

City delivery updates



Christopher Jackson

First, let me start by wishing all letter carriers a belated merry Christmas and happy New Year. As always, city carriers have exceeded expectations by delivering outstanding customer service and holiday cheer during peak season 2021. With the arrival of 2022, now is a good time to update the membership on some things that occurred in city delivery during the peak season.

MDD Software Version 7.45

In November, the Postal Service notified me of the release of a software update to the Mobile Delivery Device (MDD-TR). Software Version 7.45 includes several enhancements to the device designed to improve function-

ality. I want to discuss the addition of the “What’s New” notification banner, Service Performance Measurement (SPM) sampling alert and the “How Am I Doing?” application.

The “What’s New” notification advises the user to review the menu of new features. The notification appears as a green banner at the top of the MDD screen, which alerts the user that new features have been installed since they last logged into the device. The user can tap the green banner or use option ‘F’ on the main menu to open the “What’s New” menu and explore the latest improvements.

Also included in Version 7.45 is an enhancement related to SPM workorders. Typically, carriers receive an alert message on the MDD when approaching an address with a scheduled SPM sampling request. Sometimes this alert message does not trigger or will trigger in the wrong location. With Version 7.45, USPS has launched an enhancement that it hopes will improve the accuracy of the alert to notify the carrier several stops prior to the address of the workorder.



The USPS “How Am I Doing?” application

Another feature of particular interest to city carriers is the new “How Am I Doing?” application. The app provides information related to safety and performance. Some of the information available for review involves statistics for parcel delivery, SPM workorders and carrier pickup. Also, the app will tell the user how much of the route has been completed (traversed) at the time the carrier opens the application. This may be helpful to carriers who are working on an unfamiliar route. Additionally, carriers can review information the MDD collects associated with their

driving habits. Safety metrics, such as the number of U-turns, hard-braking events, long reverses and instances of fast acceleration, are displayed within the app. USPS states that the app is for informational purposes and hopes that it will help carriers understand and be aware of their performance in several areas. Carriers with questions or concerns about the app should ask their shop steward or branch officer.

Small Delivery Unit Sorter (SDUS)

In November, USPS notified me of its intent to resume deployment of Small Delivery Unit Sorters (SDUS), which had previously been put on hold. The SDUS is capable of sorting 2,250 packages an hour to carrier routes and/or segments within a carrier route. USPS provided me with a list of locations and a tentative schedule for deployment of 21 SDUS machines between Jan. 8 and March 12.

USPS also advised me that it intends to deploy an additional 100 SDUS machines between April and November of this year. USPS has not yet finalized the locations and schedule for deployment of the additional parcel sortation machines. Once USPS has finalized the list for the remaining SDUS machines, the locations and timeline for deployment will be communicated to the NALC regional offices and branch presidents. For more information on the SDUS, read my article in the April 2021 edition of *The Postal Record*.

eBike testing

In my September article, I described a new USPS project involving the testing of electric bicycles (eBikes) on existing city bicycle routes. USPS began testing two different models of eBikes in August in two locations in Florida. Recently, during our discussions of the test process, USPS informed NALC that the testing, originally anticipated to last for six months, would be ending. Testing of three eBikes in St. Petersburg, FL, ended on Nov. 13, and the eBikes have been placed in storage until USPS decides whether to resume testing.

USPS continued testing one remaining eBike in Miami Beach; however, it anticipated that the testing would most likely conclude in December. As of the writing of this article, I am unsure whether testing in Miami Beach is still ongoing. USPS is currently reviewing all the information related to the test process to determine whether eBikes are a viable option to replace traditional bicycles for city delivery.

With the massive volume of peak season parcels, city carriers worked long hours serving the public. Thank you for your dedication. In 2022, I am hopeful that the challenges facing letter carriers from the COVID-19 pandemic will subside, offering me more opportunities for in-person interaction with the membership. I always look forward to hearing feedback from carriers on all of the new USPS test processes and city delivery initiatives.