

ARTICLE 24LABOR-MANAGEMENT COMMITTEESSection 1

The parties, recognizing the need for improved communication and a better understanding of each other's concerns, agree that a cooperative involvement must exist at all levels of the Office and the Association in order to enhance labor-management relations. To this end, the parties agree to jointly commit their efforts to establish and support a Quality Joint Labor-Management Committee System. The objectives of the Quality Labor-Management Committee System are to enhance the quality of work life in the Office and to improve the effectiveness of the Office by providing for the discussion of each other's concerns, the open exchange of information, and the opportunity for joint problem-solving of issues and concerns that have an adverse impact on the work environment. It is understood that the establishment of the Quality Joint Labor-Management Committee System is not intended to replace the collective bargaining process or the grievance procedure, but to provide a foundation from which to build and promote the cooperative attitude the parties acknowledge must exist at all levels of the organization.

Section 2

- A. Within 60 days after effective date of this agreement, the Office and the Association will appoint 3 persons from their organizations to serve as members of the following Quality Discussion Groups (each person must work in the area the Discussion Group represents) :
- (1) Chemical Quality Discussion Group
  - (2) Documentation/Other Quality Discussion Group
  - (3) Electrical Quality Discussion Group
  - (4) Mechanical Quality Discussion Group
- B. The Office shall not appoint managers above the level of first line supervisor or managers who were participants in the arbitration leading to this agreement to serve as members of the Quality Discussion Groups.
- C. The Association shall not appoint Association Official/Representatives to serve as members of Quality Discussion Groups.

Section 3

- A. Quality Discussion Group meetings shall be held every two months, and shall be limited to two hours, unless the Group mutually decides to meet more frequently. At the first meeting, a specific day and time shall be selected for future meetings.
- B. The Chair of the Discussion Groups shall alternate every six months between Association and Office Discussion Group members, unless the Group mutually decides to have another arrangement.

- C. The Chairperson is responsible for calling meetings, maintaining orderly meetings, obtaining agenda items from the members and preparing the meeting agenda.
- D. Except for an agenda, Discussion Group meetings shall be informal.
- E. Except for grievances, Unfair Labor Practices and the like, Discussion Groups may discuss any topic related to the Office work environment, despite the fact that such topic(s) may be outside of the scope of bargaining. However, the Discussion Groups have no authority to amend or delete any term of this Agreement or to compel action on any subject.
- F. The Discussion Groups shall make recommendations and/or reports to the Joint Labor-Management Committee.
- G. Unless the Discussion Group members mutually decide otherwise, the two alternating Chairpersons shall attend Joint Labor-Management Committee meetings as ex officio members and shall report on the recommendations of the Discussion Group or on whatever the Group deems appropriate.
- H. Discussion Group members shall be authorized official time to attend Group meetings.

#### Section 4

The Association may periodically send an Association official to a Discussion Group meeting as an observer. However, the Association official shall not participate in the Group meeting. The official's time at the meeting shall be charged to the Association's bank time.

#### Section 5

When requested by a Discussion Group, arrangements shall be made for key people from the Office, the Association and elsewhere to address the Group.

#### Section 6

- A. Within 90 days after the effective date of this agreement, the Association and the Office shall appoint 5 representatives from their respective organizations to serve on the parties' Joint Labor-Management Committee.
- B. The two ex officio representatives of the Discussion Groups shall serve as non-voting members of the Joint Labor Management Committee.

Section 7

- A. Joint Labor-Management Committee meetings shall be held quarterly and shall be limited to four hours, unless the Committee mutually agrees otherwise. At the first meeting, a specific day and time shall be selected for future meetings. At the same meeting, a Standing Joint Sub-Committee on Automation, and a Health and Safety Committee in accordance with Article 31 shall be established. The Committee may subsequently establish any standing or special subcommittee it deems appropriate.
- (1) The Health and Safety Committee and each Standing Joint Sub-Committee shall be composed of six members, three representatives appointed by the Office and three appointed by the Association. At least two members of each sub-committee (one appointed by the Office and one appointed by the Association) shall also be members of the Joint Labor-Management Committee.
  - (2) Each Standing or Special Joint Sub-Committee shall operate in accordance with Section 3 above, excluding subsection G. The Joint Labor-Management Committee member who is also a Standing or Special Joint Sub-Committee member shall report recommendations to the Joint Labor-Management Committee.
- B. The Joint Labor-Management Committee Chair shall be held jointly by a representative of the Office and a representative of the Association. Each party will determine whether it will have a permanent or a rotating co-chairperson.
- C. Joint Labor-Management Committee meetings shall discuss, explore and study the recommendations and reports of the discussion groups and the Standing and Special Joint Sub-Committees. By mutual agreement, the committee shall make a recommendation or report to the Office concerning those issues discussed, explored and/or studied. However, the Committee has no authority to compel or preclude the Office from action or implementing proposed actions.
- D. The Chairpersons shall cause an agenda to be prepared and distributed to all Committee members at least two workdays prior to the meeting. The agenda shall include a brief description of each item to be discussed. Agendas should not be limited to Discussion Group and/or Standing or Special Joint SubCommittee recommendations and/or reports, although such items shall have priority along with previously scheduled agenda topics. The Joint Labor-Management Committee may agenda any topic of interest to the Association, the employees or the Office, despite the fact that such topic(s) may be outside the scope of bargaining. Topics not on the agenda shall not be discussed but rather shall be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. Emergency items may be added to the agenda by mutual consent.

- E. Every attempt shall be made to keep to the meeting schedule and agenda and, where possible, the parties will avoid carrying agenda items over more than two meetings.
- F. In order to have a frank and open discussion, the Committee shall have no authority to discuss grievances, unfair labor practices or the like, or to amend or delete any of the terms of this Agreement.
- G. When necessary, appropriate arrangements will be made for experts to address the Committee.

#### Section 8

The parties recognize that they will need a neutral facilitator to assist in their initial move towards a better understanding of each others concerns and a more cooperative, problem solving relationship. In this regard, the parties may agree to obtain a facilitator to initially provide at least the following functions:

- A. Bring the parties together and Chair the initial meetings.
- B. Provide the parties with feedback and recommendations concerning their participation in the system.
- C. Assist in planning if it is needed.
- D. Assist in controlling the agenda (provide the neutral presence which allows disagreement to be expressed but kept controlled and within acceptable limits).
- E. Help committee participants identify issues which can best be worked on in smaller groups, task forces, or subcommittees and assist in setting up such groups.
- F. Provide one-on-one consultation with Office managers, Association officials and employees.
- G. Provide the parties with information about similar programs and arrange for experts to address the committees where necessary.

#### Section 9

After 20 months the parties will assess their progress under the Quality Joint Labor-Management Committee System and determine if it should be continued, discontinued or modified.