

Shared Services Questions

Third Meeting (January 29, 2008, 10:00 AM)

Present: USPS – Nancy Laich, Joni Marshall, Linda O’Callahan, Chris Jordan, & Patrick Devine; APWU – Rob Strunk, Mike Morris, Pat Williams, & Lyle Krueth.

- 1. HRSSC is currently improperly counting successful applications for best qualified duty assignments under Article 37.3.A.7.b and c as successful bids pursuant to Article 12.3.A. When will this be corrected retroactively?**

Response: The USPS agrees that while bids for “best qualified” bids pursuant to Article 37.3.A.7.a do count as successful bids under Article 12.3.A, “best qualified” applications under Article 37.3.A.b and c do not count as successful bids. If the union can demonstrate that any applications were incorrectly counted as bids in the past, it will be corrected by HRSS.

- 2. Currently in St. Paul, MN web bidding does not match the manual bid sheet specifically on retail duty assignments with rotating days off. For example, in the most recent posting web bidding had a 6 week rotation listed and the manual bid sheet for the same duty assignment had a 4 week rotation. How and when will this recurring issue be addressed? Until the fix is made can something be put on the web instructing prospective bidders on duty assignments with rotating days off to refer the manual bid sheet for the proper rotation?**

Response: This is currently being corrected by HRSS the utilization of a System Correction Request (SCR). If the SCR cannot be accomplished in a timely manner, an appropriate warning will be placed on the web site.

- 3. When HRSSC cannot comply with LMOU requirements on posting and bidding, what procedure is in place to make sure the local office has the option of manual posting in order to comply with the LMOU?**

Response: HRSS acknowledged that time constraints in LMOUs must be adhered to. Local services has been directed that when HRSS cannot comply with an LMOU, manual posting is mandatory.

- 4. It is the position of the APWU that the results of a posting are effective on the effective date of the award notice and not on the closing date of the posting period, does HRSSC agree?**

Response: There is a problem created when a senior bidder on a duty assignment with a deferment period bids on a subsequent posting and then qualifies on the original deferment during the interim between the closing of the posting period and the posting of results of the subsequent posting. The APWU position is that the results of a posting are effective on the effective date of the award notice and not on the closing date of the posting period. HRSS will notify the Union shortly if there is disagreement.

- 5. HRSSC is improperly placing unsuccessful bidders who attempt and fail to qualify on schemes on 37.3.F.7 duty assignments under a 37.3 F.3.b absolute 90-day bidding restriction instead of a 37.3.F.7.b 180-day bidding restriction to the same position. When will that be corrected and will it be automatically done retroactively?**

Response: Labor Relations has clarified for HRSS that the application of JCIM Article 37 question 195 makes the application of the 37.3.F.7.b 180-day bidding restriction clear. Therefore, a clerk who fails the scheme requirement on an SSSA duty assignment is restricted from bidding for 180 days on other SSSA duty assignments ONLY.

- 6. HRSSC is still, in some offices, refusing to put the pay location in the comment section or elsewhere even when requested to do so by local services while it is putting pay locations in the comment sections and other areas in other offices. When will all offices be allowed to include pay location on bid notices when requested by local services?**

Response: HRSS is taking the position they will not put the pay location on bid notices. Locals will have to work with local services to ensure that pay locations are adequately identified on job postings to meet local needs.

- 7. In Sarasota, FL PTR Clerk R. S., as a result of a bid was supposed to be promoted to FTR effective July 21, 2007. As late as November 30, 2007 this still has not occurred despite numerous requests from local services to HRSSC. When will this change be made and made retroactive? Is this indicative of a larger problem?**

Response: The problem in this instance was the result of local services not completing the appropriate paperwork, Form RAR-200, Authorization to Convert to Full-time. This form currently needs to be completed to convert a PTR to FTR even when this is accomplished through bidding. HRSS will review possible changes to make the form more clear.

- 8. What can be done to increase the font size of seniority lists and bid postings?**

Response: HRSS has submitted an SCR to increase the font size on bid postings and they will submit another SCR to correct the problem with seniority lists.

9. Web bidding is confusing as it relates to non-scheduled days for employees bidding at home without benefit of a copy of the posting. Saturday/Sunday is listed with 1-7 off days. Sunday/Monday is listed with 1-2 off days. This calendar obviously begins with Sunday as the first day of the week, while postal weeks begin on Saturday. What can be done to make the posing less confusing?

Response: HRSS is investigating to determine the cause of this problem which occurs, to the best of our knowledge, only on Tour 1 duty assignments. Once the source of the problem is identified, an appropriate SCR will be submitted.

10. What can be done to accommodate the problem created when postings are not made in a timely manner?

Response: HRSS stated local services is charged with completing the required process in a timely manner to ensure compliance with national and local agreements.

11. Why is the term “swing shift” used in bid posting when no one in the USPS uses the term?

Response: An SCR will be submitted to eliminate the use of “swing shift”, “day shift” and “evening shift” and provide the appropriate TOUR information as required by Article 37.

12. Do PTR schedules have to be in whole hour increments?

Response: HRSS stated that TACS requires that weekly hours for PTRs must be in whole hour increments.

13. What are the appropriate procedures and timelines for awarding bids to employees on temporary light or limited duty who require medical certification?

Response: Local Services has been instructed that they should be following the same procedures for notifying employees on temporary light or limited duty regarding documentation requirements for bidding as was in place under the HRIS system to ensure timely notification. Local Services is also responsible for timely notification to HRSS so the successful bidder can be named.

14. Some installations duty assignments are being posted with the hours and days of as simply “V” for variable. This does not meet the criteria for posting in Article 37.3.E. What steps in HRSS taking to address this issue?

Response: Local Services has been instructed to include the appropriate schedule in job comments where the “V for variable” has been used. HRSS will look into whether this could be flagged to ensure compliance.

15. HRSS is denying bids for employees who are on their probationary period. There is no provision to deny bids in Article 37 for probationary employees. When will this be corrected?

Response: The APWU position is that all FTR clerks are eligible to bid regardless of probationary status. HRSS will notify the Union shortly if there is disagreement.

16. Is it possible to make corrections to existing bid postings without the bids being reposted? As an example, a local notices the Tour or PAA is listed incorrectly. Both sides agree locally to remedy the problem, but the union is not requesting the duty assignment be reposted. If it is corrected locally, how can we be sure that when that job is vacated it will not be reposted incorrectly in the future?

Response: There is currently no process in place under which the job posting could be corrected by HRSS without reposting the duty assignment in the next bid cycle. In the current process Local Services would have to make the correction whenever the duty assignment is subsequently vacated and posted for bid again. HRSS indicated they would explore whether a CSR could be used to provide an opportunity to make locally agreed upon minor corrections to duty assignments subsequent to the actual posting.

17. There seems to be a data entry error problem by listing the improper tour on duty assignment postings. This is causing problems because employees are filing OT and holiday disputes based upon the incorrect tour being listed on the posting. How can this be corrected?

Response: Local Services is responsible for properly identifying the Tour on all job postings. In the specific instances reviewed it appeared that the vacant duty assignments were moved to a different tour before being posted but that the posting, itself, was not properly corrected by Local Services.

18. In the past employees were able to get retirement estimates as far as three years prior to eligibility. HRSS is refusing to give estimates to employees who are more than 90 days from eligibility. Will that be corrected?

Response: HRSS indicates that employees actually are now able to get retirement estimates as much as FIVE (5) years prior to eligibility. The confusion may have arisen in that employees are often “advised” by HRSS personnel that these estimates will be much more helpful as the employee approaches the 90 day window before planned retirement.

19. There are occasions where an individual cannot contact HRSS due to incapacity or death. When issues arise regarding life insurance, health coverage, etc. occur, the union or family contacts HRSS and provide the EID, assuming we even know it, HRSS refuses to continue when they find out it is not the

employee they are speaking with. What system is in place to facilitate interaction with HRSS when employees are either incapacitate or deceased?

Response: Family members or Union representatives who contact HRSS regarding life insurance, health coverage, retirement questions, etc., on behalf of disabled or deceased employees should currently be referred to the Bereavement Team. Appropriate safeguards or protocol will be developed to protect the privacy of individuals while allowing appropriate representatives access to necessary information.

20. We are still having problems with timely processing of personnel changes by HRSS. At our last meeting we were told the changes would be processed within two or three working days. That is not occurring. In Minneapolis, K.N. retired August 3, 2007 and that is still not being reflected in the bulletins from HRSS. Is HRSS considering going to a six or seven day work week in order to keep up with the workload?

Response: Personnel changes should still be accomplished within two to three days after appropriate paperwork is submitted by Local Services. In the specific instance cited, HRSS indicates that their records show this occurred but that Local Services may not have properly posted a notice of the retirement action.

21. Has the HRSS software been changed to reflect the August 16, 2007 MOU that requires the selection of withheld residual duty assignments by clerks impacted (even if they are volunteers in lieu of impacted clerks) by Article 12 to be combined into a single group or pool, by status, regardless of pay level?

Response: HRSS stated that appropriate SCRs for all 2006 National Agreement changes have been accomplished. HRSS will research to determine whether an appropriate SCR for the August 16, 2007 MOU has been accomplished. In the meantime, Local Services must monitor to assure compliance.

22. In the Q&A from our previous meeting, HRSS agreed in Q&A # 30 that until the problem could be corrected for the long term, that local services would put uniform allowance information in the comments section of bid notices. As of January 15, 2008, HRSS is refusing permit local services to do this. How will this situation be corrected?

Response: Local Services have been instructed that uniform allowance can be included in the Job Comments Section on bid postings until the problem can be addressed through an appropriate SCR as explained at Q&A #30 in John Dockins October 15, 2007 letter.

23. Previously we have been told that Union access to OPFs would be through the District offices. Currently Union officials in Long Island NY are being told they do not have access to OPFs. What is the correct procedure for union or employee access to employee OPFs?

Response: The USPS is currently discussing the Employer's Article 17 and 31 obligations with regard to Electronic OPF access and review with APWU Industrial Relations.

24. Union officers need access to review (and not just copy) employee's OPFs. How is that going to be accomplished when HRSS is completely on line with all OPFs being scanned?

Response: The USPS is currently discussing the Employer's Article 17 and 31 obligations with regard to Electronic OPF access and review with APWU Industrial Relations.

25. Who is doing the scanning work of OPFs and what measures are in place to check the quality of that scanning?

Response: This work has been contracted to a Professional Scanning Company in Dallas, TX. The Postal Inspection Service is monitoring

security and the Employer is also closely monitoring the quality of the service being provided.

26. Has the HRSS bidding software been adjusted to accommodate the contractual requirement that when any clerk holds retreat rights to a craft or installation, those retreat rights serve as a bid on initial vacancies in the same level from which they were reassigned and as a bid on all residual vacancies in other levels for which they expressed a desire to retreat?

Response: Local Services is currently maintaining these records, as before, and is responsible for assuring that the “automatic bid” of clerks with retreats for initial vacancies in the losing installation are properly considered. HRSS is exploring a long term fix in the software. (This will require more than a simple SCR.)

27. Under the HRIS system, various reports were available to the union such as the HR083 report which gave the employee’s name, assignment, skills and schedule. We are told this report is no longer available. What personnel reports are available from HRSS?

Response: HRSS will provide APWU with a listing of all reports currently available under the new HRSS job bidding system.

28. When clerks use phone bidding there is a prompt to enter the bid number with the following message: “for example, if this is your 10th choice enter 010”. This can be confusing, a better prompt message would be “if this is your first choice, enter 001”. Can this change be made?

Response: HRSS is aware of this problem, which is a carryover from the old phone bidding system. An appropriate SCR has been submitted to correct this ambiguity.

29. When clerks use phone bidding and they enter their choice as being their 050th choice, even though they only bid one time, the

system accepts it as their 50th choice. There should be a prompt that ensures the number of bids is at least equal to the choice expressed. Can this problem be corrected?

Response: This would require an additional SCR. HRSS promised to evaluate the feasibility of such a correction to the system.

30. The on-line process for employees to change their address is not working. When will this be corrected?

Response: While this is not actually a Shared Services issue, the USPS will contact appropriate authorities to investigate whether this problem has been corrected and respond accordingly.

31. Does the Employer agree that Clerk Craft employees are only required to submit written notification of their desire to remain a “live bidder” on previous bids within ten days after designation as a “successful bidder” on a subsequent bid? We have been advised that HRSC is telling local services that the “live bidder” notice must be submitted when the employee is designated as a “senior bidder” on a subsequent bid, even though they cannot yet be designated as “successful.”

Response: APWU believes that Article 37.3.F.8.a is very clear. Employees must submit written notification of their desire to remain a “live bidder” on previous bids within 10 days after being designated as a “successful bidder” on a subsequent bid. . HRSS will notify the Union shortly if there is disagreement.