



## Keep a watchful eye on each other

**I** write this article in part to address what is currently happening on the workroom floor in many offices throughout the country.

During a vacation trip home to California, my branch president, Barbara Stickler, took me on a station visit to the Pomona main office. She selected this office because of the number of complaints that are surfacing due to recent events with management.

As I walked around and spoke with a number of carriers, it was obvious that they were irritated by a large contingency of managers who were brought in from other offices to nitpick letter carriers for not making the numbers that upper management believes are justified.

Many of these carriers informed me that there were up to 10 managers in on nitpick detail to see how they can reduce operational costs. One of the carriers exhibited anxiety over management getting under our skin. This carrier further expressed his concern over the claims that management makes when trying to save money, when in fact, management is burning more money than it can save.

These managers are quick to accuse letter carriers of taking too long and being inefficient. In some cases, these managers have made stronger accusations and attacked the integrity of letter carriers. Their leader expresses open disdain for letter carriers and comfortably attacks them whenever he can.

**The truth of the matter is that many, if not all, of these managers employ unacceptable methods to address the issue.** In my March article, I addressed the real voice of the employee. I expressed concern over how you are treated and what we need to do about it at labor-management meetings and/or safety committee meetings.

Why is management's behavior of concern to me as I write this? The answer is simple: When we are intimidated and threatened, the past has shown that we take shortcuts. When management pressures us on the performance game, often we make decisions that we should not make, and often the decision is to skip what we are

taught. When pressured, we find that many a carrier decides not to use the safety techniques he or she is taught just to get the route delivered faster.

Do we shut off the engine, place the vehicle in park and set the handbrake each and every time that we get out of the driver's seat? If not, why? You invite disaster!

Do you put on your seatbelt and shut the door each and every time you are supposed to? If not, why?

Don't let those management bullies force you to feel that you need to skip safety to get the job done.

The Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace in part provides that:

...[I]n some places or units there is an unacceptable level of stress in the workplace...there is no excuse for and will be no tolerance of harassment, intimidation, threats or bullying by anyone...every employee at every level of the Postal Service should be treated at all times with dignity, respect and fairness. The need for the USPS to serve the public efficiently and productively... does not justify actions that are abusive or intolerant. 'Making the numbers' is not an excuse for the abuse of anyone. Those who do not treat others with dignity and respect will not be rewarded or promoted. Those whose unacceptable behavior continues will be removed from their positions....

The pledges made through the Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace must be kept alive and well by you, the membership on the front lines, and by your union representatives.

You can help by keeping a watchful eye on each other. If you see a violation of the Joint Statement, step forward, be part of the solution, report it to your union representative and provide a statement confirming what you saw and/or what you heard. Help your union help you!

**In closing, I ask all shop stewards and grievance handlers to take a few minutes and review the Contract Talk article on page 31. Copy that page and have it available whenever you are investigating and/or processing a grievance involving the denial and/or improper assignment (pecking order) of limited duty.** ☒