

ARTICLE



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National President John Hegarty delivers remarks to Article 12 training attendees



Local 300 President and Northeastern Region Vice President Paul Hogrogian



National CAD Representative Tim Dwyer



CAD Manager Thomas (TJ) Branch



Paul Hogrogian conducts simulated excessing exercise with attendees

On October 30, 2014, the NPMHU conducted a comprehensive training program focusing on the provisions of Article 12 of the National Agreement, dealing with the principles of seniority, posting, and reassignments. This program, held in Washington, DC with attendees from virtually all of the Local Unions, was especially timely given the Postal Service's announced plans to close and/or consolidate up to 82 mail processing facilities during 2015.

The discussions were led by Northeast Regional Vice President, Local 300 President, and National Trainer Paul Hogrogian, CAD Manager T.J. Branch, and National CAD Representative Tim Dwyer. These three representatives, who also comprise the Union's membership on the Article 12 Task Force, are working diligently to guarantee that all mail handlers receive all of the contractual protections they possess under Article 12, and to further ensure that Article 12 is being implemented on a fair and equitable basis throughout the country. As the trainees learned on October 30, several important issues are presented by the Postal Service's plans to close and/or consolidate some of its mail processing centers.

Area Mail Processing (AMP) initiatives have been going on for the last several years, but these latest plans are different in many respects. On June 30, 2014, the Postal Service announced that it would implement Phase 2 of its "Network Rationalization" Plan, which includes the consolidation and/or closure of up to 82 processing centers. These facilities have been targeted for closure and/or consolidation for years, but the actions could not be implemented until the USPS changed its delivery service standards. The Postal

Service has now announced its intention to change the service standards effective January 5, 2015. Not coincidentally, the Postal Service also announced its intention to begin the consolidations/closures on January 10, 2015. The Postal Service will implement these plans throughout Fiscal Year 2015, with the final changes planned for September 2015.

The NPMHU vigorously opposes the Postal Service's ill-conceived plans. The National Office and the NPMHU Local Unions have been implementing several methods to fight the Postal Service's plans, many through coordinated efforts with the other major postal unions. As a member of the Postal Union Alliance, the NPMHU has been working with our sister Unions (the APWU, the NALC, and the NRLCA) to present a united front against these consolidations and closures. The Postal Union Alliance has focused on organizing opposition (community groups, other unions, elected officials, etc.) to the consolidations. The Alliance also will be conducting various "Days of Action" to mobilize our members and allies to express our opposition.

The NPMHU has increased its efforts to convince our Congressional Representatives to pass meaningful postal reform legislation that would

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keep the current service standards in effect, thereby preventing the closure and/or consolidation of most of the installations on the list of 82 installations now scheduled to be closed and/or consolidated.

The National Office has initiated a Step 4 grievance concerning violations arising from the Postal Service's plans to close or consolidate the 82 installations. The grievance cites violations of the Handbook PO-408, which contains Area Mail Processing Guidelines. In short, it is the NPMHU position that the Postal Service's current plans to close or consolidate mail processing facilities during 2015 are based on untimely AMP processes resulting in essentially meaningless AMP studies and reports. Many of the studies and reports were conducted in 2011. Local Unions directly affected by the proposed closures or consolidations are encouraged to file similar grievances locally and hold those grievances at Step 2 pending resolution of the National-level dispute.

While the NPMHU actively opposes the closings and consolidations through these strategies (collective opposition, legislative efforts, days of action, grievances, etc.), we must also actively prepare to enforce the provisions of Article 12 should the Postal Service decide to proceed with its ill-advised plans by closing and/or consolidating all or some of the facilities. Even if the Postal Service delays the implementation of its plans, the training about how to implement Article 12 is vital to ensure that the rights of all members are protected in view of the very likely scenario that these closures/consolidations are reintroduced again in some form in the future. ➤



(l-r) National President John Hegarty, General Counsel Bruce Lerner, CAD Manager Thomas (TJ) Branch, Local 300 President and Northeastern Region Vice President Paul Hogrogian, and National CAD Representative Tim Dwyer

As a member of the Postal Union Alliance, the NPMHU has been working with our sister Unions (the APWU, the NALC, and the NRLCA) to present a united front against consolidations and closures.





Local 334 President
Sheldon D. Adams



Local 329 President
John (J.R.) Macon



Local 307 President
Jim Haggarty



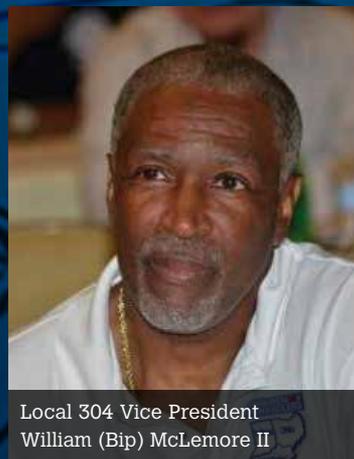
Local 325 Gulfport MS Branch
President Joey Breland



Local 307 SEBM
Rita Tripp



Local 321 President
Cindy Hoehl-Rinker



Local 304 Vice President
William (Bip) McLemore II

The training was well received and resulted in a stimulating exchange of ideas, opinions, and concepts.

The following are some of the topics that were discussed during the training:

Seniority Issues: The training discussed the various issues concerning seniority issues as they relate to voluntary and involuntary reassignments.

Rate Protection: The training discussed the various CIM and ELM provisions which provide rate protection when an employee's duty assignment is eliminated and that employee is assigned to a lower level position.

Severance Pay/Discontinued Service Annuity: These protections and benefits are sometimes available to a Mail Handler who decides that it is in his or her best interest to refuse an involuntary reassignment, sometimes referred to as an involuntary separation, if the reassignment was outside of the employee's commuting area.

Principles of Reassignment: When a Mail Handler is reassigned or exceeded to another installation, Article 12 and the Contract Interpretation Manual (CIM) provide most of the governing rules. The starting point is the general principle contained in Article 12 – that the dislocation and inconvenience to full-time regular and part-time flexible and part-time regular employees shall be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of the Postal Service. The Union must be notified in advance (60 days when relocation benefits are applicable or 30 days when relocation benefits are not applicable). Such notices shall be provided to the Union at the Regional level. In addition, the affected Mail Handlers are entitled to an advance notice of 60 days when relocation benefits are applicable and 30 days when relocation benefits are not applicable before the Postal Service makes involuntary details or reassignments from one installation to another.

Relocation Benefits: Relocation benefits are available to employees who are subject to excessing and whose new commute is 50 miles

or greater than their old commute. Relocation benefits include expenses for moving, mileage, per diem, and reimbursement for movement of household goods, as appropriate.

Article 12.6C1 through Article 12.6C3: The training covered the Article 12 provisions that deal with the specific actions of Discontinuance of an Independent Installation, Consolidation of an Independent Installation, and Transfer of a Facility to the Jurisdiction of another Installation or made an Independent Installation.

Reassignment Within an Installation of Employees Excess to the Needs of a Section: The training also discussed the contractual provisions that control the reassignment of employees whose duty assignments are abolished and who are reassigned to other sections within the installation. A demonstration of the Expedited Selection Process was provided to all attendees.

Reduction in the Number of Employees in an Installation: The training thoroughly covered the Article 12 provisions that govern the involuntary reassignment of employees from one installation to another.

Centralized Mail Processing and/or Delivery Installation: The training covered the Article 12 provisions specific to Centralization of Mail Processing Operations and Area Mail Processing initiatives.

Reassignment of PTF Employees: The training discussed the provisions that control the reassignment of PTF employees from those installations in which the PTF position still exists.

Various Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs): Discussions were held on the various Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) related to Article 12 issues.

The training was well received and resulted in a stimulating exchange of ideas, opinions, and concepts among the trainers, the National Officers and CAD staff, and the Local Union representatives from around the nation.



Hegarty Addresses Leadership Conference of the Laborers' International Union of North America

National President John Hegarty was honored with the opportunity to address Union leaders, guests, and attendees at the most recent LIUNA Leadership Conference. Hegarty spoke about the issues facing mail handlers and all postal employees — highlighting our battles and opposition to proposed plant closures, consolidations and the Postal Service's never-ending agenda to subcontract good postal jobs. Hegarty spoke about the renewed partnership and alliance among all Postal Unions and our basic objective to work together on many of the important issues facing the Postal Service and its employees. “Much of our focus extends to Capitol Hill. We’ve reached out across both sides of the aisle to get support for legislation that would stop the Postal Service from making any more cuts, while encouraging them to grow the business through innovation,” said Hegarty. “Getting good postal legislation, and electing worker friendly and postal friendly Senators and Representatives this fall will be key to solving many of our big problems.”



Hegarty also spoke about preparations for upcoming contract negotiations, and how this and the Service's proposal to close 82 plants relate to the USPS claims of poverty. In reality, the Postal Service has been operating with a surplus from its operations for almost two years, yet each month and each quarter the USPS releases disingenuous information showing continuing deficits. “We’ve got a fight on our hands, but we’ve never backed down from a fight, and we’re not about to start now. We intend to continue to fight these ill-advised plans to reduce service to the American public, and we are fighting to win,” said Hegarty.