



Press Release

National Labor Relations Board

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Chicago radio station must negotiate before adding in-studio cameras, says NLRB complaint

CHICAGO -- The General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board on Monday issued a complaint alleging that a popular sports radio station improperly installed web cameras without negotiating with the union that represents on-air talent.

WMVP-AM ESPN Radio 1000 installed the cameras on June 2009 as part of its strategy to develop a simultaneous webcast of its radio programming. The American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, which represents the station's broadcasting talent, charged that the move represents a change in the conditions of employment and so must be subject to collective bargaining.

The complaint also alleges that the station unlawfully bypassed the Union and bargained directly with on-air personalities regarding compensation and the assignment of new duties related to its renovated website. The contract covering station employees expired in late 2007, and negotiations to reach a new agreement have not yet been successful.

Chicago Regional Director Joseph A. Barker said that although the station had occasionally videotaped radio broadcasts from remote locations in the past, "the installation of cameras in the studio was a whole new ball game in terms of the station's obligation to negotiate with the Union."

A hearing on the matter (13-CA-45553) has been set for March 8 before an NLRB administrative law judge at the Chicago offices of the NLRB, Region 13.

The National Labor Relations Board is an independent federal agency vested with the power to safeguard employees' rights to organize and to determine whether to have unions as their bargaining representative. The agency also acts to prevent and remedy unfair labor practices committed by private sector employers and unions.

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