

DFAS and AFGE Council 171
Negotiation Session
May 26, 2004

In attendance: Bob McNamara, Kelley Dull, Pete Heins, Teresa Briley, Mark Collins, Frank Gootee, Frank Rock, Robin Smith, Ron Coe and Victor Davis.
Note takers: Joe Dan Rawls and Angela Beltowski.

Finalize the EDM agreement.

On the first paragraph, management thought that it was taken out because it was not needed. The Union feels it is a feel good for the employees and would like to keep it in.

Discussion of adding a line for local issues.

Kelley expressed concern that the locals should be allowed to bargain site- specific issues. Discussion continued. We normally put something in an agreement addressing bargaining issues as they arise. We don't have this in here and we need it because we don't have all of the information about EDM.

Management Caucus.

Language from Mark for end of agreement: This MOA constitutes the entire agreement between the parties regarding the implementation of the EDM technology and work processes throughout DFAS. Any subsequent site specific issues regarding the conditions of employment of EDM employees will be resolved in accordance with the current MOA between the parties regarding the level of bargaining (December 2002).

Union Caucus.

Kelley: We have an issue with the language. We don't have all of the information and this closes the door on future issues. Mrs. McGowan stated that this is in the future going to be huge.

Mark: The purpose of these negotiations is so that we can proceed with implementation.

Kelley: But this is bigger than just VP. I didn't know until yesterday that accounting has view only access.

Pete: Do you feel that every time EDM touches a new business line we will be back at the table?

Kelley: Possibly. It depends on how it impacts the employees. We don't have all of the information to know.

Frank: If something happens at a sight that EDM is implemented that isn't addressed in this agreement there is no avenue to address it.

Kelley read language below.

Union Language counter-proposal: The parties agree that issues and concerns which may arise will be subject to bargaining at the appropriate level of bargaining as defined by the MOA of December 2002.

Management Caucus.

Management Language: Subsequent issues regarding the conditions of employment for employees using EDM technology will be resolved in accordance with law, rules, or regulations, and the current MOA between the parties regarding the level of bargaining. (December 2002).

Union Caucus.

Kelley: In the interest of partnership and moving forward, we will accept the language proposed.

Kelley: When we see the information that is out there that we are waiting on we can address these issues?

Teresa: Yes to the extent allowed.

Finalized EDM MOA

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service and American Federation of Government Employees Council 171 enter into this agreement for the implementation of EDM.

1. In order to perform in a manner expected by the agency, employees must have ample space that meets the needs of their respective DFAS EDM functions and adequate space must be provided to accommodate the EDM system, and downloads associated with these systems.
2. All DFAS Employees performing EDM functions will receive all applicable training that is associated with the specific EDM Site function they perform. The training will be conducted in conjunction with implementation. The Parties reaffirm the goals set forth in Article 27 of the MUMA.
3. All position classification issues including concerns regarding the accuracy of job descriptions shall be addressed in accordance with Article 31 of the MUMA or other applicable negotiated agreements, law, rule, or regulation. In the interest of fairness and equity, positions of employees performing similar work will be classified in accordance with applicable law, rules, and regulation.
4. Tier II EDM employees are encouraged to take periodic relief from viewing the screens to avoid eyestrain. These relief periods should not exceed 10-minutes every two hours. Employees performing EDM functions may request ergonomically suited equipment through supervisory channels or other appropriate Agency representatives.

Subsequent issues regarding the conditions of employment for employees using EDM technology will be resolved in accordance with law, rules, or regulations, and the current MOA between the parties regarding the level of bargaining. (December 2002).

This agreement will be effective upon its signing by the parties' authorized representatives and will remain in effect until superceded by a subsequent agreement or master agreement.

Signed this date May 26, 2004

_____/s/_____

Robert McNamara
DFAS, Co-Chair

_____/s/_____

Kelley Dull
AFGE-171, Co-Chair

Career Learning Center
Overview of the Career Learning Centers
Frank Gootee

Frank G: Back in early 2001, the Training Advisory Board assigned an advocate for the major areas. Nancy Zimlinski was appointed for the Learning Centers. A team was put together of mostly Learning Center people who looked at the CLC's. Another team was set up that looked further at the CLC's. Included was an employee survey. As a result of the survey and other data, it was recommended to TAB that DFAS transition to an E-learning atmosphere. It was purely the self-paced areas and not the classroom areas. TAB approved the recommendation to downsize the space, number of carrels, get an e-library, and the physical data held in the CLC would not be needed. In 2002, each CLC analyzed their area and downsized the number of carrels and offered the books etc to the business lines. Any thing that the BL did not want was taken care of as surplus. The e-library under growth & learning—net-library. At every facility that had a CLC still have a small number of carrels. It may not have been in the same place as where it was before.

Ron: Didn't someone monitor what was being done to make sure that the recommendation of the TAB was followed?

Robin: There are no carrels at Rock Island.

Teresa: You had a CLC prior?

Robin: Yes. It was dismantled and is now just a room with tables.

Kelley: This is why we have had such a problem. Some sites have been disadvantaged.

Ron: Can you provide us with details of how many employees are accessing and using the E-learning?

Frank G: I don't have it here but I can get it. There is a link on the main page for emails for questions. We are training people via the By All Accounts. There is a How to on the actual E-Learning site. You can also generate an email to the vendor to ask any questions.

Kelley: Can you access this from home?

Frank G: I know you can access the NetG from home.

Frank R: You have to have the space on their computer. A normal computer can't get in because of memory. Are you aware of this?

Frank G: Not aware of it. We do get a report monthly from the vendor of the usage report.

Ron: Can we get a copy of the report?

Teresa: What would be the reason for it?

Ron: It would be helpful in the discussion today.

Kelley: It would also give us an idea of the before and after, how much difference in the usage.

Frank G: We use the report to load the completed courses into the employees file. We don't normally get a report from E-library on the usage because we don't track it.

Ron: Wouldn't the Agency be interested in what they are getting out of the service?

Ron: Can we have a Union representative on the TAB?

Teresa: I think we are getting off course. Why don't we table that?

Frank R: How much savings did the Agency have by moving to E-Learning?

Frank G: I have no idea. I know there was savings because of space and manpower. There was a lot of coordination at the sites.

Pete: There are 4 learning carrels at Rock Island.

Robin: I'll check into it.

Lexington, Arlington, Seaside do not have any carrels because they did not have a learning center to begin with.

Break for Lunch.

Management Caucus.

Teresa: We'll start with the proposals. Number 1- we have already described that we don't have CLC's any longer just learning carrels. This reads like you want them reestablished.

Kelley: We just want them to be maintained as they are now.

Teresa: Not sure what you are wanting with notice and bargaining.

Kelley: Not all sites have gone down to just learning carrels. I don't know how we are splitting hairs here. We have sites that still have Career Learning Centers areas with carrels and classrooms for training.

Frank G: They are not CLC like before. The person who is the classroom manager would also maintain the carrels.

Frank R: When the restructure took place, a training coordinator was created. This person is the one responsible for the learning carrels.

Frank G: this person is actually the Employee Services Coordinator and one of their additional duties could be to be the training coordinator.

Frank R: If it would be understood that the Agency still looks like one Agency. CR has the responsibility to manage HR and others. All of this is housed in CR and have been charge with this responsibility. The CLC's were closed and the materials were gotten rid of.

Kelley: I need to see what we have out there by site. For example: In Rock Island, they have learning carrels, are they in a work area etc. We talked about proposals but unless I can see what we currently have I can't understand where we need to be.

Bob: The learning carrels are for those who for some reason can't access it on their computer. E learning is available on employee's computer.

Victor: Employees stated on the survey that they didn't have time to leave their desk to go to the learning center. Many employees don't have the ability to use the e learning at home because of various factors.

Bob: We spend more on training in this Agency than most others.

Victor: But the Agency went to the extreme and got rid of the learning centers.

Teresa: It brought about more resources for those that were disadvantaged at the smaller sites.

Kelley: But we also hindered people who would go to a quiet place to study or research.

Bob: The Agency is committed to learning. They recognized that the CLC's weren't working and created a way for more employees to access.

Kelley: Part of the issue is that people were screaming because of the CLC's closing.

Teresa: That's because the environment was changing thinking that they wouldn't have access to the information. They do through the e learning.

Frank G: We are planning on having on MyPage a gadget that will have IDP, learner history, and a link to the growth & learning page. I think this might help the friendliness issue.

Frank R: I think it is a good program but the promotion of it hasn't happened. Nothing is said at the lower levels to help train the employees to go to this and use it. Self-initiative is something that we should all have.

Pete: What is your feeling of the use of E-portal at your site? Do they routinely use it to access information?

Kelley: No. It's not user friendly. It's hard to find things. We tried to find the library and couldn't find it on the E-portal. We were looking at the E-Library page thinking that it would be there.

Pete: Is the growth and learning site run by your (Frank G) office? Would the marketing be part of your area? Did we ever have a marketing campaign for this?

Ron: What is the Agency's response to the proposal about the carrels at the sites? Are there going to be carrels at the sites? The Agency is not going to reestablish the CLC's?

Teresa: No, it won't be reset up.

Kelley: We just want to be able to tell our employees that they can get away from their desks to study.

Frank G: I'm comfortable to say that there are learning carrels at each site.

Mark: The classrooms were not part of the CLC closures.

Pete: The questions are: Do all of the sites have classrooms and do the sites that used to have a CLC now have carrels?

Teresa: For those that didn't have CLC's there has not been an effort to set up any carrels.

Kelley: What I'm saying with number one is that what we have remains and if that is changed the Union will be notified.

Pete: Than we need to rephrase it now that we understand your intention.

Ron: The sites that didn't have a CLC are left out of this discussion?

Teresa: They actually gained something from this because they didn't previously have access to the data.

Kelley: The only thing that they did was kept the books.

Frank R: We are making good use of the space. We had people who were utilizing the CLC. We have colleges that use it.

Pete: But the classrooms are not part of this.

Frank R: A lot of what is there is good information and people do use the hard copy books.

Frank G: Is a person checking these books in or out?

Frank R: No, it is an honor system on the computer.

Kelley: If the sites were given the latitude to do it the way they wanted then how can they not be in compliance?

Bob: So would this agreement mean we couldn't shut down Norfolk's CLC? That we would have to come back here in this setting to address the one site?

Frank G: The TAB said to transition to electronic and get rid of the hardcopy materials. The site director made the decision to keep it all and house it in the same place it was before?

Frank R: The reduction of space isn't an issue because we don't pay for space.

Teresa Language: Learning carrels will be maintained at current levels for sites that previously had a CLC.

Kelley: There is a complete misunderstanding because before we had a CLC and now no one knows what we have. I think it needs to be clarified what exactly we have now. The places that have learning carrels, are they still similarly located by the classrooms? In the same area?

Frank G: In most places I can say that yes they are co-located. Here in Columbus is one of the differences because of where the carrels were previously located need an entrance/exit.

Kelley: How is it decided how many carrels are set up?

Frank G: I think that the field sites were supposed to have 2-4. There isn't anyone out there policing this to make sure that at least 2 have been set up.

Tweaked the language Teresa proposed above.

Language: e-Learning carrels will be maintained at current functional levels for sites that previously had a CLC. Changes will be subject to bargaining in accordance with applicable law, rule, or regulation and the MOU governing the level of bargaining (December 2002)

First sentence is approved. Will come back to the second sentence.

Ron: Who would be approached to add carrels if they would be needed?

Frank G: I would think admin services.

Number 2: Move sentence one to the end of number 1 sent 1.

Kelley: We have an employee services assistant at every site?

The HR person would serve in this position.

Kelley: I'm trying to get a handle on this because there was more of an effect than just the lose of the learning center. The employee services assistant would help employees with problems with electronic access.

Frank G: At Indy we are actually assigning classrooms to classes when they are scheduled and it is up to the employee services assistant to verify and make sure that there is enough space for the class and the supplies necessary. It would be the training coordinators job to fill the class with bodies.

Kelley: What about when employees want to have college classes at lunch times and the space is refused in the training room.

Frank G: DFAS classroom managers are told that DFAS classes have priority.

Kelley: How would you gage that when there is nothing scheduled and then are told that the space isn't available because we might have something come up?

Frank G: It would be a judgment call on the manager.

Kelley: How does this effect number 3?

Ron: Picked it up at 'A point of contact will be identified and posted on the e-portal...' The training coordinator would be identified for the employees.

Language: DFAS will maintain a point of contact list for learning programs on the e-portal.

Ron: Would it also be able to list the Learning coordinators for each site?

Frank G: That is something we don't maintain.

Kelley: Who ever is over the program at Indy, would send it out to the program coordinators? I'm trying to figure out how it is working now. Our intent is to have assistance for the employees.

FG: Part of their charge with maintaining the carrels is to answer some basic questions.

Robin: The smaller sites don't have a lot of assistance. We have to call to get help on most things. Would the person be the same to answer questions outside of e-learning? EMSS, ELES etc.

Teresa: I don't think we can say who will assist in specific areas. Something that tells the employee that they can seek assistance from the employee services assistant or other appropriate person.

Language from Teresa: Employee's using the e-learning carrels may seek assistance with e-learning or other HR web based applications from the employee services assistant or other appropriate personnel.

Kelley: I still have a problem with not knowing who the appropriate personnel would be.

Bob: Would each site be able to post somewhere on the e-portal who it would be.

FG: We (field op) could under growth & learning post who at each site is the person to contact.

Number 4:

Kelley: Who coordinates the classes that come in?

FG: I'm not sure how many sites have college classes come in. That would be up to the college based on the classes employees say they need. We make space available.

FR: Tele-training, what about it?

FG: It was piloted and is similar to Tele-work but the employee is approved to do training.

FR: The function of the e-learning carrel...

Kelley: What we are trying to do is tell the employees how to do what used to be done in the CLC's. The employees are going to the colleges and asking if a lunchtime class can be offered, the college is willing, then the employee is going back and having to find the space etc for it to happen.

Ron: Who does the coordinating with the colleges in Indy because we don't have a problem?

FG: If they want to call employee services assistant (ESA) could schedule the room for the query phase and then the actual class schedule. The senior site manager should be notified but the ESA should be able to do the actual scheduling.

Kelley: There's not a clear contact that would work this issue, nobody coordinating the class.

Pete: I think Frank has answered that the ESA would be the contact.

FG: The College would call the ESA who would work with them and the training coordinator to schedule what was needed.

Pete: Is it the job of the ESA to solicit colleges to come on the sites for a class?

Frank G: No, it would be the up to the employees to contact the college about the interest. ESA's role is only administrative.

Kelley: There has to be a clear path/steps that need to be taken to solve this kind of thing.

Ron: How do we relate this to other sites?

Kelley: How do the employees know how to go through this process?

Pete: A marketing program. Something that takes it right to the employee and would detail the process that needs to happen. That would not be a guarantee that the class would be on site. In principle this is possible.

Language from Frank R: The classrooms currently located at each site can be used for college courses, DFAS training programs, Military learning centers, college counseling, and other Federal Agencies,

Language from Mark: Colleges, Universities or other organizations offering training for DFAS employees, may coordinate with the appropriate Agency representative for the use of classrooms at each DFAS site, subject to availability.

Teresa: There is information on the web that tells how to use the different applications but for some employees that isn't enough. Need more than just online training.

Frank G: Part of it is marketing what is out there. Then give some basic information about how to use. Finally tell how/who to email/call for help.

Language from Kelley: DFAS will provide guidance and information to employees on the use of electronic tools.

Number 6:

Bob: I think we've done this.

Kelley: Part of it was because we couldn't find the e-library. Are the most popular periodicals that were being used still available?

FG: The number of periodicals has increased and the CBT's update immediately.

Kelley: Can delete 6 and 7.

Number 8:

Teresa: Uninterrupted would mean that the supervisor cannot stop them for anything.

Mark: When you say higher learning, do you mean?

Ron: Smarter than when you came into work.

Pete: College classes are not authorized during duty hours (paid time). The intent is not to go against the law.

Group language: Each DFAS employee will be allowed training time during duty hours for the purpose of approved growth and learning.

Robin: There are times of the month when there is down time. This time is when many people make use of this.

Kelley: We want to make sure that every employee has this opportunity.

Teresa: But can we craft something here that is going to force the supervisor to give the employee the time?

Language: DFAS is committed to supporting Growth and Learning and encourages employees to participate in e-learning opportunities during duty hours.

