

Hello NWP Reps and Members;

Welcome to LR Chronicles number 9. As with the last LR Chronicles, this one is dedicated to documentation. This LR Chronicles will expand on the last and I will mainly concentrate on the necessary documentation for more formal meetings/conversations and/or documentation that may or will involve 3rd Party's, including those being related to grievances, Unfair Labor Practices (ULPs) and Information Requests.

The first important issue that must be realized with documenting anything is that you must always create your documentation assuming that documentation **WILL** appear before a 3rd Party. Whether that 3rd Party is an Arbitrator, the FLRA, a Court of Law, the EEOC or the office of OWCP does not matter. What you need to remember is that any of these 3rd Party's are not air traffic controllers, engineers or any other specialized group that NATCA represents. Therefore, all of your documentation must be written in such a manner that it can be read and understood by any 3rd Party. If there is any doubt that your handwriting may not be able to be read or understood by a 3rd Party, then you need to type your documentation as well as date and sign it in ink in order to make it official. Once again, you need to ensure that whatever documentation that you are preparing, be it a grievance, a ULP an ROC (Record Of Conversation), etc., it must be prepared in such a manner as to be factual, to the point and free from abusive or otherwise questionable language.

When preparing anyone of the above mentioned formal types of complaints, no matter which one, the very first thing that you need to do is create a folder for **ALL** documentation relating to that issue(s). I would suggest a paper folder as well as an electronic folder. You never know when you may suffer a computer failure and you definitely do not want to lose any documentation. You always need to "back-up" your documentation. Personally, I "back-up" my documentation in three different ways; 1) on my computer, 2) on a memory stick or external hard drive, and 3) via paper. Any documentation that I create or scan is **ALWAYS** printed out in order to ensure I have everything that I need for a particular issue.

When creating these folders, both electronic and paper, **ALL** documentation related to that particular issue needs to be placed in its respective folder. That way all documentation that is related to that issue is always at your fingertips.

In my last LR Chronicles, I outlined what needs to be contained in a Record of Conversation (ROC). To review, here is what I said:

“Basically, what you are doing is jotting down your version of the substance of that meeting/conversation in written form for possible use at a later time. This is called a Record of Conversation (ROC). The items that need to be in EVERY ROC include:

- Date of meeting or conversation
- Time of meeting or conversation
- Location of meeting or conversation
- Who was present and whether or not they were there for the whole meeting/conversation or just a portion thereof
- Your version of what was discussed. This must include what each person said, including yourself
- Your signature
- Date signed

Additionally, it is very important to write and sign the ROC as soon as possible after the meeting/conversation while it is still very fresh in your mind. If other BUEs, including NATCA representatives were present at the meeting/conversation, they must do their own ROC.”

Regardless of the type of issue, the type of complaint or the type of documentation, it is imperative that you follow these guidelines.

I would now like to ensure that all of you in this region know the proper procedures for the filing of grievances and their associated documentation. There are no more “paper” grievances. Although an employee or the Union may fill out the grievance on paper, **ALL** grievances, as well as **ALL** related documentation, **MUST** be scanned and placed on the Grievance Automated Tracking System (GATS). This includes, but is not limited to:

- The grievance
- All documentation from management
- All documentation from the Union
- All ROCs
- All email threads
- Any other documentation related to that grievance

This must be done for each and every grievance. Although you will send a paper 3rd level elevation letter to the agency at the Regional level (that the GATS prepares for you), you must keep in mind the following extremely important point. If the grievance is not on the GATS, that grievance will **NEVER** be elevated to the arbitration level. The reason being is that as of January 15, 2007, **ALL** grievances are elevated to the arbitration level via the GATS. If the grievance is not on the GATS, then we have no way of knowing anything about that grievance and that grievance will "die" prior to it getting elevated to arbitration.

However you decide to document and keep track of that documentation, I hope that I have successfully shown you how important documentation is as well as how important it is to document **EVERYTHING**.

If there are any questions, please contact your FACREP, LR Advocate or myself.

Mike Hull  
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