

The USW International Union's Commitments to the Membership of Local 8-675

In order to ensure that the issues resulting in tensions between United Steelworkers Local Union 8-675 ("Local Union") and the USW International Union ("International Union") can be resolved, the USW International Union hereby commits to the following:

1. The Local Union will not be required to participate in a master agreement. *This has always been the case, but we are reaffirming it for clarification.*
2. The Local Union is free to continue to have its own separate contract. *This has always been the case, but we are reaffirming it for clarification.*
3. The Local Union will also be free to separately vote to ratify its own contract. *This has always been the case, but we are reaffirming it for clarification.*
4. There is no prohibition on voting longer term contracts that protect and advance the interests of USW members. *Current USW contracts in the paper industry range from 3-6 years in length depending on the content and the quality.*
5. The International Union will schedule one or more "town hall meetings" prior to a National Labor Relations Board election so that MeadWestvaco-Covington employees and their families will have a chance to hear from all sides about the issues they currently face. We will also continue to offer to meet with Roy Hall and his key supporters at any time and any place for problem-solving discussions to resolve any additional issues, and provide our members with a unified front at the bargaining table.
6. Luis Mendoza will continue to be assigned as the staff representative to the Local Union. Jon Geenen, the newly appointed Chairman of the USW's MeadWestvaco Council will provide support to the Local Union during and after contract negotiations.
7. Any future issues that cannot be resolved locally will be addressed in an expedited manner by the Local Union leadership, Staff Representative Luis Mendoza, MeadWestvaco Council Chairman Jon Geenen and International Union President Leo Gerard.
8. The International Union offers to fund and implement a joint communications and training program to improve communications amongst the International Union, the Local Union leadership and the Local Union membership, and to provide an early-warning system for any future problems.
9. When bargaining resumes with MeadWestvaco, the International Union will work side-by-side with the Local Union to promptly report progress and status of negotiations to the membership after each scheduled session. This will be done through written communications and membership meetings.
10. We will continue to make available the International Union's full legal and strategic resources to fight in Congress and at the International Trade Commission to prevent the dumping of foreign paper products on U.S. markets.

The International Union looks forward to quickly resolving the conflicts with the Local Union. Together, we will be able to move forward to achieve a first-class contract that benefits the Local Union membership and the Covington-area community.

Signed, this 5th day of December, 2007


Leo Gerard
International President


Jon Geenen
Chairman, MeadWestvaco Council


Luis Mendoza
International Staff Representative

