



'ANGUS BARKS'

By Jeff Francis
AEG Executive Board

Fundamental Grievance

Local 201 filed a fundamental grievance to address the Company's inconsistent application of our job posting rules. This grievance is on the Step II Aircraft agenda, and has the support of the full Executive Board.

UPGRADE SYSTEM BROKEN

Stewards across the Riverworks report problems with job postings not appearing in their buildings, or disappearing; with posting boards that are insecure, in poor repair, or non-existent. Members have had their upgrade applications misfiled, or misplaced, or not returned in a timely or secure manner. On the Company side, production managers are unhappy with the length of time it takes to fill an open request, and the Employment Office is often frustrated by multiple upgrade refusals.

FIX NEEDED

Over the past several years, Executive Board members fixed many individual situations stemming from these problems. In pursuing this grievance, the Executive Board is targeting the application process, not the selection process. The Company and Union will always have disagreements over selection decisions. But there would be mutual benefits to modernizing the upgrade system.

COMPANY RESPONSE

Rather than dispute the details of the Union's grievance, the Company has stated their willingness to consider computerizing the job posting system. That is a constructive approach. Several GE plants have had such a system for a number of years. In Lynn there are now enough shop floor terminals to make it a practical possibility. The Company stated they have the programming support to adapt one of these electronic systems to Lynn's equipment. Currently at Step II the Union and Company are reviewing the systems in place at the Erie and Waterford plants.

FIRST STEP

The first step is to post jobs electronically. The Company is willing to do this on a trial basis, in addition to the regular paper postings, to see whether it works. The postings can appear on any wide-screen monitor on the shop floor, and any work station PC that currently posts video safety messages.

For members, this would solve the problem of paper postings disappearing or never appearing or going up late. For the Employment Office, timely plant-wide postings could be sent out as easily as e-mail, without having to depend on HR reps for distribution. Some shop areas have plenty of monitors, some have few. At Step II we are reviewing which areas would need to add equipment.

NEXT STEPS

These systems also allow the employee to submit upgrade applications electronically, view which employees applied for the same job, and see who gets the upgrade. Managers are able to submit open requests, and schedule interviews. Some of the features of these programs differ from our rules. The Union and the Company will proceed carefully in discussing electronic applications. But the potential is there for a system that is more accurate, efficient and transparent than our current process.

LOCAL UNDERSTANDING

Our rules are contained in the written Upgrading & Job Posting Understanding, negotiated in 1974. The Union would prefer a modern, electronic system that duplicates those rules. If rules must change to go electronic, those changes would have to be approved by Local 201's Executive Board and membership.

The purpose of having a written, negotiated Local Understanding on upgrading is the same as it was 32 years ago: to provide equal opportunity for promotion to all employees represented by the Union, without discrimination.

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