

City Delivery and Workplace Improvement Task Force updates



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In the May edition of *The Postal Record*, I wrote about the task force established by the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Re: City Delivery and Workplace Improvement Task Force. I serve on this task force with President Fred Rolando, Director of City Delivery Chris Jackson, Special Executive Assistant to the President Tim McKay and Assistant to the President for City Delivery Michelle McQuality.

Over the last few months, we have consistently met with Postal Service representatives and established joint subcommittees to explore and address the topics identified in the MOU. These sub-

committees consist of NALC officers and staff as well as Postal Service executives and staff. Updates on the activities of a few subcommittees follow. Please check future editions of *The Postal Record* for updates on other subcommittees and additional information on the subcommittees covered here.

Efficiency and use of space

The substantial growth in e-commerce and parcel volume has created challenges related to space and capacity in some locations, particularly during our peak season. The number of parcels that bypass mail processing and are dropped directly to delivery units by mailers continues to grow. This subcommittee was tasked with finding ways to improve efficiency and create additional space in offices to better equip us to handle the ever-increasing parcel volume. After productive discussions, the parties at the headquarters level are jointly developing a pilot program to test methods of intelligently creating space while maintaining appropriate casing equipment. The goal is to kick off such a pilot this fall.

Staffing and scheduling

This subcommittee was one of the first ones to make real progress in a variety of locations. Its members jointly review and address issues regarding employee complements, starting times, employee availability, etc., to determine the root causes of staffing issues. This subcommittee has reviewed several large installations and made recommendations on ways to provide appropriate staffing. Several other locations are currently under review. The subcommittee will continue to perform these reviews

with the long-term goal of using the process it has developed more broadly to address all staffing issues that exist or arise in the future.

Route evaluation

Both parties have a shared goal of using technology in a joint route adjustment process that results in a more accurate and minimally intrusive process for letter carriers. To start the process, the task force agreed to use a subcommittee to develop and test concepts while adjusting the former consolidated casing sites. This subcommittee picked a few experienced route adjustment teams with USPS and NALC members and assigned them to use a process that was similar to the last national joint route adjustment process, while also exploring and incorporating the information that is available from GPS on each route, the location of parcels and accountable pieces of mail, and other technology.

The teams have provided excellent feedback on ways to use the technology while evaluating and adjusting several zones. For example, the teams are using the data to determine the value of territory transferred during a route adjustment. For many years, we have determined the value of territory transferred from one route to another from a PS Form 3999 that was created by a route examiner accompanying the carrier on a single day. The teams are using multiple days to determine an average that should more accurately represent the time value of territory on a route when moving it from one route another.

While there is a lot of data available, it is not yet packaged together in a way that it can be efficiently used by the teams. This process is ongoing, and it will take time to develop the best way to provide the necessary data to joint teams so that it can be used efficiently. We are excited about the progress thus far and we continue working toward another joint process everywhere in the future.

Mentorship and the new letter carrier experience

A pilot program is ongoing in two locations that is designed to give new letter carriers a better onboarding experience and better learning opportunity after formal training is completed. The goal is to improve their experience and result in better retention of employees hired. Additionally, this subcommittee is beginning another pilot in several locations this month that will test a structured mentorship program for newly hired letter carriers. Most of us had an experienced carrier who helped us out when we started. This pilot is designed to give every letter carrier that experience of having a dedicated, experienced carrier who they can go to with any questions about their new job.