

Das award implementation—task forces



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Several national-level task forces were voluntarily created by both parties through several memoranda of understanding (MOUs) contained in the Das interest arbitration award. The question is: Can the parties do something with the opportunities offered by these agreements?

We've seen these task force deals many times in the past when we get a new contract. Most of the time it amounts to a lot of talk and wishful thinking, and nothing much happens. We're hoping things will be different this time around, and we will find ways to produce meaningful results that benefit both parties.

This report concerns three of these task forces:

President Rolando and the Postal Service agreed to have a group of 10 representatives (five from NALC and five from USPS) to serve on three of the task forces created by the MOUs regarding city delivery, Article 8 and Alternate Route Evaluation and Adjustment Process. I think it was a smart idea, because these three subjects are all directly connected to each other and therefore should be worked on by the same group of representatives.

The NALC members of the task force are Region 7 NBA Chris Wittenburg, Region 12 RAA David Napadano, New Castle, PA Branch 22 President Brian Thompson, Contract Administration Unit staff member Brian Renfro and me. USPS members are Alan Moore (labor relations), David Martin and Tony Williams (district managers), Nat Mastriano and Deborah Gless (operations).

We have met on three occasions for a day and a half each time since March and are scheduled to meet three more times through August. We have discussed several concepts and ideas for possible tests regarding each subject listed above. We talked a lot about trying to come up with another joint route adjustment process and agreed to form a subcommittee to work on this issue. I'll report on this as things develop.

The Article 8 task force MOU states:

The scheduling and administration of overtime is frequently a source of controversy and disputes between the parties. In an effort to address this issue, a national level Task Force will be established for the purpose of developing and evaluating improvements to the overtime process.

In preparation for our meetings, we collected ideas from letter carriers around the country. We also provided forms on the city delivery page of the NALC website that could be filled out and mailed in.

Additionally, we have reviewed the records from our past conventions going all the way back to 1974. One recurring theme from both sources is an effort to make it easier to calculate quarterly overtime equitability.

This is one small area of the Article 8 portion of our task force where we have reached agreement. We are going to test the idea of making equitability for the quarter simpler and easier to administer for both parties.

The task force has agreed to test a jointly developed concept in up to 22 districts around the country, beginning on Oct. 1. The test will last for one year unless either side decides to terminate it earlier.

Each of the 15 national business agents will select a district, and each of the seven USPS area vice presidents will also select a district that will participate in the test. All installations in the selected districts will be part of the test. There are three aspects to the test.

Determining quarterly equitability in this test will no longer discount overtime that is worked on your own assignment. This is known as the "hour is an hour" concept. That means that if you are on the overtime desired list (ODL), any overtime you work would be counted in determining quarterly overtime equitability.

USPS will post a cumulative total of opportunities and hours worked by ODL letter carriers each week, instead of once per quarter as is called for in the current contract.

The ODL sign-up list will have two choices. You will be able to sign the work assignment-only overtime list or the regular ODL.

Please see this month's Contract Talk on the next page for a copy of the agreement reached regarding the equitability aspect of Article 8. Quarterly overtime equitability is just one piece of a much larger overtime puzzle. There are many more Article 8 issues/ideas to discuss, but this is a start.

In closing, I want to thank all of you who have submitted ideas for the Article 8 and city delivery task forces. I can assure you that each and every one of them has been read and considered. If you have ideas and want them considered, you can find the forms and directions on how to get them to me on the city delivery page of the NALC website. We would love to hear from you.