



REVIEW COMMITTEE



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CASE CLOSED
FILED & LOGGED

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF
ELECTRICAL WORKERS, AFL-CIO
LOCAL UNION 1245, I.B.E.W.
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BOB CHOATE, SECRETARY

JOHN MOFFAT, CHAIRMAN

DECISION
LETTER DECISION
PRE-REVIEW REFERRAL

Pre-Review Committee No. 17736 Customer Care – Meter Reading - Chico

Marlene Brock
Company Member
Local investigating Committee

Kit Stice
Union Member
Local Investigating Committee

Grievance Issue:

This case concerns the discharge of a Meter Reader for altering Company records.

Facts of the Case:

On August 16, 2007, the grievant's employment with PG&E was terminated. At the time of his termination, the grievant had no active discipline on his record

A Meter Reading Supervisor was sent up to Chico in order to help them prepare for an operational review. While there she asked for multiple documents that the two Senior Meter Readers in the office were unable to produce. The focus of the review was on the overall Class II Rebates and the reports used to track them. While looking at the manual log one of the Senior Meter Readers kept, the supervisor noticed that the stats for one of the Meter Readers seemed excessive and made a mental note to follow up. After a discussion with her Manager about that Meter Reader she returned to the records for a second look. The Supervisor noted that the number logged for the Meter Reader had been changed. After noticing the changes, she contacted one of the Senior Meter Readers to find out if he had changed the numbers on the log, which he had not changed. After looking at the changed document, the Supervisor had the Senior Meter Reader pull the accounts on which Meter Reader's number would have been listed as reader. From when he originally checked those Class II Rebates, it was the Senior's testimony that several of the MR-827 Daily Report: Detail of Class II Rebates had disappeared from his binder.

The Grievant stated that when the Supervisor arrived for the departmental audit, she upgraded him to Senior Meter Reader in order to help them prepare for the operational review and to look at Class 2 rebates.

The grievant admitted that he did not receive any training and had no understanding of the process by which the Senior Meter Reader used in order to verify Class II Rebates:

The Supervisor didn't question his ability to accomplish this nor give him directions as to how to proceed, even though she knew that he was not trained in the process: that in fact he didn't have access to the computer program to complete the task. The grievant admitted to changing the Meter Reader's stats on the log, and removing several of her MR-827 Daily Report: Detail of Class II Rebates for the numbers to add up.

The grievant and the Supervisor had vastly different interpretations of what was meant by, "I am going to see what I can do for those people who aren't making expectations." The Supervisor understood it to mean that he would help Meter Readers be more accurate in their reads, to scope, or tips on how to read a route more efficiently. The grievant took that phrase to mean that he was going to go through the log books and verify that the numbers were correct.

The Senior Meter Reader stated that his method is to go through the history of the reads, through the billing estimates, and to see when an over read occurred. When they are identified, they are then charged to the Meter Reader who made the initial error, which in some cases can be as many as 4 months prior to the verification. It was also stated that if any changes are to be made to the Class II Rebates, only he is to change them and that any changes must be approved by the Supervisor.

Discussion

The Union believes that the discharge was inappropriate. The supervisor knew that the grievant was going to review the Class II rebates because the grievant advised her "I am going to see what I can do for those people who aren't making expectations." The supervisor approved the grievant doing this work and even told the grievant to be sure and upgrade himself to Senior Meter Reader. The grievant did the best he could, considering he had not been trained and had no knowledge of the process used to verify class II rebates. If the Company believes the grievant's corrections to be wrong, then training (not discharge) is the appropriate action.

The Union believes that the way the Class II rebates are charged is not correct. Employees are being charged for reads which occurred months prior and for multiple months on the same account (which is really just one error). The grievant did the best he could to make sure the records were correct. He should be commended not discharged.

The Company believes that discharge was for just cause. The grievant never received approval to review or change the records. The supervisor took the grievant's offer to "help" those low performers as an offer to do field audits to help those employees read better. Given that the grievant had neither training nor knowledge of how to verify Class II rebates, why would the supervisor even think that the grievant meant he wanted to review the records?

The Company also notes that the grievant only made changes to one employee's numbers. This was the same employee who had approached him for help with her numbers. The grievant never reported the changes he made to supervision. Some of the pages (which contained the grievant's errors) are missing and the grievant has acknowledged that he may have forgotten to put them back

The grievant stated that he made the changes because the daily numbers did not equal the monthly numbers. A review of the daily reports for the three months in question shows that this claim is not true: The February Report shows seven errors which the grievant changed to six. The daily error reports for that month do, in fact, add up to seven.

The March Report shows five errors which the grievant changed to three. The daily error reports for that month do add up to five. There is one read which now shows an NE (not error). The Senior Meter Reader stated that this is not his hand writing and he is the only one authorized to make those notations. Even if the Senior Meter Reader is mistaken, and this is his handwriting, the new total would be four, not three.

The April Report shows ten errors which the grievant changed to six. The daily error reports for that month do add up to ten. The Union conjectures that the grievant may have changed the three errors for one address to one since they were all on the same account. Even with this thinking, the total would still not match the six the grievant recorded. Additionally, the grievant never said he changed the daily numbers, he only said that he added them up.

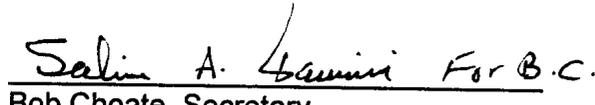
Decision

The termination was for just and sufficient cause and this case is closed without adjustment.



John A. Moffat, Chairman
Review Committee

1/14/2009
Date



Bob Choate, Secretary
Review Committee

01-14-2009
Date
P.3.