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Guild @ BNA

Contract Update # 1

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GUILD, BNA SWAP PROPOSALS

BNA: PAY FREEZE IN 2010; CUTS JOB SECURITY, TRAINING, TUITION; ELIMINATES SABBATICALS

HEALTH CARE, RETIREE BENEFITS PROPOSALS STILL TO COME

BNA Thursday proposed freezing salaries in the first year of a three-year contract, followed by raises of 1.5 percent and 2 percent in each succeeding year. Instead of a salary increase in year one, BNA proposes paying a \$750 lump sum to each employee.

BNA is holding back on its proposals dealing with employee health insurance, retiree health insurance, and the pension plan.

BNA chief negotiator Chris Marlin says the company plans to deliver those proposals Dec. 8, when CEO Paul Wojcik will attend bargaining. All proposals originally were slated to be exchanged on the first day of bargaining, but BNA's most important proposals remain up in the air despite the fact that the Guild has presented its full package.

The Guild proposal includes first-year pay raises of 7 percent, 6 percent, 5 percent and 4 percent, going from Band A to Band D. The Guild-proposed raises in the second and third years would range from 5 percent in Band D to 8 percent in Band A.

The Guild also proposed stronger job security language as well as better flexible work arrangement language, improved parental leave, merit raises based on annual evaluations, and an across-the-board annual leave increase.

BNA management's proposal would take a big whack at job security by reducing the layoff notice period from a maximum of three months to just one month, sharply limiting seniority rights during layoffs, restricting bumping rights, eliminating guaranteed training for those on layoff notice, and reducing rehire rights.

Employees hoping to qualify for tuition reimbursement also would take a hit under BNA's proposal. Future reimbursement would be limited to courses directly related to the employee's current job. Employees hoping to take classes to advance in BNA no longer would qualify for the reimbursement.

Before presenting the Guild's proposals, Guild chief negotiator Paul Reilly remarked on the shrinking BNA workforce. He noted that the number of Guild-covered employees has plummeted by more than 6 percent since the last time the two sides sat down to bargain four years ago. Payroll has increased about 9 percent — less than the rate of inflation over that same time period. And yet, he said, BNA employees have continued to turn out a highly competitive product for the company.

"BNA's talented employees — and their increased productivity — are the reason the company remains profitable," Reilly stressed.

Bargaining was preceded by a large rally outside the BNA office building.

Approximately 100 employees sang, chanted and cheered the bargaining team in a boisterous send off.

At the rally Reilly suggested that there was an easy way to avoid the "silly season" that President and Editor-in-Chief Greg

McCaffery referred to in his blog, release of which was timed to coincide with the start of bargaining.

"Don't put health insurance premiums on the table, put on decent pay raises, and we'll be done by December," Reilly told the cheering crowd.



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