

President's Message

Mark McDonald, President AFGE Local 2040

Retirements: As announced at our membership meetings, Treasurer John Martin has retired and resigned from his office. This means we are looking for a qualified individual to assume the duties as Treasurer. You must be a dues paying member for one year to hold this position.

I retired January 31st of this year but am continuing to serve my term of office. The Local will hold regular elections in October. My contact information is: 303-2639823, 307-322-1913, mark@manmrk.net

National Security Personnel System (NSPS): February 6th DoD revealed its outline for the new labor relations system. You can view it at www.afge171.org. Basically DoD's answer to employee labor rights is that you don't need them. Father DoD will take care of all.

The Union is required to get fifty one percent of the bargaining unit to vote to make any vote to have a Union valid. Dr. Chu stated that he doesn't understand why the Union is concerned about this. He stated that if the Union was providing a quality product the employees would flock to it. Close examination of Dr. Chu's statement reveals:

1. Dr. Chu apparently has never done what Union officers have to do; run for office. Dr. Chu could never get elected if he had to have fifty-one percent of those who could vote, vote.
2. The President and Congress could not get elected under this requirement.
3. The result of this requirement would be to strip employees of the right to organize to protect their civil/worker rights and address working conditions.
4. Dr Chu is laboring under the false assumption that the Union is a business. The Union is not. Dr. Chu, the employees of DoD are the Union. We band together to protect our rights from people who don't know what hard work is. We don't have the luxury of having meetings and conference calls all day, we actually do the work that keeps our military strong so our country is protected.

If you want to see how anti-employee OSD (Office Secretary Defense) is, take a look at the meeting minutes taken when

DoD met with the Union on 26 February (look at the bottom of opening page at www.afge171.org).

The key concept in DOD's paper, reiterated in several different ways, is that there would be no collective bargaining at all.

Existing collective bargaining agreements would remain in place, on paper, until their expiration. However, nothing in those agreements would be binding on management, and management could unilaterally issue regulations superseding provisions of those contracts. As contracts expire, they would not be renewed or re-negotiated.

There would be a mock collective bargaining process in some circumstances. Management, if they wanted to, would notify the union of planned changes, and then 60 days later management would implement those changes. During the 60 day period management would, at most, consult with the union over these issues. Consulting is not negotiating.

There would be no jointly controlled grievance procedure, culminating in decisions by independent third-parties. Management would control it all.

The system of non-bargaining would be administered by a management controlled board.

The concepts announced by DOD on February 6 do not meet the standard set by the new law. They do not seek to change the a labor relations system to allow it to better address the unique role that the DOD civilian workforce plays in supporting the Department's national security mission, they instead constitute a wholesale repudiation of collective bargaining; they do not allow for a collaborative issue-based approach to labor-management relations; they do not provide for independent third party review of decisions; and they do not ensure that employees may bargain collectively, participating through unions of their own choosing in decisions which affect them. All of these are criteria established by law to govern any labor relations program under the National Security Personnel System.

Nothing in the DoD proposal addresses anything to do with National Security.

OVERTIME: I have been asked by several members to discuss overtime. "Overtime covers circumstances such as temporary peak workloads or emergency situations requiring special action to preserve health, welfare, and safety of personnel or to protect Government property." (MUMA)

There has been a trend by management to consider overtime a normal way of doing business. It is not and you should not be suckered into believing that it is or that you must work overtime. Work performed on overtime is can not be used to met your work standard requirements. Overtime work can not be used for your appraisal rating.

Mandatory Overtime: The MUMA requires management to notify the you and the Union for each instance 48 hours in advance. A statement by management that they may require mandatory overtime anytime in the future does not meet the requirement or intent of the labor agreement (MUMA). This and stand by overtime are the only two types of overtime you must work and may be waived due to personal hardship.

Call Back Overtime: is defined as irregular or occasional overtime work performed by you for which you are required to return to the place of employment to perform work. You shall be provided advance notice to the maximum extent possible of the requirement to perform call-back overtime work. You are not in a pay status, and have no obligation to curtail personal activities. This means you do not have to be available, at home, leave contact phone numbers, carry a pager/cell phone or otherwise be fit for duty.

On Call Overtime: is defined as those occasional situations when you are notified that you are subject to call during a specified period of time outside your normal tour of duty. You are not in a pay status and you are not obligated to be available, at home, leave contact phone numbers, carry a pager/cell phone or otherwise be fit for duty.

For both Call Back and On Call overtime management takes a chance that they can contact you and that you are fit for duty. No discipline can be given if you can not be contacted or are unfit for duty. You can not be disciplined when you are not being paid.

Stand By Overtime: is defined as hours of work when you are restricted to your duty station, close to or at your home and are required to be fit for duty. Personal activities are substantially limited. You are in a pay status. Failure to be available and fit for duty can result in discipline.

Many employees assume they are working mandatory overtime when in reality management has just asked them to volunteer to do so. If you are not working mandatory or stand by overtime as specified here then you are volunteering and you have the right to decide whether or not to work any overtime and how much.

If you find that you are burned out, not having enough time for your family or that your overtime efforts are not appreciated, just stop working overtime. Its that simple. You are of no use to the Agency if you run yourself into the ground.

Recall Rosters: When you are not being paid, management can not require you to do work. That includes participating in what are called "recalls". Management may not require you to be contactable or call other employees when they are conducting these recalls. You can not be disciplined for not being contacted or calling other employees.

Web Stie: Our Web Site is part of the Council's web site at www.afge171.org/2040.HTM. A members only section has been added with financial reports and some meeting notes. I am waiting for the Secretary to provide me with Eboard/Membership meeting notes for 2004, 2002 and 2001 so they can be posted on the web site as per the membership in October 2003. All dues paying members should have access. If you do not, please contact me.

Snow Day Arbitration: The Arbitrator has rendered a decision against the employees. It appears the Arbitrator refused to take into account that hundreds of employees followed management's instructions to call the 1-800 number and still were charged for leave. Both ARPC and DISA felt it unsafe to require their employees to come to the building long before 0800. Most of us looked out our doors that morning and came to the same conclusion. However, DFAS could not bring themselves to value employee safety above money. They should be ashamed of themselves (don't blame your supervisor, it was the front office) for this.

I suggest that the membership insist on getting a transcript of future Arbitration hearings so they can read what management says. I sometimes wonder what planet management is on.

The Union submitted an Inclement Weather Policy proposal, October 2003, to management for negotiations. Management refused to negotiate and the Union has filed an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP). I will let you know when we have a ruling from the FLRA.

Vehicle Traffic and Parking Control Agreement: Management via the security guards is trying to force a new policy on motor cycle riders. Since DFAS is continuing to allow the guards to harass motor cycle riding employees who are obeying Colorado Law the Union is forced to file a ULP.

Stewards: We are looking for mature individuals who would like to learn about labor relations. Please contact one of the officers listed in the box below for more information.

Union Cards: If you were paying dues in August 2003, you should have received a new Union Membership card. If you have not, send me an email and I will contact National for you.

Eboard Meetings: Normally the second Tuesday of each month in the Union office. Open to dues paying members. Contact me if you wish to attend so I can give you the start time.

Membership Meeting: Next meeting will be 20 April at 1100 in the Weber Auditorium. Lunch will be provided.

Local 2040 -Post 1D18 - POBox 200157 Denver, Co 80220 (303) 676-7140 President Mark McDonald 307-322-1913 or 303-263-9823, mark@manmrk.net , ARPC VP Mike Molina 7027, DFAS VP Terry Cole Sr 2711, DISA VP Dave Pappas 6651, Secretary: Cheryl Williamson-Brown 7907, Trustee: Marian Wells; Trustee: Kelvin Booker 5169 Web site www.afge171.org
