



FMCS
FEDERAL MEDIATION &
CONCILIATION SERVICE

NEWS RELEASE

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FMCS Commends National Grid and USW on Ratification of Recent Agreement

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On Jan. 7, 2019, National Grid and United Steelworkers Locals 12003 and 12012-04 ratified a tentative 5 1/2 -year agreement that was reached Jan. 2. The new agreement covers approximately 1,250 gas workers across eastern Massachusetts and ends a six-month work stoppage that had been widely covered in the media. The company and unions have negotiated a transition schedule beginning with onboarding sessions this week that will lead to a full return to work later this month.

Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) Commissioner Martin Callaghan of the Boston field office was assigned to the case in April and began mediating negotiations in June before the work stoppage. Assisted by fellow FMCS Commissioners Barbara Owens and Todd Austin, they were able to assist the parties in coming to the table and reaching a mutually-acceptable agreement. The parties are commended for their hard work and openness to mediation, working through 36 collective bargaining mediation sessions, and for their tenacity in meeting continuously throughout the holidays to find a resolution both sides would find satisfactory.

FMCS Acting Director Rich Giacalone applauded the agreement, the parties, and the FMCS mediators for their roles bringing both sides together during the bargaining. “It has been a long six months, and I’m happy to see the long hours and commitment by everyone involved resulted in a successful and positive outcome. Getting back on the job is good for the workers, good for the company and good for the many customers who rely on normal operations.”

Both parties recognized the improvements made to the contract in the areas of wages, pensions, healthcare and the creation of new positions, among other items.

“I am pleased to know FMCS was able to play a role in creating an environment where both parties can put aside their differences and come to an adequate agreement.” said Giacalone. “It’s what we’re here for.”

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The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, created in 1947, is an independent U.S. government agency whose mission is to preserve and promote labor-management peace and cooperation. Headquartered in Washington, DC, with 10 district offices and more than 60 field offices, the agency provides mediation and conflict resolution services to industry, government agencies and communities.