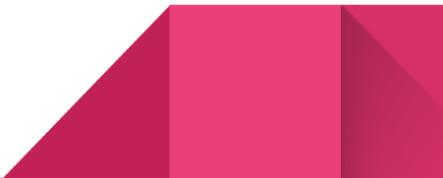


# MTS Local 152 Newsletter

Q1 2019

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### President's Report

Happy New Year! With all that is going on in the world today, we have so much to be thankful for. The struggles continue with our fight for a good contract.

A tentative agreement was reached by the APWU National Leaders and USPS. However, our Rank and File Advisory Committee had issues with what was in the tentative agreement. The Committee felt some of the things in the tentative agreement were not in the best interest of the membership overall. Therefore, they voted the tentative agreement down. The next step is interest arbitration. Have no fear, this does not mean we no longer have a contract and management can run amuck. The APWU will still operate under the current contract until we have a new contract.

### Fighting for Bid Jobs

This has been a major topic of discussion at our Union meetings for over a year now. I am sure many have noticed the increased number of job reversions as people bid off or retire. In Plant Support Kris Stoyanova has been aggressively reverting bid jobs in the plant. **Article 37.3.A.2** Reversion: When a vacant duty assignment is under consideration for reversion, the local Union President will be given an opportunity for input prior to a decision. The decision to revert or not 145 Article 37.3.A.4.c(3) to revert the duty assignment shall be made not later than 28 days after it becomes vacant and if the vacant assignment is reverted, a notice shall be posted advising of the action taken and the reasons therefor. The union has met with management on every reversion and we argue that these jobs are needed. We are extremely short staffed on all 3 tours but especially tour 1. Management is utilizing overtime and the PSE's to supplement these reversions. I want to send a big thank you to our Clerk Craft Director, as he is diligently fighting these reversions by filing grievances on every reversion. The union has been successful by documenting the overtime hours, mail going out late, and PSE's working 40 plus hours. Managements push back to this is attendance. While the union is fighting this, we need all members to fight with us. Please remember that there should be two people when running the DBCS; a feeder and a sweeper. Please do not allow management to convince you to run the machines by yourself as it is a safety hazard.

### Conversion



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In November we had two PSE's converted to full time regulars. There were two bid jobs in e-reassign with no successful transfer. As a result, we were able to get 2 conversions. We currently have 3 more jobs in e-reassign awaiting a successful transfer or possible conversion. I know it has been a long time coming for our PSE's, but we ask that you continue to hold on. We know management has done everything possible to avoid conversions. However, we are at the point where many of our regulars are entering a new chapter of their life; retirement. We are confident that with retirements and a new contract, the union will be successful with more PSE's being converted to full time regular employees.

### Lead Clerks

Lead clerks were negotiated in our Collective Bargaining Agreement with the intent of giving more duties and responsibilities to the clerk craft and reduce the usage of 204-B's by clerks. Being a lead clerk is not an easy job because it seems the lead clerks get caught between a rock and a hard place. We have seen management use and abuse lead clerks by requiring them to operate as if they are supervisors and making them think that they have to. There are also times when the lead clerk must work side by side with the very employee they oversee. The Union did not design lead clerks to be supervisors so therefore, they are not supervisors. In the newsletter I have included the Lead Clerk Mail Processing and Lead Sales and Services Associate job description in hopes it will give everyone a better understanding of how a Lead Clerk should be operating. Please see your shop steward if you have any further questions, concerns or issues on this matter.

### We Must Stand Together

With the current White House Administration Unions are under attack. We must stand together with our brothers and sisters of other Unions and fight together. The Supreme Court decision in the Janus v AFSCME case, which now limits the freedom of millions of public sector workers to come together as strong unions, now threatens us all as Americans. It is Unions that help build the middle class. The next step of Janus supporters is to divide workers and erode their power to improve work conditions through members only work unions. We must stand strong!

In Solidarity,

**Trina Wynn**

**President**



### A word from the Vice President

As we have entered the winter season which brings with it the threat of snow storms I wanted to briefly touch on the language in the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (usually referred to as the ELM), as it talks about storms.

Storms are addressed in section 519 of the ELM under Acts of God. There are 3 points:

1. Involves community disasters such as fire, flood, and storms.
2. The disaster must be general rather than personal in scope and impact.
3. It must prevent groups of employees from working or reporting to work.

A partial definition of Administrative Leave is, absences from duty authorized by appropriate postal officials ..... Determination of whether absences were due to acts of god and whether the employees could have with reasonable diligence reported for duty. In other words what attempts did the employee make to try and report for duty? If we have to make a case for employees to get administrative leave it is important to get statements and documents from you as proof of how the storm prevented you from reporting to work. Some examples of documents that you can provide would be pictures of the results of the storm how it affected you, newspaper articles, news reports, police reports, neighborhood association statements, neighbors statements, etc It is important to know that if you are calling out due to a storm the first step is to request administrative leave if that is what you want to be paid. The language in the ELM does not allow for you to call in requesting other leave types and then later ask for administrative leave. The ELM states that employees on annual leave, sick leave, or LWOP remain in such status. They are not entitled to administrative leave. These are arguments that Labor has made during cases that we have put forth in the past. I know that the system does not allow you to select administrative leave if management has not approved it already; it makes you select an alternative type of leave which doesn't include sick leave. However, you must first ask for the administrative leave and then make a note if the system makes you select an alternative leave type. Also, when you report to work make sure you submit a leave slip for administrative leave and have them disapprove it. This is documentation that your intention when you called in was to request administrative leave.

**Note: Employees in the event of an emergency (which includes weather emergencies) can call the USPS National Emergency Hotline at 1-888-363-7462 to find out if postal operations have been curtailed.**

After months of negotiations the APWU and the USPS were unable to come to an agreement on a new contract. We are at an impasse. The next step is to go to interest arbitration. In the past these decisions have taken about a year or more. We are still operating under the 2015 to 2018 contract until a new one is decided. In the recent January/February

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2019 Postal Worker magazine there is a two-page question and answer on what the process is. If you haven't already read it, check it out.

2018 was a very busy year for grievances in our local union as a whole. There were a total of 915 grievances filed; approximately 630 clerk, 240 maintenance, and 45 motor vehicle. Most of them have been resolved and some are still moving through the grievance arbitration procedure. The clerk craft can use some more stewards. If reading, writing, and advocating for what is right is something you like to do, we can sure use you. **Be a steward**

Yours in solidarity,

**Karen Jester-Witkowski**

**Vice President**

### Secretary-Treasurer's Words of Wisdom

Greetings fellow hardworking Union members,

I hope you enjoyed the Holidays. Spending quality time with family and friends never gets old.

Our APWU contract expired on 9/20/18. The APWU had negotiations with the USPS on a new negotiated contract. Our National officers and committees did everything in their power to get us the best negotiated contract they could. Sadly, a new contract never came to fruition and we are now headed to binding arbitration. This process will probably take 4-6 months before it is resolved.

Recently President Trump proposed privatizing the USPS. The APWU is totally against this and will do everything in its power to fight this proposal and secure our jobs. I urge you to call your local representatives and voice your concern as well.

I would like to once again talk about Union meetings. As per the Local Constitution we have 9 meetings per year. Our next meeting will be on March 3rd 2019, there will be much to talk about. The meeting will be at our Union office at 240 South Dupont Highway Suite 200B New Castle De 19720(This is the new Union office located at the 13/40 split on the northbound side.) The entrance to the suite is on the back side of the building behind the Granite store. There is an APWU sign on the door.



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Looking forward to warmer weather!

In Unionism,

**Doug Ritter**

**Secretary/Treasurer**

### **Notes From the Legislative Director**

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

Welcome into the New Year as the 116 Congress has begun in January; we now have a majority of Democrats in the House of Representative and still the majority of Republicans in the Senate. There are still issues that we want to continue to fight, like privatization of the postal service and cutting of our benefits to name a few. We are still encouraging the membership to call or write your Senators and House of Representative and let them know where you stand on those issues and other issues that we live with from day to day. If you need their email and or address, please do not hesitate to contact the union office and we will provide the information to you.

The Committee for Political Action better known as COPA needs your help too. Your voluntary contributions to COPA help give our Union a stronger voice in Washington DC. If you like to contribute or find out how to please come to the union office. We have the forms or assist you in filling them out.

**Malcolm Bratcher,**

**Legislative Director**

### **Clerk Craft Director**

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

I hope everyone had a nice Christmas and New Year's Holiday. I also want to welcome the clerks from the Bear and Kirkwood Post Offices to our Union.

In mid-December, I and one PSE had a meeting with the Plant Manager George Ruffin to discuss the possibility of having a more stable schedule for the Tour 3 PSEs. The meeting lasted an hour. I found out that George is long-winded.



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George agreed that rotating every 2 weeks is unnecessary. He was thinking about a 90 day rotation. But George has moved on and now we have a new Plant Manager named Jason McAllister. There is a Labor/Management meeting scheduled in February and I will bring this issue up for discussion with him then.

I have started filing grievances back November for when the Tour 3 PSEs work over 8 hours and the Full-Time Regulars on the OT list are not being maxed-out at 12 hours. These grievances will continue until Management stops overworking the PSEs.

Don't forget you have 6 months from December 5th to use your 8 hours of Administrative Leave from the Day of Mourning for President Bush's death.

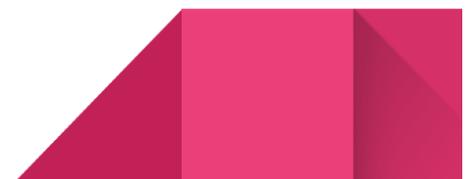
One last thing, there was an incident at a station in December where the Manager and the Supervisors tried to trick the clerk out of her 3 days of Bereavement Leave. They told her that Grandmothers are not included but would allow her to leave early one day. Grandmothers are included. They also offered her to switch her days off. FYI, everyone covered by the APWU is entitled to 3 whole days of Bereavement Leave. You can use Annual Leave, Sick Leave or LWOP. PSEs can use Annual Leave or just receive no pay. Management backed off in this case and the clerk got her 3 full days off. Contact your Shop Steward if you think Management is trying to trick you or if you feel they are ignorant of the contract.

**Charlie Phillips**

**Clerk Craft Director**

## MAINTENANCE CRAFT

Hello to everyone from the Maintenance Department here at the Delaware P&DC. We maintenance shop stewards have been super busy filing grievances and trying to protect our Maintenance Craft jobs. Management has been sending many article 32 studies to the Local Union . Article 32 studies are performed by management whenever they feel that they have a need to contract out some of our work. It used to be that management did not follow the directives stated in Article 32 and we prevailed on most of those grievances. Now, management has learned to do their "due diligence" and it is becoming increasingly harder for us to enjoy success. We have filed at least five or six grievances for snow removal. Management signed a contract with a contractor way back in 2014 for them to do all snow removal. Thanks to your shop Stewards Mike Padilla and Doug Ritter and Malcolm Bratcher. These guys are doing a bang up job staying abreast of all that is going on here. Your" Maintenance Team" is doing everything possible to make sure that the voice of the maintenance craft employees does not fall on deaf ears. We have also been filing a lot of article 32 grievances on the BEM



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side. We must face the reality of the situation people. Management is destroying the entire maintenance craft. They are contracting out our work at an alarming rate! If we don't take up "arms" and fight back we will surely go by the way of the dinosaurs, aka extinction. The only occupational group that is growing in maintenance is MM's. This is because apparently management feels that they can train the MM's to perform ET and MPE work. We already see that management has downgraded most of the ECBM tasks to include level 7 as the minimum skill level required. The BEM's have a one year moratorium on excessing and then, they will continue with things such as "run to failure" etc. etc.

As everyone knows by now management has a completely new Maintenance team. We have a new MES, Brandon Cotellese, MMO Steve Bracey, and MM Dennis Dernbach. So far I am not seeing much difference from the last regime. At least this time our MMO, Steve Bracey was an ET 11. His great wealth of knowledge will serve our department well. He is already assisting our ET's, MPE's and MM's with OJT etc.

How can we help, you ask? That's easy! Grieve EVERYTHING that you see wrong. If you see safety violations, fill out a form 1767. Force management to actually do at least a part of their job. If you see contractors performing your work get in the book and file a grievance ! It is incumbent on all Postal Workers to join in the fight. Everyone should get involved as much as you can. Remember, "the job you save ,may be your own. Our only hope of preserving our way of life is for us ALL to FIGHT TOGETHER !!

In Solidarity,

**Andrew Casson,**

**Maintenance Craft Director**

## MOTOR VEHICLE CRAFT

The end of 2018 came with some clarification on if management can take a driver off their bid job to perform other duties. The Union filed several grievances on this issue that resulted in some drivers receiving a remedy of out of schedule premium for the hours not worked on their bid job. A step 2 settlement was signed by management and the Union that clarifies the contractual right of MVS employee's right to their bid job as follows:



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### 39.1.B. Seniority for preferred assignment

1. This seniority determines relative standing among full time regular and full time flexible employees eligible to bid for preferred assignments. It is computed from entry into a regular work force position in a particular occupational group and level. It continues to accrue as long as service in the same occupational group, level, and installation continues.

### 39.C Definitions

4. Bid. A written request submitted to the installation head to be assigned to a duty assignment by full time Motor Vehicle Craft employee eligible to bid on a vacancy or newly established duty assignment. In offices where alternative bidding procedures have been established, bids, except those in 39.2A. 6 & 7, may be submitted at the employees option, by telephone or electronically.

5. Duty assignments. A duty assignment is a set of duties and responsibilities within recognized positions regularly scheduled during specific hours of duty.

#### 6. Preferred duty assignment

Any assignment preferred by a full-time regular.

## ELM ARTICLE 3

### Section 1. Management Rights

The employer shall have the exclusive right, subject to the provisions of this Agreement and consistent with applicable laws and regulations:

- A. To direct employees of the Employer in the performance of official duties;
  - B. To hire, promote, transfer, assign, and retain employees in positions within the Postal Service and to suspend, demote, discharge, or take other disciplinary action against such employee;
  - C. To maintain the efficiency of the operations entrusted to it;
  - D. To determine the methods, means, and personnel by which such operations are to be conducted.
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Management was in the practice of temporarily taking employees off their bid jobs to avoid using employees on overtime. Management's claim they had this right under article 3 is incorrect. Article 3, Management Rights, does not cloak management with absolute authority. Rather, the authority granted is subject to the provisions of the National Agreement. Article 5 Prohibition of Unilateral Action which states, The Employer will not take any actions affecting wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment as defined in Section 8(d) of the National Labor Relations Act which violate the terms of this Agreement or are otherwise inconsistent with its obligations under law. All MVS employees must police the management's actions and report contractual violations to the Union.

In solidarity

**Motor Vehicle Director**

**Robert F. Kinsley Jr.**

## Industrial Relations

Hello brothers and sisters

I hope that this article reaches everyone in good health and good spirits I'm writing this article sitting in the comfort of my home as the weather outside is frightening. With weather being bad across the United States I mean the Postal Service did not deliver mail in parts of six States bad. I thought this would be a good opportunity to remind everyone about our safety at work during extreme weather conditions. As I stated before the postal service curtailed mail delivery service in parts of six states! I have work for the USPS for over 35 years, and I think this is the first time I can remember the USPS telling the American public that because of the weather conditions the Postal Service will not be delivering mail. I have talked to our union members who work at the stations and branches and some have jobs that require them to work outside of the office in the weather if you feel that you are being asked to perform your duties in an unsafe environment (ex. working outside in Sub-Zero temps for a long period of time) you have an obligation to inform your manager Article 14.1 in part states; It is Management's responsibility to provide safe working conditions; It is the Union's responsibility to cooperate with and assist Management in its efforts to fulfil this responsibility. Also article 14.2 in part states; If an employee believes he / she is being required to work under unsafe conditions such an employee: May notify search employee's supervisor who will immediately investigate the condition and take corrective action, if necessary. Also the employee has a right to file a grievance. There is no reason that an employee should feel that they

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have to work under unsafe conditions. So if you are feeling unsafe about a work situation let your manager and the union know! **Be safe and stay warm!**

In Solidarity,

**Leon Tucker**

**Industrial Relations Director**



**Angelo Perrone**

**Evet Milbourne**

**Paige Johnson**



**Leon Tucker**  
**Jerry Welch**  
**Charles Mc Clane**  
**Julie Ritter**  
**Gary Hemberger**  
**Olney Ramos**  
**Betty Moon**  
**La Juan Wright**  
**William Donovan**  
**Wynell Jackson**  
**Karen Fisher**  
**Carleton Reed**  
**Etta Blake**

**Russell Emerson**  
**John Magee**  
**Vincent Puckham**  
**Kevin Edwards**  
**Jeffrey Ng**  
**Elaine Fleming**  
**Janet Jeffries**  
**Jay Thawley**  
**David Ritter**  
**Thomas Minor**  
**Laura White**  
**Tyrone Church**  
**Eleanor Lockiby**



### LEAD MAIL PROCESSING CLERK (P7-7)

Lead Mail Processing Clerk (P7-7)

OCCUPATION CODE: 2315-XXXX

#### FUNCTIONAL PURPOSE

Performs a variety of clerk duties required to process mail using automated mail processing equipment or manual methods of sortation and distribution. May work with or without direct supervision or as a working leader to one or more mail processing employees resolving problems that may occur during tour operations and determining when a supervisor should be involved.

#### DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provides current scheme, schedule, and routing information, as required by the distribution function, to efficiently route mail, and meet dispatch schedules. Makes one or more sortations of outgoing and/or incoming mail using the appropriate sort program or manual distribution scheme.
2. On a rotational basis, may perform the following duties: loads mail onto automated equipment, culling out non-processable items; enters sort plan and starts equipment; monitors flow of mail to ensure continuous feed; sweeps separated mail from bins stackers; and stops equipment when distribution run or operation is completed. Runs machine reports, clears jams and contacts maintenance for assistance when required.
3. Prepares work area, ensuring all necessary support equipment and materials, including labels, trays, and other containers are in place.
4. Removes sorted mail from bins or separations and places into appropriate trays or containers for further processing or dispatch based on knowledge of operating plans and dispatch schedules, or at the instruction of supervisors or expeditors; may riffle or verify mail to ensure sortation accuracy as needed.
5. Maintains a working knowledge of regulations, policies and procedures related to mail processing activities. Provides guidance to mail processing employees assigned to mail processing operations. Resolves problems that may occur during tour operations and determines when a supervisor should be involved.
6. As a working leader of mail processing employees, will cooperate with supervisor to meet established targets for identified goals. Will work to maintain efficiencies and meet dispatches based on the installation operating plan. Shifts employee in the group from one assignment to another, in accordance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement, to balance workload. Trains new employees in a specific area of specialization.
7. In addition, may perform any of the following duties as needed: provides service at public window for non-financial transactions; maintains records related to mail on hand and mail processed; examines balances in advance deposit accounts; and records and bills mail requiring special service; provides services in the receipt and dispatch of express mail; distributes, weights, computes, and processes all classes and types of postage due mail; maintains accounts and records; submits reports.
8. Uses established safe work methods, procedures, and safety precautions.
9. Performs other job related tasks in support of primary duties.

### **LEAD SALES & SERVICES ASSOCIATE (P7-7)**

**OCCUPATION CODE: 2320-XXXX**

#### **FUNCTIONAL PURPOSE**

Performs a variety of sales and customer support services for products including; stamps, stamped paper, postal cards, philatelic products, and special promotional items with or without direct supervision. May work alone or as a working leader, providing administrative and technical guidance to one or more clerks assigned to retail and post office operations.

#### **OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

This position is for use in Customer Service facilities with retail operation windows.

#### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Performs any variety of sales and customer services at a retail window such as maintaining sufficient inventory of and selling stamps, stamped paper, other retail products and services and may use a computerized system, accepting and delivering packages and accountable mail; issuing and cashing foreign and domestic postal money orders; accepting and responding to customer claims and inquiries, and providing information to the public regarding postal regulations. Rents post office boxes, receives rental payments, conducts reference checks, and completes related forms.
2. Communicates and provides administrative and technical guidance to retail and post office operations employees assigned to the unit, informing them of changes or clarifications in policies, procedures, operations, schedules, and regulations. Ensures that work is performed efficiently.
3. Forecasts and maintains a separate stamped inventory to fill requisitions submitted by other retail clerks assigned to the office.
4. Prepares a local bank deposit and/or a consolidated funds bank deposit. Prepares and maintains unit accounting records of retail activities.
5. Conducts or witnesses transfers of fixed credits between employees as required, assisting in the physical count of stock. Reviews fixed credits periodically and recommends adjustments if necessary. Examines and insures the integrity of security containers assigned to employees for the storing of their fixed credit and reports lack of conformity with security regulations.
6. Conducts product inventories by counting items on hand; attaches and removes security devices; accounts for items on display; and verifies and records sales floor inventory and shrinkage. Brings inventory discrepancies and shrinkage reports to the attention of the appropriate supervisory presence. Maintains an adequate supply of materials required for the operation of a retail office.
7. Processes and/or accepts and verifies applications for redeemed stamps and stamped paper. Prepares and submits necessary stock for destruction.
8. Instructs and advises individual employees in correct financial and retail sales procedures.
9. In accordance with the directives of the supervisory presence, plans, directs, organizes and monitors retail related programs/projects and the work of people to meet unit goals, including coordinating and scheduling work hours. Supplies

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leadership necessary to secure a customer friendly environment, encourages professional appearance and work habits to accomplish effective and pleasant customer relationships.

10. Provides product and service information to customers, including informing customers regarding special offers and the layout of the store; refers customers to sales and promotional programs by promoting products based on customer needs. Answers customer inquiries.

11. Maintains appearance of store by setting, arranging, and replenishing displays and merchandise racks; ensures display and selling areas, work stations, and storage areas are presentable to customers. Checks and maintains post office self service equipment and postage meters.

12. Trains new employees to ensure quality service.

13. Maintains records, files and submits reports, as assigned.

14. May verify presort and bulk mailings of all classifications; computing and maintaining on a current basis mailers' credit balances.

15. In addition, may assign and clear accountable items and distribute mail as required.

16. Performs other duties as assigned.

