

USPS video testing and consolidated casing updates



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USPS has initiated two unilateral field tests that incorporate video technology in city delivery vehicles. I want to use this month's article to explain the testing and potential impact of these initiatives for city letter carriers. USPS is conducting this testing independently, without NALC participation. NALC is concerned about your privacy and protecting the rights of letter carriers with regard to this video technology. Last month, NALC initiated a national-level grievance related to USPS usage of this video technology.

On June 7, USPS notified NALC of its intent to test the use of video technology in select delivery vehicles. The test began on June 17 in two test sites: Waldorf, MD, and Poway, CA, and is anticipated to last through the end of September. USPS states that the purpose of the test is to determine the feasibility of using video technology to collect information related to letter carrier street activities. Video information collected will be used in conjunction with GPS data obtained by the Mobile Delivery Device (MDD) to determine the possibility of completing a "virtual" route inspection of letter carrier routes. USPS will collect the video test data and GPS data to compare to recent PS Forms 3999 conducted on the test routes. USPS intends to use video recorded to verify work activities occurring during stationary time registered by the MDD.

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This test uses two internal and three external cameras in the delivery vehicle. The internal cameras are mounted to the vehicle, one inside the driver compartment and one in the cargo area. Two of the external cameras are attached to the side mirror assembly and one is mounted above the door on the rear of the vehicle. The cameras are intended to provide USPS with a 360-degree view of the delivery vehicle and to record all letter carrier activities. USPS states that the cameras begin recording when the

carrier starts the vehicle and will continue for two hours after the engine is shut off. During this test, USPS will record all carrier street activities that occur while the vehicle is running and within the two-hour after shutoff window, including loading and unloading, relay time, parcel delivery and curblines/motorized work methods.

On June 18, USPS notified NALC of a second test using video technology in city delivery vehicles. Testing began on June 24 in two test sites: Bethesda, MD, and La Puente, CA. On Aug. 2, USPS notified NALC of its intent to expand this test to include two additional sites: Rockville, MD, and Highlands Ranch, CO. The testing period has been extended through the end of October. USPS states that the purpose of this test is to determine the feasibility of using video and GPS technology to reduce collisions and assist in identifying driver risks and the causes of vehicle damage. USPS reports an allegedly significant increase in motor-vehicle accidents and tort claims over the last five years.

This test uses one video camera located in the driver compartment. This camera provides interior video footage of the driver and exterior video coverage in front of, and to the sides of, the vehicle. This camera is limited in site range and does not record anything behind the driver compartment. USPS indicates the camera in this test is running and being monitored at all times; however, the video obtained will be saved only when a "triggering event" occurs. These triggering events will prompt the system to save video footage from a few seconds prior to the event and until 20 seconds after the event. Some of the triggering events identified by USPS are, for example, a collision, U-turns, hard stops, running a known stop sign, or exceeding the speed limit by 10 mph. The camera recording also can be manually activated by the letter carrier using a button on the camera assembly; however, carriers should use this option only when the vehicle is stopped and it is safe to do so. Remember, there is no need to activate the camera if one of the triggering events has occurred; it will record automatically.

My staff and I have attended meetings with USPS regarding both of these test initiatives. USPS states that it is collecting test data and intends to share this information with letter carriers to assist in correcting bad driving habits and potentially reduce motor vehicle accidents. USPS intends to conduct service talks in the test sites to discuss general patterns and driving behaviors observed during the test. Letter carriers should be reminded to always drive defensively and follow all traffic laws; safety is always the No. 1 priority. NALC is monitoring both of these tests closely and will update members as necessary on the test process.

USPS video testing and consolidated casing updates (continued)

USPS unilateral consolidated casing update

On April 24, NALC filed a national-level grievance on this unilateral USPS initiative. As stated in my column in the May edition of *The Postal Record*, this initiative will occur in three phases. Phase One of the test began in Annandale, VA, on May 18. On June 5, NALC received USPS notification of seven locations identified as Phase Two test sites to be implemented in June. With several subsequent letters to NALC, the Postal Service has amended the Phase Two list and revised the dates of implementation for these sites. NALC immediately notified the regions and branches affected by the changes and quickly arranged for representatives to assist the local membership in the Phase Two test sites. By the time you are reading this article, most, if not all, of the Phase Two sites will have been implemented.

In the July edition of *The Postal Record*, NALC reported that USPS would expand Phase Three of the testing to 240 test sites on the list provided to NALC by the end of August. With the most recent correspondence, USPS has also revised the list of Phase Three test sites. The revised notification states that USPS has selected 58 sites for the third phase of the unilateral consolidated casing test. Fifty-six of the 58 sites identified on this list were part of the original list provided to NALC and two additional sites were added. This revised list has been provided to the NBAs and the NALC Headquarters consolidated casing representatives. USPS has hinted that this list of 58 sites may not be the only sites in Phase Three; additional locations may be included as the test progresses.

I want to remind letter carriers about the importance of proper clock rings and time recording. Carriers should be sure to make the proper moves on the time clock to accurately reflect the time spent performing office and street duties. It also is important that carriers use the correct operation code for the work that has been assigned. Carrier clock rings and operation entries are maintained by USPS in the Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS). Improper time allocation or clock ring entries in TACS may negatively affect route evaluation anytime, not only during this unilateral consolidated casing test. If management instructs you to use a different operation code than what you typically use, request time with your shop steward for them to investigate the situation.

Letter carriers can use the *NALC Work Hour Tracker* to record their work hours and keep notes related to unusual circumstances or management instructions. The printed, pocket-sized *NALC Work Hour Tracker* is available through your NBA. Electronic versions are available in the

Members Only section of nalc.org or by downloading the NALC Track Hours app on your Android or Apple device.

If there are concerns regarding time allocation or clock-ring editing, shop stewards can review work-related time entries by requesting the TACS Employee Everything Report. This report contains specific information related to time recording and letter carrier pay. For a more detailed explanation of clock ring entries and TACS, review *The NALC Guide to Identifying Intentional False Editing of Clock Rings* available at nalc.org/workplace-issues/city-delivery.



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NALC is committed to protecting the rights of letter carriers during this unilateral USPS consolidated casing initiative. NALC has distributed a collection of grievance starters for use by local representatives to facilitate grievance filing if contractual violations arise during the initiative. These grievance starters cover the most common contractual violations; however, there may be other violations that may require grievances to be filed. The starters have been distributed to the regions and are available by contacting your NBA.

To learn more about the unilateral USPS consolidated casing initiative, read my articles in the May and July editions of *The Postal Record*. Be sure to visit nalc.org regularly for updates on both of these national-level grievances.