



National President Paul Hogrogian



National Secretary-Treasurer Michael Hora



Central Region VP and Local 306 President June Harris



LiUNA General President Terry O'Sullivan

# SAMLU REPORT

## WASHINGTON, DC

Officers and representatives from nearly every Local Union gathered in Washington, DC from November 15 through November 17, 2021, for the Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions (SAMLU). The NPMHU adopted appropriate Coronavirus precautions; the meeting arrangements were spacious, and everyone complied with official health guidance.

On Monday, November 15, 2021, the meeting convened with National President Paul Hogrogian's introduction of the NPMHU National Executive Board, the Contract Administration Department (CAD) staff, and other

key staff members from the Union's National Office and the RI-399 Regional Coordinators.

President Hogrogian introduced Joel Aponte (Local 313) and Dwayne Williams (Local 325), two newly installed Local Presidents resulting from election or appointment occurring since the last SAMLU in August 2021. Brother Hogrogian also congratulated other recently elected and re-elected Local Union officers who were in attendance.

Following these opening activities, President Hogrogian provided a report to the assembly. As is customary, the National President's report was a comprehensive account of the activities

of the National Union since the previous meeting of the Local Presidents. President Hogrogian addressed a wide array of topics, beginning with the USPS financial situation.

The financial information provided by USPS for the year-end Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 (October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021), reflects that the Postal Service had a net loss of \$6.9 billion for FY 2021 and a net operational loss of \$2.4 billion for the same period. The USPS reported that total mail volume was down 0.21% compared to last fiscal year. First-class mail was down 3.7%, continuing the recent trend. First-class mail volume has declined





Southern Region VP and  
FL SEBM Lawrence Sapp



Eastern Region VP and Local 308  
President John A. Gibson



Local 297 President Chris Bentley



Northeastern Region VP and Local 309  
President David E. Wilkin



Western Region VP and Local 316  
President Don Sneesby



Local 298 President Wayne Foster



each year for the last 15 years and is projected to continue to decline into the future. Marketing mail posted a moderate increase of 3.4% during FY 2021. There is no expectation that this lost mail volume will return.

Package volume has increased by 3.5% from last fiscal year. These volume increases are slipping but remain higher than pre-pandemic levels.

The USPS projects overall mail volumes to continue their decline, projecting a deficit of \$10 billion annually, and projecting total losses of \$160 billion over the next 10 years.

President Hogrogian spoke about the make-up of the USPS Board of

Governors (BOG). Currently there are nine Postal Governors in addition to the Postmaster General (PMG) and Deputy Postmaster General (DPMG). The DPMG position was recently filled by Doug Tulino, former USPS Vice President of Labor Relations.

The sitting Governors that are carryover appointees from the Trump administration include Robert Duncan (the former chair of the Republican National Committee), Ron Bloom (chairman), Roman Martinez, John Barger, William Zollars (former chairman of Yellow Worldwide Freight) and Lee Moak, (former president of the Air Line Pilots Association). President

Biden has appointed Ron Stroman (former DPMG), Anton Hajjar (former counsel to APWU), and Amber McReynolds (CEO - National Vote at Home Institute). BOG Chairman Ron Bloom is in his carry-over year and would require a renomination to hold the seat beyond December 2021. President Hogrogian spoke about the favorable swing and makeup of the BOG, and concerns surrounding Ron Bloom's possible renomination.

President Hogrogian discussed issues given rise by PMG DeJoy's actions, including his involvement with New Breed Logistics, XPO Logistics, nationwide mail processing delays associated



with truck schedule modifications and the removal of mail processing equipment, and the USPS organizational redesign of processing and logistics and retail and delivery. PMG DeJoy is under investigation for conflict of interest and campaign finances issues. Given the BOG's support for the PMG, his premature ouster seems unlikely. Under pressure from Congress, postal unions, and the public at large, PMG DeJoy has committed to maintaining 6-day delivery and universal service, while supporting postal reform legislation.



Local 310 President Pervous (Andy B.) Badilishamwalimu



Local 333 President Monica Marshall



Local 300 President Kevin Tabarus



National CAD Representative Tom Ruther



Local 322 BP Deborah Stophel

He has initiated a reorganization of the USPS management structure and has emphasized stabilizing the workforce while reducing overtime.

The next topic covered by President Hogrogian was the Ten-Year Plan, which sets forth a series of strategies by which USPS management hopes to improve service and ensure financial stability. The major points of the 10-year plan include: (1) a commitment to 6/7 day delivery; (2) obtaining new delivery vehicles; (3) planning for package growth; (4) establishing 46 package support annexes; (5) stabilizing the non-career workforce; (6) consolidating mail processing operations in select

installations; (7) reducing postal retail options; (8) increasing utilization of ground transportation versus air transport; (9) modifying service standards to include new 4 and 5-day delivery standards; (10) passing postal reform; (11) repurposing the NDCs into parcel only installations called Regional Distribution Centers (RDCs); and (12) retaining existing employee benefits.

President Hogrogian directly addressed closings and consolidations of mail processing facilities, noting that our prior reliance on past assurances that these actions are on hold is tenuous in view of the bleak postal finances, continued declines in mail volume, and





(l-r) Local 317 reps: Vice President Sam Edwards, Recording Secretary Robert Richburg and SEBM Carlos Hunt



Local 301 President Dan St. Marie and Treasurer Shawn Holt



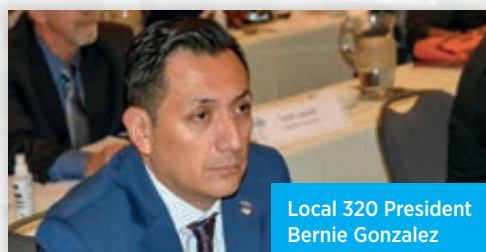
Local 318 President Nick Mosezar



Local 317 President James Morris



Local 311 President Charles Charleston



Local 320 President Bernie Gonzalez



Local 315 President Joe Harms



Local 305 President Felandria A. Jackson

network redesign references in the PMG's 10-Year Plan.

President Hogrogian also reviewed an April 27, 2021, notification wherein the USPS announced a planned implementation of secondary mail moves for 18 facilities that will include destinating flats, letters, or in some facilities both. Of the 18 facilities identified, there are 10 where mail handlers are currently working, including Bend (OR), Erie (PA), Gainesville (FL), Huntsville (AL), Mid-Hudson (NY), North Bay (CA), Pocatello CSMPC, Seattle DDC (WA), Southern Ct (CT), and Wausau (WI). These installations are not proposed to close entirely and should retain parcel processing,

cross dock, and other operations. Final implementation was tentatively scheduled for November 2021.

President Hogrogian reported that the Postal Service is also looking at refreshing Area Mail Processing (AMP) feasibility studies for a number of mail processing facilities. The USPS was considering mail moves/consolidations in 38 sites, electing to conduct 15 full AMPs and 16 partial AMPs, with 7 installations no longer being considered for consolidation. The USPS subsequently tabled 3 full AMP sites and 9 partial AMP sites, leaving 29 sites still under consideration, 28 of which employ mail handlers.

Also as part of its 10-Year Plan, the Postal Service is establishing 46 package sorting annexes (PSAs) located near NDCs or large P&DCs. PSAs will support mail processing facilities in key locations in anticipation of growing package volume. Lease negotiations will impact when the 46 PSA facilities become operational. The USPS plans to deploy Single Induction Package Sorters (SIPS) in 42 of the 46 sites. President Hogrogian discussed several issues relative to the new PSAs, including the tying of a site's identity to an existing facility, staffing and MHA complement, operational and jurisdictional considerations, and union access and



Contract Administration  
Department Representatives



Local 332 President  
Edvina Tesch



Local 321 President  
Errol (Tony) Wilson



Local 312 President  
Troy Davis



representation. In addition, the USPS will operate 40-45 holiday annexes during peak operations from October 2021 through January 2022.

President Hogrogian then provided a comprehensive update on the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. As of the November 2021 SAMLU meeting, reports show a significant decrease in the Covid-19 numbers since December 2020 when there were 8,057 postal

workers who tested positive for the virus and 2,067 employees who were presumptive positive for a total of 10,124 infected postal employees. Recent reports show approximately 3,500 postal employees infected and 770 postal employees under quarantine. This temporary decrease in Covid-19 numbers prompted the Postal Service to modify its mask policy. (The modified mask policy modification was

rescinded on August 27, 2021, due to uncertainties with COVID-19 related to the delta variant.)

The NPMHU has negotiated several memoranda of understanding to address problems that have arisen because of this crisis, including: SLDC-childcare; MHA Leave; Temporary MHA exception periods; Transfer MOU for Covid-19; and Step 3/arbitration extensions. These MOUs were first negotiated





Local 299 President  
Keala Parker



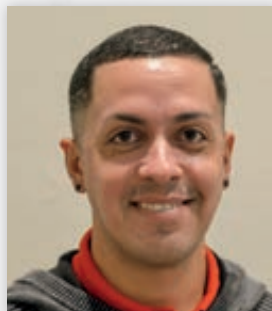
Local 302 President  
Tony Coleman



Local 329 President  
John (J.R.) Macon



Local 334 President  
Sheldon D. Adams



Local 313 President  
Joel Aponte



Local 330 President  
Bob Griffith



(l-r) Sacramento PDC Rep Dwight Parker, San Jose BP Anthony Dering, Local President Tony Coleman, NP Paul Hogrogian, NST Michael Hora and Sacramento BP Steve Gutierrez



Local 304 President William (Bip)  
McLemore III

in March 2020 and have been extended 7 times. These MOUs are now scheduled to expire on December 31, 2021.

President Hogrogian then discussed President Biden's recently issued vaccine mandate and OSHA's newly issued Covid-19 guidelines with an evolving effective date now pushed to January 4, 2022. Bargaining implications of the Covid-19 guidelines include mask policy, vaccination mandates, proof of

vaccination status, COVID testing, testing locations and costs, leave policies for testing, vaccination and recovery, compliance, and non-compliance ramifications.

President Hogrogian spoke about the Mail Handler craft complement and the Mail Handler Assistants (MHAs) path to career. He reviewed three prominent Memoranda signed in December 2020, March 2021, and June 2021 that collectively converted 12,772 MHAs to

full-time regular status (FTR) over a period of seven months. The total MHA conversion to fulltime regulars is 31,159, with 13,809 occurring in 2021.

President Hogrogian addressed the issue of National Bargaining in 2022. Solicitation to the field seeking contract proposals will be sent to Local Unions, published in each forthcoming edition of the Mail Handler Magazine, and posted at [npmhu.org](http://npmhu.org). The Field



Negotiating Committee will be meeting in February 2022 to review all contractual proposals submitted.

The subcontracting and redesign of the STC network was discussed. Despite previous assurances to the contrary, the USPS announced subcontracting at the STC operations in Kansas City, Chicago, Seminole/Orlando, Atlanta, Cap Metro, Springfield, NJ, Northern California,

and Southern California. National level disputes have been filed.

Finally, President Hogrogian spoke about the new Executive Order establishing the Juneteenth Day of Observance, signed on June 17, 2021, by President Biden. The new law makes June 19 a federal holiday, but notably excluded the USPS. The Postal Service made the decision not to accommodate

the observance for 2021. The issue will be raised during national bargaining, if necessary.

Upon conclusion of President Hogrogian's remarks, National Secretary-Treasurer Michael Hora provided a detailed presentation and entertained questions and comments on a variety of topics, including NPMHU financial statements for the quarter



Local 303 representatives review meeting material.



MHBP Executive  
Director Nina  
Gallaresi



Legislative and Political  
Director Katie Maddocks



Local 307 President James Haggarty



Local 327 President Steve Buksch



Local 325 President Dwayne Williams



Local 322 President Kelly Dickey



ending September 30, 2021, and deficit control measures; quarterly and annual expense and revenue analysis; Covid-19 pandemic related impact on finances; Mail Handler complement, regular and associate membership trends and per capita analysis; revenue projections and allocation among our Union's affiliated organizations; 2021 dues increase and per capita changes; the NPMHU Revenue Sharing Program; the amalgamation and merger of Local 319 (Wyoming) and Local 321 (Colorado); an in-depth membership review, including recruitment initiatives and SF1187 processing; a Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) review; the availability of NPMHU merchandise; the NPMHU Arthur S Vallone scholarship; the NPMHU 2020 and 2024 Quadrennial Conventions; the NPMHU mobile app; USPS notification of unauthorized access to PostalEase, cybersecurity and phishing threats; and a report on scheduled NPMHU national meetings and training programs.

The assembly heard a report from General Counsel Bruce Lerner on litigation and other pending legal matters involving the NPMHU National Union.

Next, NPMHU Legislative and Political Director Katie Maddocks provided a report on various legislative and political efforts with which the NPMHU and its activists continue to be involved. Director Maddocks provided a review on the status of the Postal Reform Act, H.R. 3076/S. 1720; Infrastructure and Investment and Jobs Act, P.L. 117-58; Build Back Better Act, H.R. 5376; the impending debt ceiling; Federal funding expiring in December; and nominations to the Postal Regulatory Commission and the BOG.

Finally, Director Maddocks led a review and discussion on the upcoming 2022 midterm elections, emphasizing the importance of the

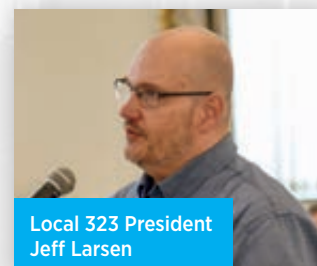
National President Hogrogian and Secretary-Treasurer Hora



Regional CAD Representatives Eileen Mills and Eugene Horton



Local 323 President Jeff Larsen



Local 313 leadership in attendance.



NPMHU Legislative Action Center and members' grassroots participation. She emphasized the need to grow relationships with elected officials, ensuring that Members of Congress are well educated on NPMHU issues and can effectively advocate for the Union on Capitol Hill.

The assembly then received a report on the NPMHU Women's Committee, from Committee Chair and Vice President Central Region/Local 306 President June Harris.

On Tuesday, November 16, 2021, the attendees received a comprehensive report regarding various matters related to the Mail Handlers Benefit Plan (MHBP) from Executive Director Nina Gallauresi.

Next, the Manager of the NPMHU Contract Administration Department, Teresa Harmon, provided a report and entertained questions and comments on the activities of the Contract Administration Department (CAD) since the last meeting of the Local





Contract Administration Department Representatives



General Counsel Bruce Lerner



Local 303 President Eddie Cowan



CAD Manager Teresa Harmon



Local 322 Branch President Joe Fitzgerald



Local 300 VP Marcenia Yvette Johnson



Local 328 President Todd Larson

Unions. Sister Harmon's presentation was based on the written report that was circulated at the meeting and is available to all NPMHU Officers and Stewards through the MAILS Steward Resources portal at [npmhu.org](http://npmhu.org).

Next, President Hogrogian introduced LiUNA General President Terry O'Sullivan. President O'Sullivan spoke about the collective struggles facing the NPMHU and LiUNA membership during the pandemic. In his unique, fiery style, President O' Sullivan emphasized the importance of the Postal Service and vital services provided to the American public stating, "Your personal bravery, commitment

and perseverance in the face of COVID-19 epitomizes the very best of the United States Postal Service and honors the highest traditions of your 246-year history." President O'Sullivan closed out his remarks by stressing the importance of finalizing favorable postal reform legislation.

CAD Representative Tom Ruther next led discussions on the activities of the Article 12 Task Force and RI-399 jurisdictional matters.

Toward the end of the business session, a round-robin was held, as usual, to allow all Local Unions to raise any other issues not already covered. Then, without any further

business before the body, the Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions was adjourned.

The third day of the meeting was reserved for a National Bargaining Strategy Session led by President Hogrogian. Numerous contractual proposals were discussed and debated during the strategy session. The Field Negotiating Committee will be meeting in February 2022 to review all contractual proposals submitted.

The SAMLU meeting was well attended and resulted in a wide array of discussion and debate. The next SAMLU meeting is scheduled for April 2022 in Louisville, KY.





## NATIONAL-LEVEL DISPUTES

Teresa Harmon, Manager, CAD

In this issue, I want to give a brief overview on the National cases that have recently been heard in National arbitration, as well as some that are currently pending on the arbitration docket at the National level. These cases include:

### SUBCONTRACTING OF THE KANSAS CITY SURFACE TRANSFER CENTER

In early July 2021, the NPMHU and the Postal Service started arbitration hearings over the subcontracting of mail handler work at the Kansas City, KS Surface Transfer Center, which was opened and staffed in the fall of 2019. After six days of hearings, concluding in October 2021, that portion of the dispute is now complete, and only post-hearing briefing remains.

The Union position in this case is set forth in the NPMHU's Step 4 grievance:

The National Postal Mail Handlers Union is initiating a grievance at the Step 4 level — in accordance with Article 15, Section 3D of the 2016 National Agreement between the NPMHU and the Postal Service — concerning the Postal Service's proposed subcontracting for the establishment and staffing of a new Surface Transfer Center (STC) in the Kansas City, KS area. The NPMHU was first notified of this proposal by letter dated August 2, 2019, which was not received at the NPMHU National Office until August 8, 2019. The NPMHU believes that this subcontracting presents both a procedural and substantive violation of Article 32 of the parties' National Agreement, as well as a violation of the Memorandum of Understanding Re Article 32 that appears on page 200 of that National Agreement.

With regard to procedures, Article 32.1B of the National Agreement provides for advance notice and discussions with the Union while the Postal Service is "developing the initial Comparative Analysis Report." It also requires the Postal Service, among other things, to consider the views of the Union before making its subcontracting decision, to respond to the Union's views in its decisional document, and

to not make any final decisions on contracting out work prior to discussing the matter with the Union.

Each of these required procedures was violated by the Postal Service in this case. Indeed, in the Postal Service's own letter, it states that "[a]fter carefully considering the relevant factors found in Article 32 of the National Agreement, the Postal Service has made the decision" to subcontract. (Emphasis added.) These are blatant violations of Article 32: stated simply and directly, there were no discussions with the Union, nor consideration of the Union's views, prior to the point at which the Postal Service made its final decision.

The Postal Service ends its letter dated August 2, 2019 by claiming, in an apparent attempt to excuse its blatant violations of Article 32, that "[n]o significant impact to the bargaining unit is anticipated." This is utter nonsense. As required by the MOU Re Article 32, the parties have a joint National Subcontracting Committee, through which the parties "commit to ... continuing their discussions" about the STCs, and thus this is plainly an issue of significant impact to the NPMHU's bargaining unit. To make matters even worse, the NPMHU has been told by its Local leadership that supervisors and/or managers at one USPS facility in Kansas City have held stand-up talks with Mail Handlers and told them that an FSS machine is being removed and that 84 jobs will be impacted because of the subcontracting.

On the substantive factors that must be considered under Article 32.1A, here again the Postal Service could not have properly considered or decided upon these factors without Union input, and the Postal Service's failure to seek advance Union input may account for whatever errors made by the Postal Service when it unilaterally "considered" the Article 32 factors. Failure to inform the Union and discuss with the Union is the epitome of arbitrary and capricious conduct that violates Article 32.

For just one example, a key factor under Article 32 is cost, yet the Postal Service's analysis could not have properly



compared the costs of the subcontract with the cost of using USPS employees because the Postal Service could not know the costs of maintaining the work inside the Postal Service without discussing the work with the NPMHU.

In response, the Postal Service claims that the procedural requirements of Article 32 do not apply, because this subcontracting of the Kansas City STC does not have a “significant impact” on the NPMHU bargaining unit. USPS also claims that its decision was eminently reasonable.

**Promotion Pay** – This pending case, which should be the next to be heard, concerns a change to the promotional pay rules contained in the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM). In April 2017, the Postal Service sent notification that it intended to make changes to the ELM that affected promotion pay under Schedule 2 of the mail handler pay scales, which is the wage scale applicable to career employees hired after February 15, 2013.

Under the old Schedule 1, which still applies to all mail handlers hired prior to February 13, 2013, employees who are promoted to Level 5, usually through the bidding process, have been governed by the rule found in ELM Section 422.323, which means the employee “receives a promotional increase equal to two times the most prevalent step in the former grade.” After this amount is added to the mail handler’s former base wage, if the amount falls between two steps of the new grade (Level 5), the employee is slotted at the next higher step in the grade and a new step waiting period begins unless the employee is being repromoted.

According to the Postal Service, this long-standing rule has unintended consequences when applied to the new career pay scale (Schedule 2), which covers all career employees hired after the effective date of the 2013 Fishgold Arbitration Award. The step increases in the new pay scale are significantly larger (approximately \$1434 per step, compared to the most prevalent step in the old scale of approximately \$300), and thus a promoted employee receives an increase of almost \$3000. The Postal Service claims that such a pay increase was unintended and therefore is an unwarranted windfall to the employee.

The Postal Service has therefore amended the language for promotions in ELM, Section 422.323(a)(2) to provide the following: “The Grade 4 employee receives a promotional increase that brings the salary to the same step in Grade 5. The promoted employee will retain the waiting period step credit that had been earned prior to the promotion in calculating the next step increase date.” In addition, the Postal Service has initiated a “hold in place” rule as follows: Employees who were promoted to either Step AA or A will have a one-time additional step waiting period of 52 weeks, minus time in step credit at the time of the most recent promotion. Employees who were promoted to Steps B through O will have a

one-time additional step waiting period of 104 weeks, minus time in step credit at the time of the most recent promotion.

The NPMHU position is that the new step placement rule creates changes in wages, hours, or working conditions that must be bargained with the Union and cannot simply be implemented unilaterally under Article 19. This new rule is also not fair, reasonable or equitable and is inconsistent and in conflict with our National Agreement.

**Safety Ambassador Program** – This pending dispute concerns the Postal Service’s roll out of a new program called the Safety Ambassador Program. According to the Postal Service, the purpose of the program was to create a standardized program based on the existing locally developed Safety Captain Programs. The Safety Ambassador Program is supposed to focus on employee engagement, training, communication, hazard identification/abatement, and accident reduction.

Upon implementation of the program, however, the Union found that selection of the Ambassador in each facility is at the sole discretion of the installation head and is not selected by the Union or with any Union input. The Local Safety and Health Committee established under Article 14 of the National Agreement also is not part of the program, and the program is being implemented in a manner that is interfering with pre-existing safety programs and procedures.

The NPMHU position is that the implementation of this Safety Ambassador Program is a violation of Articles 5, 14, and 19 of the National Agreement.

## UPDATE ON RI-399 NATIONAL JURISDICTIONAL ARBITRATIONS

**Advanced Facer and Canceled System (AFCS):** Arbitration was held on December 8 and 9, 2020. Closing briefs have been submitted by the parties and a decision should be rendered soon.

**Automated Delivery Unit Sorter (ADUS):** After the AFCS, the next National dispute to be heard was the jurisdictional determination issued by the Postal Service concerning the ADUS. Both unions have appealed that decision. The hearings on this case were held on February 17, 2021. Briefs already have been submitted by all parties and a decision is expected soon, but probably will not be issued until after the AFCS case is decided.

**Universal Sorter System:** The next National case that was heard in RI-399 National arbitration dealt with the Universal Sorter System (USS). These hearings began on April 20, 2021, and continued into June 2021 over five separate days. All disputes on the USS were from the APWU, as mail handlers have been assigned as the primary craft for all positions operating the USS. All parties have completed their briefs, which were submitted to the Arbitrator on November 8, 2021, and we are now awaiting the decision from Arbitrator Sharnoff.

If you have any questions about any of these cases or others that are pending, please talk to your union official.



# Contract Administration Department Representative Positions

**As a result of upcoming retirements**, there will be several vacancies in the Contract Administration Department. To ensure that there are qualified and available applicants, the NPMHU is asking any interested Union representatives or members to send in a “statement of interest” to the National Office. Applicants must be willing to relocate. Any statement of interest should include a listing of qualifications, a description of experience in contractual matters, positions held within the Union, any special projects, duties or accomplishments, training programs attended, education/degrees and other pertinent information deemed appropriate. This can be in the form of a simple letter or as formal as a resume. All submissions should be sent to:

**TERESA HARMON**

NPMHU Contract Administration Department  
815 16th St. NW, Suite 5100  
Washington, DC 20006

# FILLING RESIDUALS IN INSTALLATIONS WITHOUT MHA'S

**O**n October 5, 2021, the NPMHU was notified of a new computer software program that will be used by the Postal Service to canvas for residuals in installations that have no Mail Handler Assistants.

When an installation that does not have an MHA creates a residual through the bidding process, that duty assignment is placed on eReassign for a period of 21 days in accordance with the Vacancy MOU. After that period, if no one requests to transfer into this installation, management currently would manually canvas all MHAs within a 50 mile radius of this

installation. Over the last few years many problems with this process occurred, causing the same job to be canvassed several times.

With this new software program, the process will now be handled through the Lite Blue system. After a residual comes off eReassign with no interest expressed for the transfer opportunity, it will be placed into the new program and the computer will automatically show all MHAs that are employed within the 50-mile radius. The computer also will generate a stand-up talk for the installations that employ those MHAs. The stand-up talk also will be

displayed for the period of 10 days. During this period all eligible MHAs will be able to select this position through a program in Lite Blue. At the end of the 10-day period, the senior MHA within the 50-mile radius will be offered the position; that MHA can either accept or reject the bid. If the senior MHA rejects the bid, it will then go to the next senior eligible MHA. If no MHAs select the position, the Postal Service will look to externally hire to fill it.

This new, computer-based process will help ensure that all MHAs eligible for a residual get the chance to select the career position.