

JUN 15 1978

Mr. J. Joseph Vacca, President
National Association of Letter
Carriers, AFL-CIO
100 Indiana Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Lawn Crossing
St. Louis, MO
NC-NAT-13212

Dear Mr. Vacca:

On May 16, 1978, we met with you to discuss the above-captioned national level grievance.

We have carefully considered the matters you presented in conjunction with applicable contractual provisions and the arbitration award of Impartial Chairman Garrett in case NC-C-7851.

The arbitration award of the Impartial Chairman makes clear that the "lawn crossing policy" announced by the St. Louis Post Office on January 5, 1977, was in conflict with controlling provisions of Handbook M-39 and that the policy was to be rescinded. In this regard, instructions have been issued to rescind the policy announced on January 5, 1977, and for letter carriers in St. Louis to use sidewalks and accepted and approved walkways and refrain from traversing lawns or other private property not normally used as a walkway in order to effect delivery.

As stated during our meeting, Postal Service policy does not advocate that management issue blanket orders requiring letter carriers to cross every lawn or take every shortcut. In this regard, consideration must be given to whether "obvious" shortcuts across lawns exist, and appropriate comments must be made by the route examiner

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in accordance with the pertinent provisions of the M-39 Handbook as interpreted through arbitration. We agree that any claimed time savings due to a carrier's failure to properly take an obvious shortcut cannot be based on fixed "standard" time. Time savings must be considered on the basis of conditions existing at the particular "obvious" shortcut(s) in question, the comments and recommendations of the route examiner, and the knowledge and evaluation of the manager making the adjustment.

We do not agree that the national-level policy on lawn crossing is in all material respects identical to the "St. Louis lawn crossing policy". Accordingly, your assertion that the Postal Service should "announce an appropriate nationwide change in its 'lawn crossing' policy" is rejected as being unwarranted and unnecessary.

Sincerely,

(signed) W. E. Henry, Jr.

William E. Henry, Jr.
Labor Relations Department