



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AIR TRAFFIC SPECIALISTS

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May 2, 2005

Federal Aviation Administration
Ms. Ventris C. Gibson
Assistant Administrator for Human Resource Management
800 Independence Ave, S.W.
Washington, DC 20591

Ventris
Dear ~~Ms. Gibson~~:

Thank you for taking time out of your schedule to meet with Scott Malon and myself on Friday. This is the letter as promised that outlines the issues we talked about, as well as a couple of additional issues that have come to my attention, all of which need your attention and clarification.

The issues discussed on Friday:

- Article 108 Time – LM's offer to apply for a job is not the actual job offer and does not trigger any gain or loss of afforded entitlements specified within Section 7, 8, and/or 9 of the RIF agreement.
- Mutual Reassignments: Alaskan Region – The agency has apparently put a deadline on the individuals completing the move by June 12th, 2005. This deadline is not only detrimental to the individual, but also to the agency.
- Nationwide Terminal Bids – Some of the Air Traffic Managers in the Terminal Option have been vocal about not wanting/accepting any Flight Service Controllers into their facility. This is completely unacceptable and NAATS requests your oversight on selection and training of any individual sent into a hostile environment with management like that. We would also like to see consideration given to married couples who are bidding that they get placed in the same tower now so we don't have to look at hardships later.

- EMP 1.9: Application of “Well Qualified” – There have been “mixed signals” given regarding employees eligibility under Section 4 of the RIF Agreement. It was the understanding of NAATS during RIF negotiations that an individual was not required to have any previous ATC certification in a Terminal or Enroute facility to be afforded the opportunity to receive priority placement over that of a non-FAA hire, specifically for the ATC - 6, 7, and 8 facilities as outlined within the Agreement. It was the understanding that the knowledge and skills gained within our current positions within Air Traffic would contribute towards that definition.
- Vacancy Announcements: Enroute/Other Positions Not Covered Within the RIF Agreement – It has been brought to our attention that the Enroute Managers are being instructed to hire a College Training Initiative (CTI) candidate before any AFSS BUE, regardless of the qualifications of our workforce. This would imply some form of “Selection Priority” given to the CTI program for any position not within the ATC-6, 7, or 8 levels.
- VERA Employees Ability to Rescind the Application – There are a few individuals who applied for the VERA that would now like to pull that application (Approximately 3 out of the 14-15 applications on file). The rest of the Federal Government allows employees the right to pull their paperwork right up until the day they retire, the FAA supposedly has some kind of policy in place that does not allow that. This does not harm the agency, but does harm the individual. The fact it may throw off management planning in an insignificant way or someone else wanting to do it in the future is unacceptable. Has there ever been a case within the FAA when employees have had to make the decision between a VERA or a Discontinued Service Retirement (DSR)?
- Retirement Issue 1.7% After 30 Years of Service – There was a statement made at the convention that contradicts the HR web site, hopefully that’s already corrected.
- AT Workforce Plan on Terminal Hiring – A BUE was given a number of 160-200 positions to be filled through FY07. This is completely contrary to the understanding of the RIF Team, in that FY07 was the year that the Agency expected to hire the majority of its terminal staffing needs. The expected hiring for FY was roughly 530 positions. While we recognize the Agency’s ability to adjust their planned hiring based upon need and funding, it would seem suspect that adjustment has already been made in the previous month of our newly signed Agreement.

Some additional issues that have been brought to my attention:

- Waiver Approval from PPP by AVS-1 – If this is the beginning of a form letter requesting waivers for hiring outside of our bargaining unit because of budgetary and training constraints then the entire Preferred Placement Program is a farce and needs to be exposed. If every Director writes the same letter and has it approved then the only jobs within the FAA our people will be allowed to compete and be given preferred placement on are the few tower positions available.
- IPPs Criteria For Approval - There appears to be an arbitrary process being used to approve/disapprove IPP requests, with some individuals being denied a transfer even though their paperwork was submitted first. What is being considered to ensure that fairness is applied to all interested employees?
- Employees Selected For Positions Outside the Flight Service Option - Supposedly 35 BUEs have been given positions since January 1, 2005, with a list being developed. You advised both Scott and I that you would make that list available to us.

It has been just over one month since the Parties agreed upon the Memorandum of Agreement concerning Reduction-in-Force (RIF) procedures. Expectedly, procedures regarding both the RIF Agreement as well as other Agency policies have been affected by what amounts to a difference of interpretation and/or opinion between the parties. I thought some clarification regarding these issues would most certainly be in order so that we can collectively move forward correctly through this process.

I appreciate in advance your response to these matters. I believe we can both agree that whatever we can do collectively to ensure a mutual understanding of this process during this stressful time, the better it is for our workforce.

Sincerely,



Kathleen A. Breen
President

CC: NAATS Board of Directors
JWashington