

Update on Operational Changes/Four Walls Initiative

By Charlie Cash, President

December 16, 2014—The APWU and the NPMHU met with Senior Plant Manager Laura Hubrich, Maintenance Manager Tom Gray, Senior Manager of Distribution Operations Walter Lujan, and representatives from Labor Relations. We met to discuss the upcoming changes to mail processing operations.

As of the date above the operational plan changes are still on track. Management has admitted they are a bit behind but are moving forward. With the current Congress set to end their session very soon no relief was given to the USPS and no bills were passed that would save the delivery service standards. Based on that, service standards will be changed on January 5, 2015 from overnight delivery to a 2-5 day delivery standard for letters and flats. Priority Mail parcels will still have their 2-3 day standard. With the change in standards mail processing operations will be turned upside down on January 24, 2015.

This is what we know. Beginning January 24, 2015 Tour 1 mail processing as we know it will no longer exist. Mail processing will be changed back to Tour 2 and Tour 3 operations. Although we do not know the exact number of bids in each area we can tell you this: Start times will be 0800 (8:00 am), 1200 (12:00 pm), and 1630 (4:00 pm). We will also be losing 5 DBCS machines because the Service believes they can process mail with fewer machines. These machines will have tarps placed over them and be left unused until July when the Provo consolidation is completed. At this time there is no reason to believe that this consolidation will be put on hold.

Delivery Point Sequence (DPS) will start being run at 0800. Each zone will be run straight through-no stopping and pushing back and waiting for more mail. You will run it straight through. Tour 3 will process 893 mail and originating mail like they currently are. However, once Tour 3 is done with that mail it will wait to be processed for delivery until the next day. Mail processing will be scheduled to end at 0130 (1:30 am) each day.

There will also be changes to flats and maintenance operations. Flats at the ASF will begin processing mail at 1200 instead of 1500 (3:00 pm) which will require a repost of the flats jobs and those currently in flats being made unassigned. Maintenance will need to have more employees working on Tour 1 to complete preventative maintenance routes and more custodians will need to be on Tour 1 to facilitate the cleaning of the GMF when it is being used the least during the day. Management has informed us that will mean skilled maintenance positions and custodian positions will be posted at 0200 (2:00 am) to meet these goals and duty assignments on Tour 2 will be reduced.

What exactly will the impacts be? First, Tour 1, except Express Mail Techs, Registry Clerks, and Expeditors, will be eliminated. This will lead to all Tour 1 Mail Processing Clerks being made unassigned regulars and being excessed from the Tour. Maintenance will have new jobs posted starting at 0200 in both the skilled and custodial positions. This will lead to the elimination of some Tour 2 maintenance duty assignments and some junior employees being excessed from Tour 2. At this time, that is the most specific I can be about maintenance.

There will be many new bids posted on Tour 2 starting at 0800 for all clerks to bid. As these are new duty assignments they will be posted installation wide. Anybody can bid them. The Tour 3 bids will be changed as well. However, there will not be as much of an impact. The 1700 bids will be moved to 1630. Because this is only a half hour change the contract allows for this and the 1700 employees will remain in those duty assignments. The Tour 3 employees who start at 1400 (2:00 pm) and have been in their duty assignments for at least one year will have the option of accepting the new start times of either 1200 or 1630. Management

will identify what jobs will be changed to the noon start times and which ones will be changed to the 1630 start times based on their needs. The APWU will of course monitor to ensure that the changes are implemented following the principles of seniority as outlined in our contract.

You need to prepare for the change. It will not be stopped. This is a national switch over and many offices throughout the country are already well into the switchover. No number of grievances will stop this change nor has the contract been violated by changing mail processing operations. Management has the right under Article 3 to change the way mail is processed within the law. With the law on service standards changing it is happening. I asked all of you to write letters, contact your congressmen, and come to protests but very few of you did—now that it has happened are you ready to stand up and fight side by side with your union?

If you are one of those who will have their job effected you may want to start looking at all the bids that are posted. You will receive written notice around December 24, 2014, that your job will either be changed or eliminated. If you are on Tour 1 you will get notice that you will be excessed unless you bid out of your duty assignment. By January 10, 2015, all the new bids will be posted with an effective date of January 24, 2015. You will need to look at all the bids and bid something. If you do not bid you will be left unassigned and at the whim of management to be assigned a schedule that you may not like. If you bid, you at least have a say in your schedule. You also need to start looking at adjusting your lives and any issues like daycare that you may face. It is also expected that this plan will significantly reduce the number of overtime hours worked and lower the number of hours PSEs will be working because mail will not be committed to be delivered the next day.

At this time, there no changes coming to any truck schedules or any schedules at the Stations and Branches. Management told me they will be observing the changes and the Stations and Branches may see changes in the future. But at this time there will not be any immediate changes. Also, there are no announced or planned changes at the Remote Encoding Center or to parcel operations at the ASF.

There are still a lot of things we are concerned about like vacation roster that will need to be worked out. But your Union is aware of the things that need to be addressed and we are working on making this difficult transition as smooth as possible. We know there will be some problems but we ask that if you encounter problems that you let us know and let us help you address them. Getting angry or yelling and screaming at management will only get you in trouble. If you have problems with daycare and such, we may be able to help you out on a case-by-case basis to give you time to get it addressed. But you need to prepare and know that these changes will be in effect for the long foreseeable future.

The future of cuts and job eliminations is here. Are you ready to fight for your job yet? Are ready to go walk a picket line? Are you ready to help make the public understand how much their Postal Service is being destroyed? If you don't think we need your help now I am not sure what will wake you up. This is a wakeup call to you that Postal Management at the highest levels does not care about our service or the public's postal service. This is just the first step towards privatization and the complete elimination of your jobs. This is one of those rare times when local management will be hurt nearly equally to the craft in the lines of schedules and pay and I for one do not feel one ounce of sympathy for them. It is about time they feel our pain that comes with these destructive changes.

As usual, as the plan develops and management lets us know what is going on we will share that information with you as it comes out and can be shared.

Stand Up! Fight Back! Solidarity!