. Calls are monitored for quality. Coaching and re-coaching is provided to ensure USPS is providing quality service. With the upcoming holiday, calls are expected to increase. Customers may get a local phone numbers via the usps.com website, but agents are trained not to give out phone numbers of offices.

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Item 6 -continue

NAPS discussed the issue of Customer Care Centers utilizing four-10 hour work days. During holiday weeks, the Care Center converts back to the traditional 8-hours a day work week. Supervisors are also working 4-10 hour days. Many employees are pleased with the 4 10-hour day schedules. NAPS asked how many Customer Care Centers employees are rehab employees. USPS stated 30% of CCC staff are rehab employees. Louis stated he visited the Los Angeles CCC and it was very informative, a nice working atmosphere, and the CCC had a good working relationship with the employees.

The USPS also addressed the Enterprise Customer Care (eCC) system and the policy on how customer issues are handled. According to the USPS, the local post office has 24 hours to make contact and a total of three days to resolve an eCC issue. The eCC is initiated on USPS.com or by the Care Center. NAPS asked how eCC's are handled when a delivery is for an address across the country. The USPS stated the eCC issue belongs to local post office of the customer generating the eCC and the local office can transfer the ECC to another office. However, the originating office is ultimately responsible. It was suggested to keep updating the progress of the eCC issue until it is finally resolved. It may take weeks.

Item 7

NAPS is requesting an update on the current rule relative to time limits an EAS employee may serve on a higher-level assignment in an authorized vacant position. Is the 120 day rule for details to vacant positions still in force, or is there a moratorium on this rule?

USPS Response: There is a moratorium on the 120 day rule. A waiver of the rule is in effect until the end of FY 2014. The USPS will reevaluate the rule at the end of FY 2014 to determine if it is necessary to continue the waiver. If there is no need for the 120 Rule to be waived, the USPS will reinstate the 120-day rule at the end of FY 2014.

Item 8

What are the current rules as they pertain to EAS employees requesting a downgrade to a craft position if they are unable to obtain another EAS position during the current RIF? Will the EAS employee who request craft positions during RIF avoidance be placed in career full-time positions?

USPS Response: An employee can ask but there is no guarantee they will be placed.

Item 9

NAPS had previously met with the USPS concerning safety issues brought about with the recent OSHA settlement between the USPS and OSHA. At our briefing we brought up the issue of the USPS providing protective clothing for electrical work that had full-length metal zippers. NAPS expressed our concern about the conductivity of this type of safety apparel and recommended that protective equipment such as these be purchased with non-metallic zippers.

NAPS would like to know what action the Postal Service has taken to address our concerns and recommendations related to this OSHA safety issue.

USPS Response: Materials in question are OSHA approved and in compliance.

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Item 10

This agenda item was originally provided to the USPS at our April, 2013 Consultative Meeting. A response has not been provided, so the item has been submitted again with additional verbiage:

With the district consolidations over the past several years, the scope of work for remaining district VMFs has greatly increased. Gaining districts have seen the number of vehicles increase, sometimes as much as 100 percent or greater, as workload shifted from closing districts. As the workload increased in these instances, EAS staffing remained the same.

VMF manager positions assumed greater responsibilities without a review of the levels of the manager positions and EAS staffing levels in VMF operations. With the critical importance of transportation in the Postal Service, NAPS requested that a position review be conducted in VMF operations to determine the adequacy of VMF manager levels and overall EAS staffing in VMFs. Reviewing all VMF positions would be a large undertaking. A number of criteria go into determining levels.

NAPS provided examples of VMFs that absorbed more work due to consolidations, but with no additional staffing to accommodate the work. NAPS developed a spreadsheet on the VMF workload issue and will make it available to the USPS for review. Previously, NAPS also provided a comparison for three Districts that gained vehicles responsibilities from Districts that had been consolidated. The comparisons that we provided are similar to the increase of vehicles that gaining VMF's received from other District closures.

NAPS believes that an analysis of the all VMF operations that gained vehicles as a result of consolidations will show that the gaining offices should receive upgrade consideration. NAPS recommends the USPS look at how the consolidations increased territory and VMF workload. In some cases, VMF workload increased and some evaluations went up but others did not.

USPS Response: USPS has received the information from NAPS and will take the information back to USPS HQ department that handles VMFs to decide if a rework in evaluation is required.

Item 11

On 9/10/13 NAPS headquarters sent a request to labor Relations, Policy Administration asking about the new Sunday delivery pilot expansion. Specifically we wanted to know how the operations would be managed with direct supervision. We have not received a response to this request.

USPS Response: The Postal Service will review this service as it goes forward. Initially, the USPS will start with supervisors on site. The USPS will review the Sunday service to determine if it is necessary to continue with supervision on Sundays.

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Item 12

On 9/30/13 NAPS headquarters sent a request to Labor Relations, Policy Administration asking about recent changes in Plant staffing involving a change in level of Network Specialist positions. At issue is whether the upgraded Network Specialist positions were going to be considered successor positions or if the positions would require competitive bidding. NAPS believes that the positions should be successor positions as the nature of the work has not changed. What is criteria for Mail Processing Facility (MPF)?

USPS Response: Annex is 100 miles within host plant and has oversight from a manager outside the area. MPF is over 100 miles from host plant. MPF has its own competitive area and manager. If a facility does not qualify as a PD&F, then it is either an Annex or MPF. There will be a minimum of three MDO's per plant based on the 1:22 /1:25 ratio. If a facility does not qualify for three MDO's then an SDO will be exchanged for an MDO position to make the three per facility. This action is position neutral. USPS will exchange an SDO position for an MDO position to meet the MDO requirement on each tour.

NAPS asked why the Network Specialist position was not a successor position. USPS stated it eliminated Level 16 and 18 Network Specialist positions and replaced it with Level 17 Network Specialist position. Because there is now only one level Network Specialist position it is not a successor position.

NAPS inquired about saved grade and salary. If a person is impacted by the RIF and takes a lower level position they receive save grade and saved salary for 2 years. If a person is in a reclassified position, then they only receive saved salary.

Open discussion

NAPS requested information regarding compensation for outside hires in sales. The USPS provided the information after the consultative meeting. That response is below.

USPS Response: At the NAPS/USPS consultative meeting on October 21, the Executive Board asked how salaries are established for external hires into nonbargaining positions. Talent, Acquisition, and Retention provided the following response on setting salaries for external hires:

Talent, Acquisition and Retention determines all salaries for nonbargaining unit career and noncareer employees in supervisory, professional, technical, clerical, administrative, and managerial positions in the Executive and Administrative Schedule (EAS) in accordance with the EAS and Management and Technical PayBand Annual Salary Schedules published by Compensation annually, and aligns our salaries in accordance with the Chapter 4 "Pay Administration" of the Employee Labor Manual (ELM) guidelines.

Furthermore, we use market payscale analyses to calculate and validate salaries offered to provide compensation for Postal Service work comparable to compensation paid for comparable levels of work in the private sector of the U.S. economy.

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NAPS asked how transportation positions are determined. USPS responded that the number of transportation positions are not based on the plant level, but on the work load, such as highway contracts, etc.

NAPS asked if the Snow Arbitration decision is still in place. USPS stated that there is no guarantee an EAS employee has a right to return to a bargaining unit position. In the past, there were plenty of bargaining unit positions, but that field of jobs is shrinking. The principle applies that there has to be career craft positions to go into, but if there are no career positions, then an EAS employee can't be placed into one.

NAPS stated that there is no documentation that EAS were notified they were impacted, it was just implied all EAS were notified. USPS stated it was not ready to respond to NAPS' letter to Mr. Tulino regarding a board motion that was passed to have the USPS notify all EAS if in writing if they are impacted by the restructure/RIF.

NAPS stated notification is not happening at many plants. No staffing has been established at some of the re-ranked facilities. The USPS asked for a list of facilities that NAPS believes EAS have not been notified of their impact.

NAPS commented that it is the agencies responsibility to tell employees they are impacted not the employee's responsibility to ask. The USPS did clarify what is meant by impacted. EAS are impacted if their job went away, their position level was lowered, or if the position is over complement (more people in positions authorized).

NAPS asked how the USPS would know who is impacted when the December 2013 postings are for only "impacted" EAS to apply. The USPS stated it does a mock RIF to see who would be impacted at that point in time. Basically, if the USPS were to initiate a RIF on December 3 it would know who is impacted (i.e. a mock RIF).