

No 438/20

9th September 2020

CWU/Royal Mail Joint Statement Covering Annual Leave Planning (April 2021 to March 2022)

Dear Colleagues,

As with previous years, the following National Joint Statement has been agreed in order to assist representatives when discussing and concluding 2021-22 annual leave arrangements with local managers, which should be concluded in line with the Way Forward Agreement by 31st October 2020.

Whilst the attached Joint Statement mainly reflects previous year's arrangements and guidelines, the particular focus this year has been on the process for local parties to use, to assist in reaching agreement on local Annual Leave plans.

Equally, these agreed arrangements also reflect and references wider agreements reach on Annual Leave planning, covered in the 'Joint Statement between Royal Mail and the CWU in regards to a joint review of Annual leave Arrangements' (set out in LTB 409, issued on the 4th of July/19); and the 'Joint Statement between Royal Mail and the CWU on Annual leave for 2020/2021 Leave Year' (as set out in LTB 345/20 issued on the 1st of July/20).

As with previous year's arrangements, particular attention is drawn to Branches regarding the following:

The "Annual Leave Calenderisation Work Aide" information/guide tab will assist managers and Reps in undertaking the correct process to establish leave demand and populate the work aide accordingly, whilst stressing the point that the Work Aid is a guide and should therefore be used as such.

The focus is on concluding a robust and reliable Annual Leave Plan/Agreement that includes all individuals' legally contractual leave entitlements, as its primary driver, whilst also identifying extra leave slots in low traffic periods over and above those agreed to facilitate the taking of additional leave and therefore maximising choice of leave slots for individuals.

The existing National agreements, guidelines, agreed tools, procedures and processes are in place to support resourcing on an ongoing basis and are **not** affected by this Joint Statement. They remain firmly in place and will in fact be used to support the process and assist in providing a balanced approach to year-round leave allocation and resourcing.

Managers and Reps will also need to establish the total number of owed weeks above the leave year's contractual entitlement, which need to be documented in your agreements and arrangements agreed locally and put in place to deal with it.

The Joint Statement also sets out a clear process for Operational Managers and Area Delivery Representatives to provide evidence of local agreements on their office's Annual Leave plans to their respective Delivery Director and Divisional Representatives, which should be completed by the end of October/start of November.

Additionally, set out below is guidance that has previously been communicated to representatives but is worth repeating especially for representatives entering into leave agreements for the first time:-

It is essential when entering discussions that CWU representatives establish and allocate the unit's contractual entitlement first which will in turn identify the number of leave reserves required to enable reliable resourcing.

'Vacancies and leave reserve vacancies should remain under constant review to ensure adequate resource is available to meet customer, the annual leave plan and operational requirement'.

When establishing leave demand this needs to include all staff contractual leave, Bank Holiday credits for annual leave that coincides with Bank Holidays and rest days that fall on a Bank Holiday, purchased leave, and any leave days carried over from the previous year. Your DOM should have this information in their Manpower Plan (and recorded on the PSP) and you should check this information to ensure all 'contractual' and 'carried over' leave has been captured.

The number of weeks can be checked through this calculation below and should be cross-referenced with the number of leave weeks in PSP and that are in the Annual Leave Calendarisation aide and the relevant adjustments made.

For example:

If the above added up to 600 weeks to be allocated and covered and 2 weeks were closed for Christmas Pressure the number of leave reserves to cover AWD would be 12, (600 divided-by 50) = 12. Add to this the leave reserves leave 12 @ 5 weeks = 60 weeks would mean another leave reserve (60 divided-by 50) = 1.2.

In this example, that would mean that a minimum of 13 leave slots a week for 50 weeks should be available. If you then agree to open up, say, another 3 slots, due to agreed absorption through the summer weeks, then in the period from June to August, the number of open slots available should be 16.

This is just one flat line example. Units may decide not to employ against all 13 reserves and convert some to S/A, or overtime. This is subject to local discussion and agreement.

As a consequence of providing additional leave slots in the summer period, there may be leave gaps in the 'winter' period, notwithstanding other absence, which you may need to discuss and agree a plan to deal with. There could be more people available in the unit, bearing in mind traffic/workload traditionally increases during this period. This should be dealt with via weekly resourcing meetings and subject to agreement.

Branches should progress any disagreements in regard to Managers refusing to fully engage and adhere to these guidelines in establishing annual leave plans/agreements through the IR Framework as appropriate.

Further National discussions continue with Royal Mail regarding the impact of owed/carried over annual leave, and talks remain ongoing in relation to a wider review of the Weekly Resourcing Agenda. Branches and Representatives will continue to be updated in due course.

Finally, it is also relevant to remind Branches that in the 'Joint Statement between Royal Mail and the CWU in regards to a joint review of Annual leave Arrangements' set out in LTB 409/19, that the following additional clarity was give around the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and displaying annual leave plans on workplace notice boards:

It has been highlighted that there may be some confusion since GDPR came into force. The confusion relates specifically to displaying annual leave plans on notice boards and whether this is still permissible. To be clear, displaying annual leave plans on notice boards does not contravene GDPR, as the sharing of names against annual leave slots is not considered as 'sensitive personal data'. It is in fact **essential** for units to display annual leave plans on notice boards, so that there is a common understanding of the annual leave plan. **Please ensure annual leave plans continue to be displayed on notice boards in all units.**

Any queries to the content of the above, please contact the Outdoor Department, reference: 445, email address: outdoorsecretary@cwu.org.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Baulch
Assistant Secretary