

**El Paso Electric Company and Local Union No. 960,
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers,
AFL-CIO. Case 28-RC-1685**

December 22, 1967

DECISION AND ORDER

Upon a petition duly filed under Section 9(c) of the National Labor Relations Act, as amended, a hearing was held on August 16, 1967, before L. L. Porterfield, Hearing Officer of the National Labor Relations Board. Thereafter, the Employer and Petitioner filed briefs.

The Hearing Officer's rulings made at the hearing are free from prejudicial error and are hereby affirmed.

Upon the entire record in this case, the Board finds:

1. The Employer is engaged in commerce within the meaning of the Act and it will effectuate the purposes of the Act to assert jurisdiction herein.

2. The labor organization involved claims to represent certain employees of the Employer.

3. No question affecting commerce exists concerning the representation of certain employees of the Employer within the meaning of Section 9(c)(1) and Section 2(6) and (7) of the Act, for the following reasons:

On August 14, 1967, Petitioner filed a petition seeking a separate unit of all meter readers, alleging that there is a lack of functional integration between the meter readers and other employees and that they have a separate community of interest. The Employer, a public utility, moved to dismiss on the ground that the unit is inappropriate, contending that meter readers are part of the accounting department.

The meter readers perform the normal functions of the job. Thus, they go to customers' homes, take readings, record, and submit them to the accounting department. Within the administrative framework of the Employer, the meter readers are part of the accounting department. Although the meter readers do have their own immediate supervisor, his authority is limited to routine matters. Hiring, firing, instruction, and discipline of meter readers are done by accounting department supervisors, and recommendations of the immediate supervisor are fully investigated before any action is taken. Pay rate procedures and benefits are the same for meter readers and other employees of the accounting department. The job of meter reader is a starting position in the accounting department and promotions are made only within that department. When there is a shortage of available meter readers, an employee of the accounting department, usually a former meter reader, is temporarily given the task of filling the vacancy, and ill or injured meter readers are temporarily assigned work in the accounting department.

On these facts, we find that the unit sought by Petitioner is inappropriate. While we are not unmindful of the difference between the tasks and working conditions of the meter readers and other clerical personnel, we find that they are outweighed by the common supervision, and the identical benefits and pay rate procedures shared by the meter readers and other accounting department employees, as well as the line of progression and interchange of employees within that department. Accordingly, we shall dismiss the petition.

ORDER

It is hereby ordered that the petition filed herein be, and it hereby is, dismissed.