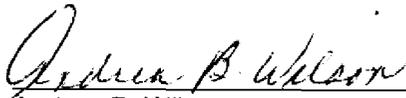
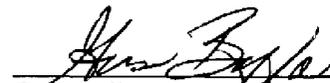


ANALYSIS OF CHANGES TO THE NATIONAL AGREEMENT

Several provisions in the 2000-2004 National Agreement between the United States Postal Service (USPS) and the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA) were changed. Based on inquiries received from the field, some of the changes may require further explanation. The following analysis should be helpful in understanding these new provisions.

This analysis reflects the understanding of both parties of the changes that have been made to the Agreement. It is not intended to revise, modify, or in any way change the language or the meaning of the Agreement itself. It should be considered as an aid to a better understanding of the Agreement and an explanation of the substantive changes which appear therein.


Andrea B. Wilson
Manager, Contract
Administration (NRLCA/NPMHU)
United States Postal Service


Gus Baffa
President
National Rural Letter Carriers'
Association

Date: January 30, 2003

ARTICLE 2 NON-DISCRIMINATION AND CIVIL RIGHTS

This article was amended to reaffirm that discrimination against handicapped employees in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act, is prohibited.

ARTICLE 9 COMPENSATION, SALARIES, AND WAGES

Section 2.C.5. Relief Days

The language in Subsection C.5.f.(1) was added to clarify that should a regular carrier on the relief day work list select the option of receiving only an X day to be scheduled by mutual agreement as compensation for working the relief day, a PS Form 3971 will be completed indicating the scheduled X day. The scheduled X day will then be given the same consideration as approved annual leave.

The new language in Subsection C.5.i. provides the opportunity for management to allow a regular rural carrier to work his or her relief day in order to grant a day off to the leave replacement scheduled and available to work the regular carrier's relief day. With the provisions of the Extension to the Agreement to the 1995-1999 National Agreement that provided for the establishment of a relief day work list, some managers had been reluctant to allow a scheduled leave replacement a day off because of the potential additional cost when a regular carrier serves the route on his/her relief day. This provision is intended to give management the opportunity to grant a leave replacement's request for a day off without incurring the additional costs that would result from usage of the relief day work list. With the provision that if the regular carrier agrees, it allows management to permit a regular rural carrier to work the relief day, regardless of whether or not the carrier is on the relief day work list. This is an option and applicable only after management has used all available leave replacements in accordance with Article 30.2.D.2. and 3. The only compensation received for working this relief day will be an X day to be scheduled by mutual agreement. As with one of the compensation options available to those carriers who have signed the relief day work list, a PS Form 3971 will be completed no later than the day prior to the relief day to be worked indicating the scheduled X day and this X day will be given the same consideration as annual leave. Article 9.2.C.5.i. does not provide any leave entitlements for leave replacements or additional work entitlements for regular rural carriers, including those on the relief day work list.

Section 2.C.6. Route Classification

This new Table of Evaluated Hours is for auxiliary routes only and allows for maximum compensation of 57 hours per week for an auxiliary route. This alleviates any confusion with auxiliary routes being placed into an H, J, or K classification when they increase beyond 40 standard hours and reflects the parties' agreement that no auxiliary route carrier will be entitled to evaluated compensation greater than 57 hours.

Section 2.C.10. Substantial Service Changes

A substantial service change is now defined as an increase or decrease of one (1) full hour (60 minutes). Previously, a substantial service change required an increase or decrease of two (2) full hours in the route's evaluation. It is important to note that the

one hour (60 minute) substantial service change has been included in this subsection only.

Section 2.J.2. Equipment Maintenance Allowance

References to Optional Equipment Maintenance Allowance (OEMA) have been deleted from this subsection. MOU .13 provides that the Postal Service will assign 15,000 RHD postal-owned or postal-leased vehicles to rural routes through 12/31/2008. The MOU does not provide for rejection of the assignment to a route of an employer-provided vehicle so there is no longer a need for OEMA.

Regular rural carriers purchasing new RHD vehicles to be used on their route in accordance with the current provisions of the MOU .8 will not be assigned a postal-owned or postal-leased vehicle for a three year period from the date of purchase of the RHD vehicle.

ARTICLE 11 HOLIDAYS

Section 2. Payment

The new provisions provide that a regular rural carrier may be scheduled to work their designated holiday if no leave replacement is available to serve the route. In addition, it is further clarified that for the purpose of this section, a leave replacement is unavailable if he or she is assigned on any regular or auxiliary route. Article 30.2.D. provides that management would attempt to provide coverage for the route on the designated holiday by utilizing PTFs, the matrix, other qualified leave replacements in the delivery unit and within the office, prior to working the regular on the designated holiday. However, the regular may be required to work the designated holiday before requiring another regular to work on his or her relief day.

ARTICLE 12 PRINCIPLES OF SENIORITY, POSTING, AND REASSIGNMENT

Section 3. Rural Carrier Posting

A. Posting Requirements

Language was added to specify that a vacant route that evaluates at 26:00 standard hours or less will be converted to auxiliary status. Regular routes reduced to 26:00 standard hours or less as a result of the reasonable accommodation MOU will not be converted to auxiliary routes when vacated.

B. Awarding a Vacant Route

Changed provisions now require a vacant route to be reposted in the vacancy office for all non-probationary RCAs, prior to filling the vacancy through a register of eligibles (hiring a regular off the street). The procedure for posting of a vacant route in the office and then district-wide, has not been changed. This is a new posting that would occur prior to going to the register to fill a regular route vacancy. Non-probationary RCAs are

those RCAs who have completed their probationary period of one year or 90 days actually worked, whichever occurs first.

ARTICLE 15 GRIEVANCE AND ARBITRATION PROCEDURE

Section 4.E. EEO Complaints

Language was added to allow a former rural carrier to take the assignment of the junior regular carrier in the office to which they were previously assigned in order to comply with a decision by the court, EEOC, or other federal agency, if there are no vacant or residual routes in the office. The displaced regular carrier will be reassigned in accordance with Article 12.4.A.1.

ARTICLE 30 WORKING RULES FOR RURAL CARRIERS

Section 2.B. Probationary Period

When an RCR is assigned to an RCA position, the RCR is not required to serve a new probationary period.

MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING

.8 Right-Hand Drive Vehicles

This MOU is effective only for the term of this Agreement and it is applied retroactive to November 20, 2000. Because the previous Right Hand Drive (RHD) MOU expired when the Extension to the 1995 Agreement expired, carriers who purchased RHD vehicles may not have completed the Notice of Intent to Purchase a RHD vehicle prior to purchasing their vehicle. Therefore, this requirement is waived for those purchases between November 20, 2000 and February 3, 2002, and the three year waiver for assignment of an employer-provided vehicle is retroactive to the date of purchase. This MOU also reflects changes that allow management to assign employer-provided vehicles to a rural route and carriers do not have the option of rejecting the vehicle.

RIGHT-HAND DRIVE (RHD) MOU INSTRUCTIONS

Regular rural carriers are eligible for an incentive for the purchase of RHD vehicles under the provisions of this MOU. Instructions for completion of the forms are set forth below.

Notice of Intent to Purchase a Right-Hand Drive Vehicle for Use on My Rural Route

Any regular carrier considering purchasing a right-hand drive (RHD) vehicle for his or her route should first consult with the supervisor/postmaster to determine if the Postal Service plans on providing postal-owned or leased equipment for the route. The carrier will make his or her intentions known by completing the Notice of Intent to Purchase

form and giving it to the postmaster/supervisor. The postmaster/supervisor has five (5) working days from the receipt of the notice to contact the appropriate district personnel and determine if there are plans to provide that carrier's route with a vehicle.

If no postal-owned or leased vehicle is planned for the carrier's route, the postmaster/supervisor signs and dates Section A. of the intent form and gives a copy to the carrier. The carrier has thirty (30) days from the date of notification by the postmaster/supervisor to purchase a RHD vehicle under the provisions of the MOU (NOTE: A signed purchase order is acceptable if the vehicle must be ordered and delivery to the carrier cannot be completed within the 30 day window).

If a postal-owned or leased vehicle is planned for the route in the near term, the postmaster/supervisor signs and dates Section B. of the intent form and gives a copy to the carrier. The carrier is not eligible for the waiver or incentive payment.

Request for Incentive Payment and/or USPS Waiver Offer for Purchase of Right-Hand Drive Vehicles

After being advised that the Postal Service does not intend to provide a vehicle for the route, the carrier has 30 days to complete purchase of a RHD vehicle. If the carrier purchases a RHD vehicle during the 30 day period, they should complete a Request for Incentive Payment and/or USPS Waiver Offer form. If the carrier has followed proper procedure (completed an intent form and the purchase was authorized), he or she must complete Section I. of the incentive/waiver request form and provide appropriate documentation showing proof of purchase of a RHD vehicle. The postmaster/supervisor must complete Section II. of this form certifying carrier purchase of a RHD vehicle and his/her pledge to utilize the vehicle on the route for at least three years. This will give the carrier a three year period during which the Postal Service will not assign a postal-owned or leased vehicle to the route.

Also included in Section II. is a statement of eligibility for an incentive payment to the carrier. If the vehicle purchased meets the provisions of the MOU, which is a right-hand drive that is a new current model year vehicle or a not previously owned prior model year vehicle, the carrier is eligible for an incentive payment.

If the carrier is eligible for the incentive payment, the postmaster/supervisor completes Section II. and enters the employee's social security number, and \$500 on the amount line of the finance section of the form. Additionally, the postmaster/supervisor must enter his/her office finance number and the employee pay location number. The completed form should be submitted to the district finance office.

District finance personnel should verify the information contained in the finance office section of the form. After completing verification, the request for waiver/incentive payment form should be sent to the Minneapolis ASC address listed below:

Minneapolis ASC
Accounts Payable Section
2825 Lone Oak Parkway
Eagan, MN 55121-9600

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO PURCHASE A RHD VEHICLE
FOR USE ON MY RURAL ROUTE**

TO BE COMPLETED BY REGULAR RURAL CARRIER:

This is to advise you that I am presently considering purchasing a right-hand drive vehicle for use on my assigned rural route. I am asking you to advise me if the Postal Service intends to provide a postal-owned or postal-leased vehicle for my assigned route. If you advise me that the Postal Service does not presently intend to provide a vehicle, I understand that I will have thirty (30) days from the date of notification to complete the purchase. If I have not completed the purchase of the RHD vehicle within thirty (30) days, I understand that I will not be eligible for the three year waiver that would be provided under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding on right-hand drive vehicles. I also understand that I may be eligible for an incentive payment if the vehicle that I purchase meets the requirements of the aforementioned memorandum.

RURAL CARRIER SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____ **OFFICE:** _____ **RT. #:** _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE POSTMASTER/MANAGER:

(Section A. or B. must be completed with 5 days of receipt from the carrier)

A.) This is to advise you that the Postal Service presently has no intention of providing a postal-owned or postal-leased vehicle for your route. As of this date, you will have thirty (30) days to complete the purchase of a right-hand drive vehicle in order to be qualified for the three year waiver and for any incentive payment for which you may be eligible.

POSTMASTER/MANAGER SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____ **OFFICE:** _____

B.) This is to advise you that the Postal Service intends to provide a postal-owned or postal-leased vehicle for your route and that your request for a three year waiver and a possible incentive payment for purchase of a right-hand drive vehicle is denied.

POSTMASTER/MANAGER SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____ **OFFICE:** _____

**REQUEST FOR INCENTIVE PAYMENT AND/OR USPS WAIVER OFFER
FOR PURCHASE OF RHD VEHICLE**

In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding regarding an incentive to regular rural carriers for purchase of right-hand drive (RHD) vehicles and a waiver of vehicles provided by the USPS, the following information is provided relative to my purchase:

1. Regular Rural Carrier:

I, _____, purchased a right-hand drive
(Print Employee Name)
vehicle _____ on _____.
(Vehicle Year/Make/Model) (Purchase Date)

I pledge that I will use the RHD vehicle on my rural route for at least three years from the date of purchase and I understand that I could forfeit all or part of any incentive payment for which I may be eligible if I discontinue use of the vehicle on the route prior to the end of the three year period. I further understand that, as a regular carrier, the Postal Service will not assign a postal-owned or postal-leased vehicle to my route during this three year period.

2. Postmaster/Manager

I, _____, certify that _____
(Postmaster/Manager Name) (Carrier Name)
purchased a RHD vehicle _____ on _____
(Vehicle Year/Make/Model) (Date)

and has pledged to use this vehicle on his/her rural route for at least the next three years. With this purchase and pledge, the Postal Service will not assign a postal-owned or postal-leased vehicle to his/her route during this three year period. I further certify that the carrier (is) (is not) (**circle one**) eligible for the incentive payment for purchase of a new right-hand drive vehicle.

(Carrier Signature) (Date) (Postmaster/Manager Signature) (Date)

Route Number: _____
Post Office: _____
City/State/Zip Code: _____

Employee Name: _____ Finance Number: _____
Soc. Security Number: _____ Account Number: 52463
Amount: _____ Pay Location: _____

Submit to District Finance Office for Verification and Processing

MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING

.13 Employer Provided Vehicles

This is a new MOU which outlines the Postal Service's commitment to providing right-hand drive postal-owned or postal-leased vehicles on rural routes over a five year period beginning on January 1, 2004 and ending on December 31, 2008. In each of these years the Postal Service will deploy 3000 RHD vehicles for placement on rural routes. This MOU also provides that the 15,000 vehicles are in addition to the 10,804 postal vehicles currently assigned rural routes. Any vehicles provided to rural routes prior to 2004, the commencement of the five year period, will be counted toward the 3000 vehicles to be deployed in 2004.

.15 "L" Route Profile

The coverage factor for L routes has been changed from 82% to 91%.