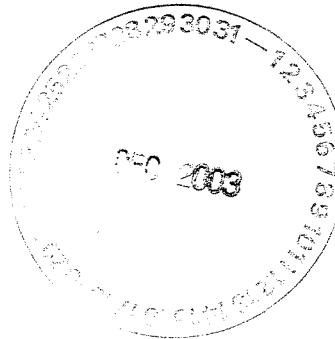




December 22, 2003

Certified Mail Number
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Mr. William Burrus
President
American Postal Workers
Union, AFL-CIO
1300 L Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005-4128

Dear Mr. Burrus:

This is in response to your December 8 correspondence to Mr. Patrick R. Donahoe, Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President, concerning his November 19 memorandum on Part-time Flexible (PTF) Conversions. Your letter has been referred to this office for response.

Mr. Donahoe's memorandum neither instructs nor encourages managers to violate the National Agreement. Managers are expected to be aware of and comply with the provisions of the National Agreement relating to the conversion of PTF employees to full-time. Your letter reflects that you misunderstood the plain meaning of the memorandum.

Mr. Donahoe's memorandum encourages the efficient use of work hours based on workload, a careful needs assessment of vacancies, and the use of other complement management skills to ensure cost-efficient operations, all in accordance with our contractual requirements.

Our commitment to maximize full-time employment pursuant to our contractual obligation remains unchanged. It is our responsibility, to manage our complement levels and employee mix efficiently while complying with those contractual obligations.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (202)268-3833.

Sincerely,

Sandra J. Savoie

John W. Dockins

Manager

Contract Administration

for



American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

1300 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005

December 8, 2003

William Burrus
President
(202) 842-4246

Mr. Patrick Donahoe
Chief Operating Officer
U.S. Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
Washington, D.C. 20260

Subject: Part-time Flexible (PTF) Employee Conversions

Dear Mr. Donahoe:

National Executive Board

William Burrus
President

Cliff "C.J." Guffey
Executive Vice President

Robert L. Tunstall
Secretary-Treasurer

Greg Bell
Industrial Relations Director

James "Jim" McCarthy
Director, Clerk Division

Steven G. "Steve" Raymer
Director, Maintenance Division

Robert C. "Bob" Pritchard
Director, MVS Division

Regional Coordinators

Sharyn M. Stone
Central Region

Jim Burke
Eastern Region

Elizabeth "Liz" Powell
Northeast Region

Terry R. Stapleton
Southern Region

Omar M. Gonzalez
Western Region


I am in receipt of a copy of your instructions to field operations on the subject of Part-time Flexible (PTF) Employee Conversions. The document is disturbing in its contents, instructing managers to violate the National Agreement. As the Chief Operating Officer it is disturbing that you would go into such detail in instructing your subordinates to avoid the conversion of part time employees.

In 1971 the national parties incorporated into the National Agreement a commitment to maximize the number of full time employees and minimize the number of part time employees. Prior to this agreement, the parties had engaged in litigation and congressional action over the obligation to maximize full time employment and in good faith agreement was reached on contractual language reflecting that commitment. Your letter reverses this commitment. Your instructions are intended to maximize part time employment and minimize full time.

I note that despite the details of your letter regarding steps that should be considered in maximizing part time employees the instructions do not include the obligation to comply with the contractual provisions. After the protracted disagreements over the use of casual employees resulting in the liability of millions of dollars paid to resolve grievances, your instructions will lead to contractual disputes that like the casual violations will be added to future liabilities.

I request that these instructions be invalidated as in conflict with the parties long standing commitment to maximize full time employees and defer to the negotiation process if the Postal Service desires to modify the language of our agreement.

Sincerely,


William Burrus
President

WB:hfa
opeiu#2, afl-cio

PATRICK R. DONAHOE
Chief Operating Officer
and Executive Vice President

UNITED STATES
POSTAL SERVICE

November 19, 2003

VICE PRESIDENTS, AREA OPERATIONS
MANAGER, CAPITAL METRO OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: Part-time Flexible (PTF) Employee Conversions

Complement trends continue to move in the right direction. You are doing an excellent job in capturing attrition by avoiding career hiring. Opportunities still exist in the area of part-time flexible (PTF) conversions. By avoiding the conversion of PTF employees to regular status, we will maintain the flexibility needed to adjust work hours to workload.

While there are valid reasons for PTF conversion, there are also reasons why conversions should be avoided. I ask for your commitment to prevent unwarranted conversion of PTF employees to full-time status. With our career hiring severely restricted, we are not adding new PTF employees into our employee complement pools. PTF employees are a valuable component of the complement mix. As you continue your focus on limiting PTF conversions, please consider the following:

- Before you post a full-time duty assignment for bid, be aware that if there are no bidders, you may have to convert a PTF employee to full-time status at the end of the bid cycle.
- Encourage the human resources group to begin a thorough bid management review. Be sure that you do not have vacant full-time duty assignments that have not been reverted nor have they been posted for bid within the contractual time limits.
- Remember, when you are presented with a proposed casual in lieu of grievance, it may seem less expensive if the union requests PTF a conversion rather than a monetary settlement. What you settle today through PTF conversions, may result in greater costs through the loss of flexibility for years to come.
- Schedule PTF employees according to the workload by each work day. While I recognize that each employee has a financial need, PTF employees are hired to work a flexible schedule.
- Full-time flexible employees may seem to be a reasonable alternative to PTF employees. Full-time flexible employees are created when we make scheduling errors. While you can flex their schedule, you cannot reduce their daily work hours.

We can maintain our present limited PTF flexibility through management oversight. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Al Lariviere, Manager, Complement Planning, at 202-268-4343.



Patrick R. Donahoe

cc: Mr. Rapp
Mr. Vigilante