



NPMHU Actively Engaged In PRC Proceedings

On December 5, 2011, the Postal Service filed a request with the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) seeking an Advisory Opinion regarding the Postal Service's plan to consolidate its processing network and substantially lengthen service standards, including the elimination of overnight delivery for first-class mail. Under the Postal Reorganization Act, the Postal Service must seek such an Advisory Opinion from the PRC before it implements any "change in the nature of postal services which will generally affect service on a nationwide or substantially nationwide basis."

The NPMHU immediately intervened in these proceedings and, over the course of the last several months, has been submitting written interrogatories and other document requests, attempting to uncover whether the Postal Service has overstated the anticipated savings and under-estimated the difficulties of the closings and consolidations currently planned. Counsel for the NPMHU and other interested parties also had the opportunity to cross-examine postal witnesses at live hearings during March. In more recent weeks, the NPMHU submitted affirmative written evidence to explain how the proposed changes would adversely affect mail service and postal employees. The NPMHU thanks the following Mail Handlers for contributing their own statements to this evidence: Northeast Region Vice President and Local 300 President Paul Hogrogian; National Office Contract Administration Department Representative Michael Hora; Local 297 Vice President Chris Bentley; Local 307 President Jim Haggarty; Local 305 President Kenny Hayes; Local 309 President David Wilkin; and

Local 301 President Bob Broxton. Additional hearings took place in May and June.

After testimony is complete, the Postal Service, the NPMHU, and all other parties will have the opportunity to submit briefs to the PRC. Briefing on the case will be complete in July, with a decision from the PRC expected in late summer or early fall.

On May 17, the Postal Service announced a major revision to its network consolidation plan. Under the revised plan, the Postal Service will proceed in two phases. In the first phase, the Postal Service plans to implement consolidations at forty-eight facilities in the summer of 2012, followed by consolidations at an additional ninety-two facilities in January and February of 2013. Employees at the first forty-eight facilities to be affected should have already received notice from the Postal Service. During this first phase, intra-SCF First-Class Mail (mail that stays within an SCF's service area) would continue to have an overnight delivery standard, but inter-SCF mail would go to a two to three day standard. The second phase is planned to begin February 2014, and would involve consolidation at an additional eighty-nine consolidations. Once the second phase is implemented, all First-Class Mail (with a limited exception for certain presorted mail entered before an early critical entry time) would have a two to three day service standard. The final revised service standards, including this two-step implementation, were published in the Federal Register on May 25, 2012. This two-phase implementation, and the promulgated service standards, are part of what the PRC will consider in its Advisory Opinion.