



# NEWS RELEASE

FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICE •

W. J. USERY, Jr., Director

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## FMCS PUBLISHES 27TH ANNUAL REPORT

Washington, D. C. -- Mediation activity in labor-management relations in the United States increased during fiscal year 1974, according to the 27th Annual Report of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) released today.

The report shows that FMCS was involved in 20,160 cases from July 1973 through June 1974, an increase of more than 16 percent above the 16,930 cases reported in FY-73. It marked the first time the figure topped 20,000 since FMCS was established as an independent agency in 1947. The previous high of 17,668 was recorded in FY-71.

The number of strikes rose from 1,937 in the previous fiscal year to 2,801 during the reporting period. A large number of these strikes occurred after April 30, when wage controls ended.

The percentage of strikes to settlements increased from 11.4 percent in FY-73 to 14.9 percent in FY-74, but was identical to the percentage of FY-71, when many of the same agreements were last negotiated.

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While private sector mediation activity increased, public sector activity increased more. About one-third of all state, local and Federal employees are now organized, compared to about 20 percent of the private workforce, according to the report.

FMCS was involved in 507 Federal cases in FY-74, compared to fewer than 200 in FY-73, and in 140 state and local disputes, compared to practically none in previous years, the report shows.

It also documents a number of the disputes, including the strike by independent owner-operators of long-haul tractor-trailer rigs that resulted from the increase in price and the scarcity of diesel fuel that accompanied the oil embargo and ensuing energy crisis in early 1974.

Although not a true labor-management dispute in the classic sense, mediation techniques proved helpful in getting rate adjustments and fuel guarantees that brought the strike to an end.

Increasing activity in all areas, the growth of public employee organizations, the truckers' strike, new developments in collective bargaining and the recommendations of the National Commission for Industrial Peace published in May, contributed to organizational changes within FMCS described in the report.

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Major changes included:

--The establishment of an Office of Technical Services, with coordinators assigned to each of the Agency's seven regions, to coordinate technical assistance and public-sector bargaining.

--The creation of a separate General Counsel's office and a strengthened Office of Arbitration Services (previously they were combined).

"The importance of improving FMCS to meeting the changing needs of labor and management cannot be overemphasized," said National Director W. J. Usery, Jr., who in February 1974 was appointed Special Assistant to the President for Labor Relations.

"The report documents what we tried to do and what we succeeded in doing during this period to meet our obligations as the Nation's principal peace-keepers in industrial relations.

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Copies of the Report are available.