



## American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

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April 3, 2009

To: Local Presidents

Re: OSHA Complaint – Ergonomic Issues Related to DBCS Operations

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Dear Local President:

This is a follow-up to my March 25, 2009, memo asking that locals with DBCS machines file simultaneous OSHA complaints. The purpose of this letter is to respond to inquiries from the field, which posed the following question:

*Since the Ergonomic Strategic Partnership has expired, should locals collectively withdraw from the Local ERRP Committee at the same time they file Form 7?*

The APWU **does not ask or recommend** that locals withdraw from the Local Ergonomic Risk Reduction Program (ERRP), either as part of a nationwide endeavor or in conjunction with the filing of OSHA complaints for the following reasons:

The filing of the DBCS ergonomic complaints and continued participation in local ERRP committees are two separate issues. The APWU supports the ERRP program because it has a proven record of reducing ergonomic hazards. In addition, although the Ergonomic Strategic Partnership agreement has expired, the parties at the national level are engaged in ongoing discussions about renewing the agreement.

At the local level, in facilities where ERRP committees are functional, the programs have significantly reduced ergonomic injuries. They also provide a vehicle to promote ergonomic practices, and to educate employees about ergonomic principles and work methods.

Of course, some ERRP teams may be non-functional or may function in a way that fails to properly address the APWU's concerns. The decision to withdraw from the local ERRP is up to each individual local. However, there are resources and procedures in place to assist locals when their programs do not appear to be working. In such cases, issues of concern should be brought to the

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attention of the Local Joint Labor Management Safety and Health Committee, which has oversight of the program at the facility level. If the Local Safety Committee cannot resolve the problems, APWU Area ERRP representatives have the authority to elevate them to the Area level. If the issues are not resolved at the Area level, they may be referred to the National Ergonomic Work Group or the National Joint Labor/Management Ergonomic Committee.

If your local ERRP program is not providing you with an effective way to address ergonomic issues, in addition to notifying the Local Joint Labor Management Safety and Health Committee, and the APWU Area ERRP Representative, if you have any questions, please contact Corey Thompson, the APWU's safety and health specialist, at (202) 842-4273 or [cthompson@apwu.org](mailto:cthompson@apwu.org). He will work with you to help make your program more effective.

In Union Solidarity,



Greg Bell

Director Industrial Relations

GB/CT:jb  
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