

NAPS/USPS July 2012 Consultative Meeting Minutes

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USPS

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NAPS

Louis Atkins, President
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Ben Clapp, NAPS Chairman

Agenda Items

1. The new Lead Clerks positions that have been negotiated for the clerical craft involve duties NAPS believes will require training. Based on the job requirements, how will this training be accomplished? Has the Postal Service established the training requirements and will training be provided by qualified trainers?

USPS Response: *Technical training is based on skill requirement for bargaining unit employees. The Lead Clerk Q&A addresses training oversight. Training is provided when necessary. In the job description, working experience is required. When determining necessary training, it is decided locally by the manager or supervisor. The APWU MOU has a provision to review lead clerk jobs after year two. At that time the USPS will review their effectiveness to determine if the position is needed or changes are required or more training is necessary.*

NAPS: Are there a set of training skills the Lead Clerk needs? NAPS is concerned that supervisors will be held accountable for the Lead Clerk not doing their job, because they have not been properly trained. Is there going to be certified training for the Lead Clerk? NAPS is hearing that Lead Clerks will cover the NSD of the supervisor. How will this evolve when having to discipline a Lead Clerk and they state they did not have the training? There is a wide variety of ideas in the field on how to use the lead clerk to run a large operation. Is it the job of the MDO to train the Lead Clerk? What are the parameters? Who will do the training? The USPS has to expect some errors in the field when bringing more Lead Clerks on-line.

USPS Response: *Your point is well taken. The Lead Clerk is not adding another level of supervision. If the supervisor is not in the office for a few hours, the Lead Clerk will make sure the operation continues to run. When you have an employee new to an operation you may need to show them how to do the job. You do not need to be certified to provide such instructions. The USPS stated there are existing SSA Lead Clerk positions in the field and asked NAPS if there have been any problems with the current Lead Clerks? The issue of training and instructing employees is not limited*

to Lead Clerks. It is not uncommon for all employees to be shown how do to various parts of a job or complete a task.

2. NAPS headquarters has been forwarded a question relative to staffing in processing facilities as it relates to the number of pieces of automated equipment a single supervisor should be required to manage.

While we understand that our overall EAS staffing is based on complement, it is the opinion of our members in the field that staffing by ratios in the automated operations does not allow for proper operational oversight when it is expected that one supervisor manages over 10 pieces of automated equipment. What is the optimum number of DBCS's or other automated equipment that a single supervisor be assigned to manage?

USPS Response: *USPS ratios are established based on overall facilities not a segment of a facility. It is local managements' discretion on how supervisory staffing is allocated in a facility. USPS HQ does not track or expect to follow the ratio of a facility tour by tour. USPS HQ does not tell a facility how many supervisors to have on one tour or another. It is the discretion of the facility head to staff their operations. USPS HQ expects the Area to maintain the ratio in a facility, but USPS HQ has allowed for exceptions, but the Area has to make up the ratio in another facility.*

NAPS: It is hard to rationalize that when staffing of machines, there isn't an optimum. There is a facility that has one supervisor for 16 machines. The USPS should have an optimum established for the number of equipment that can be supervised. NAPS believes the Postal Service should have an optimum established for plant operations on how many machines one supervisor should be assigned. NAPS believes there is a problem, since there are no parameters, supervisors are being held accountable for 14-16 machines.

USPS Response: *There are many factors, operating plan, arrival profile of mail, productivity, sweeping rejects, etc. that needs to be looked at with regard to supervisor staffing. There are winners and losers when the USPS establishes optimums. It is best left to the local office to establish the staffing of their operations. The variation of each facility makes it difficult to have an optimum established. Locally, based on the activity of the facility staffing must be adjusted to meet the needs of the operation. Is the supervising of 14-16 machines by one supervisor a result of supervisor vacancies? These staffing issues need to be addressed at the local level, including the need to fill critical vacancies and assigning responsibilities.*

3. NAPS members in the field serve in a variety of roles with our organization including elected and appointed positions at the local level. Does the Postal Service have any prohibitions against EAS employee's serving in an official capacity, who have an EAS position in labor relations? Specifically, NAPS wants to address the position of Labor Relations Specialist.

USPS Response: *There is no specific regulation that prohibits an employee working in labor relations doing NAPS representation. There are duties that may conflict with being in labor relations and a NAPS representative, such as giving advice or providing reviews. You can't serve two masters. Therefore, a conflict of interest can come up. The employee must be mindful that a conflict could*

arise and that their NAPS duties do not trump their USPS job. Access to files and records may create a conflict of interest. If a person puts themselves in a position of a conflict there is a possibility that a violation may occur. It is a chance a NAPS representative must consider. There is an inherent conflict of interest. The concept of serving two masters applies when an employee works in labor relations and is also a NAPS representative.

4. NAPS requests that a meeting be scheduled to receive an update on the Postal Service's position on our ELM 650 proposals that were previously submitted.

USPS Response: *A target date was set for May, but a review had to go back to legal. A final draft is being prepared and a tentative meeting is scheduled the week of August 13.*

5. As representatives of supervisors in the Postal Police force we have received requests from these individuals to provide this employee group with the ability to carry their licensed personal firearms from their residence to their duty stations for personal security. To accommodate this request the USPS would need to provide a secure location at the officers' duty station to secure their personal weapons while they are on duty and to retrieve their personal weapons when they leave their duty station.

Postal Police work in areas where there is high crime and believe that they need to have personal protection during their travel to and from their duty stations. Current postal regulations restrict the carrying of firearms on postal property. However, Postal Inspectors are allowed to carry personal weapons that have been designated as their service weapon onto and around postal property and are allowed to travel to/from their duty station while carrying a licensed weapon. NAPS requests that the Postal Service meet with us to discuss this proposal.

USPS Response: *The short answer is - No. Having firearms on postal property is a violation of federal law and postal policy. Inspectors have been authorized to have their personal weapon designated as an agency weapon. No one can bring a weapon onto postal premises or into a postal facility, unless they are officially designated a 24/7 law enforcement personnel. There are federal regulations that allow the USPS to make firearm policy. Only duty weapons will be allowed on postal property. There is a liability issue of having Postal Police use their own weapons as postal service weapons outside USPS duties. Postal Inspectors have full law enforcement status—24/7. Postal Police do not have 24/7 duties, responsibilities or authority.*

The primary duty of Postal Police is the security of postal property and employees. At the end of the day it is a liability cost to the USPS and is not part of our mission. The USPS does not need a postal security force 24/7 outside the USPS to do the mission of the agency. In addition, changing the policy would provide the agency with a liability issue, which the USPS does not want to take on. The role of postal office security is important, but it is not the agency's mission to have the Postal Police as a full time law enforcement employee outside the USPS. Postal Police are not 24/7 on duty law enforcement personnel as the Inspection Service or municipal police.

6. In our representation of supervisors who serve in the Postal Police force, we are requesting that the Postal Service recognize members of the Postal Police force under the guidelines established by the Office of Personnel Management.

As of now, Postal Police Supervisors derive their statutory authority under Title 18, USC, 3061 (c). Postal Police Supervisors are recognized as Federal Law Enforcement Officers under HR – 218, The Law Enforcement Officer Safety Act (2004) (PL 108-277 – July 22, 2004). Unfortunately this recognition has not extended itself to their retirement.

For this agenda item we have included the guidelines that pertain to Physical Security Specialist/Law Enforcement Security Officers (LESO), as they most closely compare to the duties and responsibilities, as Postal Police Supervisors.

NAPS believes that the solution is Postal Police Supervisors positions should be considered as Physical Security Specialist/Law Enforcement Security Officers (LESO). LESO's are sworn law enforcement officers and trained security experts who provide security assessments, inspections, and oversight for contract guards, and respond to crimes in progress. We feel that the GS-0080 classification, most closely aligns itself to what their duties and responsibilities are as Postal Police Supervisors and that the Postal Service should grant them this categorization and recognition.

USPS Response: *The Inspection Service is different than Postal Police. USPS does not regulate retirement benefits, OPM does. Legislation would need to be changed. When it comes down to job duty and responsibilities, Postal Inspectors have wider duties than Postal Police. Protection is the primary duties of Postal Police. Only acts of Congress can give LESO.*

7. NAPS is requesting an update on the AMS positions.

USPS Response: *The Postal Service scheduled a teleconference with the Manager of Labor Relations Field Operations to discuss the AMS positions. NAPS was informed that 318 EAS AMS positions would be going back to the craft.*

NAPS: Based on the expected loss of EAS AMS positions, NAPS is requesting that it be provided with the names and locations of impacted NAPS members. In addition, NAPS is requesting what plan the USPS has for RIF or placement of impacted employees. Another teleconference is being scheduled to address NAPS' concerns regarding members in AMS.

After the consultative meeting NAPS issued the following update from USPS HQ regarding the AMS positions. This update was sent out in Board Memo 035-12, which stated:

In the aftermath of National Arbitrator Carleton Snow ordering the return of EAS AMS jobs to the craft in accordance with the current Collective Bargaining Agreement, NAPS has been working to see what plans the USPS will have for the impacted employees. As a result of the recently completed job audit; it has been determined that 318 jobs will be returned to the craft.

During the course of our recently concluded consultative; NAPS inquired to USPS Labor Relations Policy on whether or not a RIF would have to be conducted for the impacted EAS employees. The individual who is in charge of this matter is based out of Chicago and has been unavailable to

address this issue. NAPS is currently working with Labor Relations to secure this information as quickly as possible in the event that RIF Avoidance is required. We will keep you informed further developments.