



Mr. Ronald Brown
Vice President
National Association of Letter
Carriers, AFL-CIO
100 Indiana Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001-2197

Re: F94N-4F-C 97024971
Holdeman, M.
Gardena, CA 90247-9998

F94N-4F-C 97015179
Duran, R.
Pomona, CA 91766-9998

Dear Mr. Brown:

Our respective representatives recently met in a prearbitration discussion of the above referenced grievances.

The Step 4 issue in these grievances is whether any grievance, which has as its subject safety or health issues, may be placed at the head of the appropriate arbitration docket at the request of the union.

The parties agree that Article 14.2 of the National Agreement controls. It states in part:

Any grievance which has as its subject a safety or health issue directly affecting an employee(s) which is subsequently properly appealed to arbitration in accordance with the provisions of Article 15 may be placed at the head of the appropriate arbitration docket at the request of the Union.

The fact that the union alleges that the grievance has as its subject a safety or health issue does not in and of itself have any bearing on the merits of such allegations. Accordingly, placement of a case at the head of the docket does not preclude the Postal Service from arguing the existence of the alleged "safety" issue or that the case should not have been given priority. The Postal Service will not refuse to schedule a case in accordance with Article 14.2 based solely upon the belief that no safety issue is present.

Please sign and return the enclosed copy of this letter as your acknowledgement of agreement to remand these cases to Step 3 for further processing including arbitration if necessary, removing them from the pending arbitration listing.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Douglas A. Tulino in black ink.

Douglas A. Tulino
Manager
Labor Relations Policies
and Programs

Handwritten signature of Ronald Brown in black ink.

Ronald Brown
Vice President
National Association of Letter
Carriers, AFL-CIO

Date: 2/20/01