

MDD-TR translator and more updates



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In recent weeks, City Delivery has received numerous questions on new initiatives and pilot tests conducted by the Postal Service. I think it's important to share some more information on these topics in this month's article for *The Postal Record*.

Translator application

In September, the Postal Service sent notification that a pilot test would be conducted on the Mobile Delivery Device—Technical Refresh (MDD-TR) using language translator applications. Testing began at the Falls Church, VA, Carrier Annex with four route assignments on Sept. 25.

My staff visited the Falls Church facility to observe the test. The carriers my staff talked to reported that the application allows them to translate languages, using an internal microphone, through text, using the device's keyboard, and through pictures, using the device's camera. They also reported that it is very similar to other translator applications available on cell phones.

Additionally, NALC found that the translator applications are not active on the scanners that carriers are using for their delivery duties. Instead, carriers involved with the pilot are given a second scanner to use for translating languages at their discretion. Carriers explained that they have not been instructed to keep the second scanner on them, nor have they been mandated to use them.

Informed Facility

Recently, I became aware that USPS has been displaying carrier performance information on television monitors at some delivery locations across the country. The monitors list the status of route assignments by detailing what percentage of the route is completed, the total number of packages delivered and whether delivery of the assignment is "early" or "late" throughout the day. Furthermore, the monitors feature a "Geo Return to End Tour" report showing



the difference between the amount of time it takes a carrier to break the unit's geofence when returning from the street and the time the carrier ends their tour for the day.

I am in communication with the Postal Service regarding concerns about the information posted on the monitors and its impact on letter carriers. If management is displaying your work performance information on TV monitors, request to see your steward and ask that a grievance be filed.

Managing Arrow Lock Key accountability (MAL)

In my October column, I informed the membership of a new process for managing Arrow/modified Arrow Lock Key accountability introduced by the Postal Service. In this process, Mobile Delivery Device-Technical Refresh (MDD-TR) and Mobile Delivery Device-In Office (MDD-IO) scanners are used to transfer Arrow Key accountability by scanning employee identification badge and Arrow Key barcodes.

In this new process, a carrier can "check out" or receive a key without a signature, return a key without an accountable clerk or supervisor present and transfer accountability for an Arrow Key to another carrier by following the "Arrow Key Management" workflow on the MDD-TR. Implementation of this accountability process is in conflict with the provisions of postal handbooks and manuals and does not change the letter carrier's responsibility when handling Arrow Keys as outlined in Sections 261 and 43 of *Handbook M-41, City Carrier Duties and Responsibilities*.

A carrier's responsibility when receiving Arrow Keys outlined in Section 261 of *Handbook M-41* states:

261.2 Receiving for Accountable Items

261.21 Keys

A numbered check is issued to each employee. **When you surrender the check, you will be given a set of Arrow and/or padlock, and/or truck keys. (In some instances, a signature is used in place of a numbered check.)** The keys are on a chain which must be securely fastened to a belt or clothing. Keys must be returned at the end of the tour of duty. (Emphasis added.)

Section 43 of *Handbook M-41* details the procedure for a carrier to gain clearance for accountable items:

43 Clearance for Accountable Items

431 Keys

Turn in mail keys in exchange for assigned key check or signature clearance. (Emphasis added.)

I have requested a meeting with the Postal Service to discuss the process and the steps that are in conflict

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Overtime and pay (continued)

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dition, the total hours of daily service, including scheduled workhours, overtime, and mealtime, may not be extended over a period longer than 12 consecutive hours. Postmasters and exempt employees are excluded from these provisions.

The Step 4 settlement (M-01272) in case number E94N-4E-C96061540 dated Feb. 25, 1998, clarifies that the 12-hour limit established by ELM 432.32 continues to apply even during the penalty overtime exclusion period.

Similar to the previous reference that paid leave counts toward overtime, the 2022 JCAM, on page 8-19, explains that the 12- and 60-hour limitations are inclusive of all hours, including any type of leave taken.

The third exception during December pertains to letter carriers on the WAL. As stated above, excluding December, WAL carriers are available to work up to 12 hours in a day or 60 hours in a service week. Outside of the penalty overtime exclusion period, management has the right to assign an employee on the ODL to work regular overtime to avoid paying penalty overtime to a carrier on the WAL. This can limit a carrier on the WAL to 10 hours in a service day, even if additional overtime was available on their bid assignment. This is explained on page 8-21 of the 2022 JCAM, which states:

Management may assign an employee from the regular ODL to work regular overtime to avoid paying penalty pay to a carrier who has signed for Work Assignment overtime. This exception does not apply during the penalty overtime exclusion period (December) when penalty overtime is not paid.

During the penalty overtime exclusion period, the carrier on the WAL has the right to work the additional time over 10 hours, since penalty overtime is not paid. Keep in mind, this exception applies only when management wants to assign a carrier from ODL to work the overtime. Management still retains the right to utilize a letter carrier at the straight-time rate or a PTF or CCA at the straight-time or overtime rate prior to assigning additional overtime to a carrier on the WAL. The explanation for this provision is found on pages 8-20 and 8-21 of the 2022 JCAM, which states:

Management may always assign another carrier to perform the work at the straight-time rate rather than assigning overtime to a carrier on the Work Assignment List. Management may also assign PTFs and CCAs at the straight-time or overtime rate (up to the ELM limitations).

If you have any questions related to these or other Article 8 provisions, contact your local shop steward or branch officer. Complete copies of the “M” documents referenced in this article and the 2022 JCAM are available on the NALC website at nalc.org.

Director of City Delivery

MDD-TR translator and more (continued)

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with postal handbooks and manuals. As of the writing of this article, the meeting has not taken place. I will continue to work toward a resolution for these issues. I encourage any member who receives instructions related to this process that violates the language above of the M-41 to inform your local union representative and file a grievance.

Additionally, USPS has provided guidance under this process advising the use of PS Form 1106 to clear carriers of Arrow Key accountability. PS Form 1106 has been

rescinded by the Postal Service since March 23, 2023. The use of this form should be brought to the attention of local union representatives to investigate.

Finally, I want to thank the carriers in the Falls Church Post Office for their time and helpful insight into their experience with the translator application on the MDD-TR. I will update the membership on these subjects once we have an

opportunity to meet with the Postal Service and discuss all available information.

PS Form 1106