



---

## FLRA REJECTS AFGE'S ATTEMPT TO RAID NWS; RULES NWSEO REPRESENTS ALL NWS EMPLOYEES

The Denver Regional Director of the Federal Labor Relations Authority has dismissed AFGE's petition to represent the employees of the NWS's National Logistics Support Center in Kansas City. In this decision, the FLRA reaffirmed that NWSEO is the sole representative of all non-supervisory NWS employees nationwide.

The case arose when NOAA transferred the Logistics Support Center and its employees into the NWS. AFGE had been previously certified as the bargaining representative of the Logistics Support Center employees when it was part of NOAA, and not the NWS. NWSEO had been certified in 1981 as the exclusive bargaining representative of all NWS employees nationwide, so when the Logistics Support Center was transferred to the NWS, the Center accreted to the NWSEO bargaining unit and NWSEO became the employees' representative. However, in order to weaken NWSEO's influence, NWS management continued to illegally recognize AFGE as the collective bargaining representative of the Center's employees and sent the employees' union dues to AFGE.

The FLRA held a three day hearing at the Logistics Support Center in Kansas City last summer and ruled earlier this week that the Logistics Support Center employees "are functionally integrated with the existing nationwide unit of NWS employees, all of whom support the same NWS mission of protecting lives and property." The Regional Director also concluded that the "inclusion of these employees in the unit represented by the NWSEO will promote effective dealing by including in one unit all employees who share a community of interest."

Prior to the hearing in this case, NWSEO Vice President Bill Hopkins personally appealed to the AFGE's Vice President to withdraw AFGE's attempt to raid the NWSEO bargaining unit – urging AFGE to concentrate on representing the employees it has already. However, the AFGE refused to back down from its predatory tactics.

As a result of this victory, NWSEO will now explore whether NWSEO would be a better representative of the employees in other bargaining units in NOAA now represented by AFGE.

The Regional Director's decision is also a repudiation of the NWS' claim that it is as efficient to bargain with two unions as it is with one – a position which the agency took at the hearing in order to undermine NWSEO's strength. According to the FLRA's Regional Director, recognition of NWSEO as the sole representative of NWS employees "will also promote efficiency of operations, as will the inherent savings in time and money in negotiating and administering only one contract."

"I certainly hope that NWS management will cease trying to undermine NWSEO by illegally dealing with the AFGE and sending the Logistics Support Center employees' dues money to AFGE. We warned the agency before the hearing that its recognition of AFGE was illegal, but we were ignored. I regret that an outside body had to come in and straighten out the NWS' illegal labor practices at significant expense to both the NWS and NWSEO," said Dan Sobien, President of NWSEO.