



Change

It's the morning after election day and like many of you, I stayed up way too late anticipating the outcome that we have worked so hard to achieve. The worker-friendly candidates have taken control of the House of Representatives, and notwithstanding the remaining count and possible recounts in Montana and Virginia, likely control of the Senate. Letter carriers and other working people have sent a loud and clear message to Congress and the administration—it's time for a positive change.

As we resume contract negotiations tomorrow with the Postal Service, another positive change would be for the Postal Service to stop stalling and to begin engaging in serious and productive negotiations with the NALC. They have wasted valuable time with their frivolous approach to the bargaining sessions, which will likely necessitate non-stop negotiating once they show up at the table for real.

In many areas of the country, the Postal Service has instituted the Postal Automated Redirection System (PARS) for the forwarding of letter mail. The system as initially instituted does not provide the letter carrier with the customer's new address. Letter carriers need the customer's new address to perform certain duties, such as the forwarding of accountable mail. *Each postal facility has access to the customer's new address, and the new address must be made available to the letter carrier when needed to process "undeliverable as addressed" mail.*

The Postal Service has responded to requests from major mailers by instituting a new AMS delivery designation known as Small Office Home Office (SOHO). The purpose of the change is to identify residences that may also contain a business, and businesses that may also contain a residence. The Postal Service prepared several service talks to explain the program and to provide instruction regarding the relevant edit book codes.

In the service talks, it is indicated that many of the SOHOs will be identified automatically by the National Customer Support Center's use of public sources of information. Additionally, the Postal Service is requesting assistance from letter carriers to use their "delivery force knowledge" to identify such deliveries. However, as indicated in the service talks, *letter carriers should only provide such information where customers are publicly dis-*

playing that their location is both a business and a residence.

For reasons that should be obvious to letter carriers, the Postal Service has found it necessary to look beyond postal employees for recruitment of initial-level supervisors. They currently have three pilot sites to test their training program for these "externally recruited supervisors." The first four weeks of their pilot training program involves what they refer to as "letter carrier familiarization." The letter carrier familiarization includes New Employee Orientation, Driver Training and completion of the City Carrier Academy Training.

Additionally, for the last nine days of this letter carrier familiarization period, the recruits receive on-the-job experience by performing actual carrier duties. The recruits must not perform these duties in lieu of a city carrier, *but instead must be accompanied by either the regular carrier assigned to the route or the letter carrier on-the-job instructor.* The pilot is only being conducted for 38 externally hired recruits, in three sites (New York Metro, San Francisco, Capital), and there are currently no further plans for additional testing. The Postal Service is hoping that such recruitment and training will result in a more qualified supervisor. They might get one.

This is likely my last article as your Director of City Delivery, which means that I'm saying goodbye to several friends who will soon retire. Fortunately for the NALC, we have a depth of talent that allows us to move on and maintain the excellent level of representation we have grown accustomed to. I'm looking forward to working with the new blood who will surely serve this union well.

I would like to thank Executive Vice President Jimmy Williams, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Jim Korolowicz, Director of Retirees Don Southern, Region 5 NBA Art Buck, Assistant to the President for Compensation Ron Watson, RAA Joe Bedor and RAA Shelly Williams for their dedication, contribution and friendship over the years. (On a personal note, I have had the privilege of working together with my good friend Don Southern in at least some capacity for the past 28 years, and have watched him age.) I hope each of them enjoys a long, happy and healthy retirement.

I would also like to take this opportunity to wish all of you and your families happy holidays. ☒