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VICE PRESIDENT, LABOR RELATIONS



January 23, 1996

VICE PRESIDENTS, AREA OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: RIF Procedures

In light of recent Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) decisions, there has been some confusion over the process to be implemented in reassigning bargaining unit employees.

The MSPB has issued decisions regarding placement of veterans preference bargaining unit employees in lower level positions. Placing veterans preference bargaining unit employees in lower level positions, even with saved grade, has been determined to be a reduction in force (RIF). The MSPB has decided that the Postal Service must follow RIF procedures when placing veterans preference bargaining unit employees in lower level positions.

Historically, the Postal Service has utilized Article 12 of the Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) in placing employees in lower level positions and will continue to do so when appropriate and not in conflict with RIF procedures. The provisions contained in Article 12 regarding placement of employees are based on the employee's seniority, and do not recognize veterans preference. This could potentially conflict with the RIF procedures contained in federal statute. We should continue to use Article 12 reassignment procedures unless it is apparent that a veterans preference eligible will be adversely affected (placed in a lower grade), at which time Article 6 provisions will be utilized.

The provisions of Article 6 of the CBAs provide a procedure by which bargaining unit employees can be placed in lower level duty assignments which comply with RIF procedures. My department has developed training and guidelines for the placement of veterans preference bargaining unit employees under the provisions contained within Article 6. Training will be completed shortly for all areas concerning the applicable contractual procedures to be utilized to reassign employees under Article 6.

The Headquarters/Field Labor Relations Group is available to work with your area staff to develop a site specific plan to accomplish the necessary placement of affected employees.


Joseph J. Mahon, Jr.