

Task force updates



**Lew
Drass**

I thought it would be a good idea to let you know what is going on with the Article 8, City Delivery, and Joint Route Adjustment task forces.

Article 8

The overtime equitability test (M-01820) began Oct. 1 in 22 districts around the country. The test is expected to last one year. The task force has been talking about ways to monitor and evaluate the test. The general consensus seems to be that we should conduct a joint survey in the test sites.

We are working on developing questions and thinking about how many work locations there are in 22 districts. We are considering the

idea of surveying half of the sites after the first and third quarters of the test and surveying the other half of the sites after the second and fourth quarters of the test. This should

every 30 days or so. Letter carriers within the group would make their own decisions regarding scheduling, time needed to complete routes, etc. The only way this concept can work is to begin with jointly adjusted routes and, as reported below, we haven't come to agreement on a process to do this as of yet.

The second proposal being considered involves work methods on days where we have four bundles. This concept would allow letter carriers more freedom to make decisions about what would be the most efficient way to handle the fourth bundle. It also would allow letter carriers to make different decisions on different days, depending on residual mail volume, type of circulars, etc.

The third proposal involves the way residual mail is handled in low-volume offices. The idea is to collate residual mail with automated mail in the office instead of casing, pulling down, and carrying it as a separate bundle.

We still are working on each proposal, and it remains to be seen if we will reach final agreement on any of them.

Joint Route Adjustments

This work group met for several days in September. We discussed ways to narrow our differences regarding the length of time for the evaluation period, how anomalies will be handled, street time selections, the review of adjustments process, etc. I think it's fair to say that we made some progress in all these areas. If we could find a way to agree on the major principles involved, I don't think it would take long to get the details worked out.

In the meantime, we have received reports that management is making plans to use the minor route adjustment process to adjust routes in some locations. This is why the Contract Talk section this month is dedicated to explaining the key points of the minor route adjustment process. The most important points to remember are that there must be reasonably current route inspection data to use and the same letter carrier must be serving the route.

The only routes in the country that have reasonably current route inspection data are those that have been through a traditional route count and inspection since our last joint route adjustment process (JARAP 2011) ended. There also are many routes that have been through a traditional route count and inspection, but don't have the same letter carrier serving the route. This excludes most routes in the country from being contractually eligible for the minor route adjustment process.

In closing, I want to wish each of you and your families a happy Thanksgiving and to congratulate all the city carrier assistants who will have been converted to career status by the time you read this.

“I think it’s fair to say that we made some progress in all these areas. If we could find a way to agree on the major principles involved, I don’t think it would take long to get the details worked out.”

give us a good view of whether or not the test is successful, and an opportunity to make any needed changes based on the experiences of the participants in the test.

In my July column, I wrote about two other test concepts being discussed. One concept involves joint administration of overtime distribution. The other involves an attempt to merge the rules from the letter carrier paragraph with the rules for off-assignment overtime to create one set of rules for assigning overtime. Neither concept has been finalized as of this writing, but both still are being considered.

City Delivery

The task force presently is working on three proposals. One is a self-management concept involving groups of 10 or fewer routes. In this concept, each group would be given a certain number of work hours each day and be graded