

# Postal Worker West

Issued by:  
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## AMP Consolidations On Hold, Not Cancelled!

**WASHINGTON DC**– The PMG recently announced an indefinite “hold” on further AMP consolidations which some are misinterpreting as “cancelling” of the dreaded Area Mail Processing consolidations.

In late January the PMG announced in the Daily Journal of the US Government the *“postponement” of implementation date of the Revised Service Standards*. This resulted in a Valentine’s Day letter from USPS Contract Administration Mgr. P. Devine to the National Union President.

The letter was a notice that excessing related to the AMP

events has been placed on an **“indefinite hold”** and that management was releasing the residual vacancies that had been withheld for placement of potentially impacted employees.

### Service Standards Revision Key To Consolidations

“Too many postal workers are reading this as management caving in and stopping the AMP consolidations,” warned Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez.

He explained that since 2011 management has given notice of USPS intentions to revise the Service Standards so that

management could implement major consolidations of the postal network.

In 2012 management began its next phase of the network realignments upon publishing the service standard changes connected to those AMPs. The recent “hold” is actually a revision of the revision of Service Standard changes.

“This Federal Register announcement simply postpones the implementation date of service standard changes that were to become effective February 1st of this year,” said Gonzalez.

“No employee should be



**AMPs have gutted many plants**

dancing in the aisle”, he quipped. Once the PMG gets his ducks in a row, and figures out further rationalization of the network he will publish another revision with an effective date for service standard changes.

### Multiple Issues Erupt

The National Union’s initial posting of the supposed “good news” sparked a host of issues and immediate retorts.

The release of the “withheld” residual assignments must be monitored by Local Unions.

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## PMG Not Backing Off Staples Plan



In a video reportedly forced on many throughout the postal service the PMG proclaimed he was “not backing away from Staples.”

Donahoe likened management’s placement of postal units into Staples as a “rising tide that lifts all ships.” His propaganda mirrors the scripted messages postal managers feed the

Media in response to union protests. Managers claim they want to grow the business and make postal services convenient and accessible for everyone.

In the same agitprop video the PMG decried those claiming management is trying to privatize the postal service.

“Don’t let people get you confused about privatization”, said Donahoe. He then declares himself a “39 year person” and states he has no intention on privatizing the postal service.

### Many Beg To Differ

“But, as in most cases of the bosses’

self serving claims the actions of the PMG speaks louder than his forked tongue,” said Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez.

“Almost everything the PMG and his minions are doing reeks of privatization and postal workers who fall for the Employer’s disclaimer do so at their own peril. From the elimination of postage vending machines and neighborhood mail boxes, the contracting out of parcel sortation to our competitor, reduction in post office hours to the closure and sale of historic post offices none of which ‘grows the business’ all that and more amounts to privatization.” said the Coordinator

# PMG & Realtor Say– Blah Blah To OIG Alert On Potential Financial Risk Associated With Sale Of Post Offices



Management rejected a recent OIG Alert on the risk associated with CB Richard Ellis (CBRE) contract which management modified to allow CBRE to negotiate on behalf of the Postal Service and the prospective buyers and lessors of postal real estate.

For some time now many union officials and community groups have condemned the sale of some of the country's great historic post offices. The OIG report revealed that CRBE was responsible for the sale of more than **\$189 billion** of properties and lease transactions but did not disclose how much of that was for P.O.s.

The audit alert reveals a possible conflict of interest in that the contractor provides a range of property values to negotiate a lease and then received a commission from the lessor based on the property value negotiated and the Postal Service paid the contractor to act on its behalf in negotiating leases.

The OIG warned that these conflicts of interest could lead to financial loss to the Postal Service and decreased public trust in the Postal Service's brand.

## So What?

The bosses, in typical managerial logic, disagreed with the OIG and claimed that

they get a wider exposure to potential offerors and, thus ensure rigorous competition. They claim so called "dual agency" arrangements are a common practice. [WOW!]

Management then claimed that CBRE is unlikely to risk its reputation and economic resources by violating brokerage laws. They also said CBRE has no incentive to violate brokerage laws concerning dual agency because their license would be at risk.

Management raised issues with the OIG for saying that *"Given the multiple roles CBRE plays within the real estate industry, the Postal Service should take steps to lessen the potential for CBRE to engage in transactions that create conflicts of interest"* The bosses point out that the CBRE contract requires notification of any actual potential conflict of interests such as owning or having interest in a property that may be a part of a Postal Service real estate transaction.

Management also took issue with the OIG's notice that it will conduct a full audit but, they're going ahead with dual agency. Meanwhile, the Boston Business Journal reveals that CB Richard Ellis is fighting

back through email basically saying where there is an opportunity for CBRE, using different sales teams, to represent the seller and the buyer it is disclosed to USPS in advance for approval. When management says ok they claim controls are put in place to prevent confidential information from being shared. [WOW!]

## Raising Cane

"Why should postal workers care about the sale of post offices? Because piece by piece the Service is being privatized. When they close a post office it not only affect postal jobs it impacts the community as well," said Regional Coordinator Gonzalez Patrons must go elsewhere!

Postal management is getting rid of many post offices and directing patrons to non postal venues such as Staples. All postal workers should come out and support the community activists fighting to preserve the post offices. *"If postal workers don't pay attention to the sale of post offices soon they won't have one to work in,"* warned Gonzalez.

# Postal Service Made A Year To Date \$912 million in Profit

Recently released financial reports reveal that USPS made a year to date profit of \$912 million with a showing of \$122 million in profits for January 2014.

But management continues to blame almost every move they make to cut services and the workforce on the dire financial condition of USPS. The reality is when USPS is forced by a congressionally mandated law to then turn around and pay \$475 million (on paper) our bosses release to the media world that USPS **lost \$354 million** and is bleeding \$25 million each day. This in turn is reported on the news giving the American public the impression USPS is a failing business



and should be privatized. Postal bosses continue to blame labor costs for the money problems of the service.

"The fact is postal wages and benefits of workers dropped by 2.3% (about \$1 billion) but bosses and cronies keep blaming us for their mismanagement," said Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez.

"They don't report the bosses increased rates by about 4% and at the same time increased their own wages by 1%. Nor do they place the blame squarely on Congress where it should be. Instead the PMG capitalizes on the "manufactured crisis" to implement their *Transformation Plan* concocted as far back as 2002 thru 2006," explained Gonzalez. Of course they don't mention the PMG's annual compensation package of \$436,540. nor their bonus payments either.

Area postal bosses are pushing District managers to push their retail supervisors to push better for customer satisfaction by speed ups at retail units.

The bosses are proclaiming that Wait Time In Line (WTIL) is top priority and must improve. They want this to occur they claim, through increased employee engagement, effective staffing and effective scheduling.

Last year it was reported that 3.2 million customers were handled each day at Post Offices ( 31,135 retail units ) and the average waiting period in line was only 2.34 minutes. [ *Editor's note: these stats seem to be missing from the recently released 2014 so called postal facts. ]*

The effective staffing and scheduling the Area bosses are calling for **does not**



## WTF is the WTIL Push?

equate to fully staffing the window counters. Instead, the actions of the Districts is to "realign" schedules, abolish and repost duty assignments impose so called "Area Best Practices" One Area official asked for the

assistance of the Regional Coordinator to help reduce the Wait Time In Line but did not elaborate.

*"It amazes me, management wants to reduce wait in line time yet guts the window operations. They take out vending machines so patrons have to stand in line for one stamp. They close post offices, reduce hours forcing patrons to go to another P.O. They don't fully stock stamps. They bully window clerks and alter schedules which make no sense, managers perform clerk work at higher wages and now they want to reduce wait in line time"* expressed Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez

*"Typical corporate bosses- wanting more from less. Here is an idea...fully staff the window operations !!!"*

*Note WTF = Waiting "Till Forever*

## Do It Right !



**Give quality window service but do not cut corners! Make sure to input all transactions. Don't just take parcels over the counter without inputting the transaction. Every transaction counts towards earned hours. Report unsafe conditions and discrepancies in security.**

### National Union Leaders Meet In Executive Session

**St Louis, MO**– All the elected officers of the National Union are conducting an Executive Council (NEC) meeting to discuss a broad range of issues facing the union internally and within the USPS.

The week long session will be the first under the union's new Administration leadership. The former administration use to convene the NEC o have the entire national union leadership on one page

### AMP Withheld Residuals released continued from page 1

The HQ news report on consolidation holds and the release of withheld assignments initially indicated that PSEs would be converted and for locals to contact their Regional Coordinators if problems arose. After several protestations the news report was modified but still has some discrepancies including the statement "...the Memorandum ...does not allow agreement to revert a residual vacancy by agreement at the local level." "That sentence makes no sense, the 11-7-11 Memorandum cited in the news article applies only to "withheld" residual vacancies ," explained the Western Region Coordinator who sought clarification from the National office.

#### Further Talks Held With Postal Officials

National Union officials held a subsequent meeting with postal officials in D.C. seeking clarification that the AMP "indefinite holds" be proclaimed cancellations. Also the parties met on possible PSE conversion mechanism. The National President informed he would fully brief the union officers . When asked for his take on those issues Regional Coordinator Gonzalez responded he considered the effort a positive step and eagerly awaits the briefing and disclosure of the unions' strategy.



NEC Meets In Saint Louis

prior to National conventions. It is the National Convention that is the supreme governing body of the Union.

#### Actions & Presentations

All the Departments of the Union which provide services to the membership reported to the NEC. Of particular importance are the Legislative and Organization reports. The Union's financ-

es and structure are also discussed. Multiple issues involving grievance-arbitration backlogs, PSEs , performance of craft work by managers, release of withheld assignments and a host of internal matters are debated.

"Debate on issues is always healthy provided we act in the interests of the members," relayed Omar Gonzalez.

He also pointed out that the new Administration took over a little over three months ago and in most cases is responding as quickly as administratively possible.



Carriers Do Not Have Less Than 40 hour jobs

## NALC Delivers Halt To Excessing of Certain Clerks

The Letter Carriers' Union prevailed in arbitration securing an award by Arbitrator Nolan prohibiting the Postal Service from reassigning any clerk craft employee who does not meet the definition of full-time employee under the NALC contract

into a full-time carrier craft position.

The case which involved the NALC, Mailhandlers', and APWU took 2 years to reach disposition. The appeal evolved from the reassignment of a clerk who had a non-tradition assignment (NTFT) into the carrier craft as a Full-time carrier. The NALC grieved claiming the former clerk should have been reassigned as a PTF carrier. NALC challenged management's right to transfer (reassign) a clerk who does not meet the NALC definition of Full-time employee into a full-time carrier position under their CBA Article 7 and that USPS/APWU CBA cannot violate the USPS/NALC CBA. The APWU argued that their contract clearly defined NTFT employees as full-time even if they hold 30-hour per week jobs. The Mailhandlers argued basically in support of NALC. Management sided with the APWU and added their points about "NTFT employees".

## WHO IS RIGHT?

Arbitrator Nolan said both APWU and NALC were correct but since USPS negotiated with different unions and reached different terms management cannot reasonably promise contradictory things to different unions. If management negotiates conflicting agreements, it is stuck with the result...." in short, when dealing with cross-craft assignments, the gaining bargaining unit's contract must apply.

Management complained that if NALC wins it would paint them into a corner and limit their ability to engage in cross-craft excessing. The arbitrator didn't buy it. "If complying with the agreement [management] negotiated with the NALC creates a problem with the APWU, that is a problem for those two parties to resolve," said Arbitrator Nolan.

## NOW WHAT?

The impact on the clerk craft, which management often claims is over-staffed, remains to be seen. The APWU's Industrial Relations Department interprets the CBA and will eventually, it is presumed, issue a position on the matter. Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez, however, stated that the award will certainly affect the Article 12 involuntary reassignment process. "How exactly that plays out remains to be seen. Unfortunately, it appears too many postal parties continue to believe NTFTs are employees. NTFTs are assignments!," Gonzalez said.



The PMG's propoganda video likened his Staples deal to a tide that lifts all ships. The reality is that the secret Staples deal is a tidal wave of privatization regardless of what the Postmaster General claims.

In this secret deal management has built and installed postal retail units in the privately owned Staples. This differs from the so called Village Post Offices but has the same intent— *close U.S. Post Offices in the near vicinity.*

If the PMG really cared about the communities he, and his managers, would increase the hours our Post Offices are open, restore the postage vending machines, fully staff the window operations and stop selling our nation's post offices paying the same company representing the buyers.

Management is more concerned about major mailers then the millions of Americans who still use and need the **UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE— America's Post Office!**

## Is Congress Ready To Lay An Easter Egg?

Rumblings indicate that Senator Carper wants to take action on the devastating postal reform bill S.1486 before Easter Recess.

Congress takes another break on April Fool's day and if action is not taken to vote on this proposed law, that guts services, it may not occur until after the mid term elections. On the House side arch enemy Cong. Issa will try to get votes on each of his proposals that will close more post offices and end door to door delivery. Meanwhile National Legislative Director John Marcotte is meeting with Senator Cummings on postal banking services favored by millions, backed by the union but opposed by banks. **CALL CONGRESS AND OPPOSE S.1486 & ISSA'S BILL**



## MAINTENANCE UNDER RENEWED ATTACK

National Assistant Maintenance Director Idowu Balogun has issued an alert to Locals over management's attempt to change how housekeeping determines the number of custodians assigned to facilities. The intent is to cut custodial jobs and turn over postal work to contractors. Ironically it was a private company that conducted the study referred to as "Cleaning Team". Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez is alarmed at the impact to safety and supports the call for Locals to immediately request and secure their current custodial package (Forms 4852,4869 and 4839) and get ready to fight.

## OIG- P.O. Patrons Oppose Reduced Hours...Duh!

A recent OIG study of "America" reveals most participants don't want P.O. hours reduced, 98% would be negatively affected if USPS ceased to exist, those that work want Saturday delivery, and some see usefulness in offering new services. In a related story the push for P.O. banking services is gaining steam. The Union supports expanding services, increased hours ,6 day delivery and no change to service standards! !