

## National Executive Board Acts To Fight Network Consolidation

### *Dues Assessment Approved to Help Pay for Ad Campaign*

Vowing to do “everything in our power to thwart the Postal Service’s network realignment plan,” the union’s National Executive Board voted to approve a \$5 dues assessment at a special meeting March 10. The assessment will help pay for an advertising campaign designed to make the public aware of the expected changes and the negative effect they will have on service to individual consumers and small businesses.

“This plan was created without any input from the American people, whose mail service will deteriorate,” said APWU President William Burrus. “It is the result of pressure on the USPS by the mailing industry, which is seeking to reduce its costs at the expense of all others.”

The advertising campaign will be coordinated with a grassroots effort to enlist support from elected officials, businesses, individual citizens, and community organizations. The assessment will take place over two pay periods in increments of \$2.50 each, reflected in the paychecks issued to employees on April 7 and 21.

(A previous dues assessment, approved in July 2003, was not implemented, and authorization for it expired in August 2004.)

“This is just the beginning,” Burrus said. “We will use all the tools at our disposal to engage the public in this effort. It is essential that we involve our members as well.

“The Evolutionary Network Development plan is a stunning example of a dangerous trend within the USPS,” he said. “Instead of serving the nation’s citizens, postal management now places primary importance on acting as a conduit for the major mailers to transmit advertising.

Although the USPS has been advocating network realign-

ment for several years, it briefed the APWU on the Evolutionary Network Development (END) plan for the first time on Feb. 14, the same day it submitted the plan to the Postal Rate Commission for evaluation. (The Postal Service is required by law to seek an advisory opinion from the commission when it proposes to make changes in service that are national in scope. Under the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the Postal Service is also required to notify the union when a major relocation of employees is planned “due to the implementation of national postal mail networks.”)

The USPS briefing for union officials contained virtually no specifics. It failed to provide the number of facilities, the timing, and the locations that would be affected. The Postal

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Service announced it would replace the nine existing facility-types with five: Regional Distribution Centers, Local Processing Centers, Destination Processing Centers, Airport Transportation Centers, and Remote Encoding Centers. (A copy of the USPS presentation can be viewed on the union’s Web site, at [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org).)

More than 40 facilities have been identified since October 2005 for consolidation of “some operations,” or for feasibility studies. “Additional changes are expected to be profound,” Burrus noted, “and the Postal Service plans to implement them over a period of several years.”

## Pay Increases Take Effect March 18

APWU members will receive pay increases totaling approximately \$1,200 per year, effective March 18. The raises, which were negotiated as part of the extension of the Collective Bargaining Agreement approved last summer, will appear in the paychecks employees receive on April 7.

Six thousand APWU-represented employees will also

receive upgrades, equal to more than \$1,000 annually. The upgrades cover 14 positions in the Clerk, Maintenance, and Motor Vehicle Services Crafts.

Pay charts reflecting the increases were included in the March/April issue of *The American Postal Worker* magazine. They also can be viewed in the “Pay Information” pages at the APWU Web site, [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org).