

BEFORE THE
POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20268-0001

STATION AND BRANCH OPTIMIZATION AND
CONSOLIDATION INITIATIVE, 2009

Docket No. N2009-1

RESPONSE OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
TO AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION INTERROGATORY APWU/USPS-1
(October 26, 2009)

The United States Postal Service hereby provides its response to the following
interrogatory of the American Postal Workers Union filed on October 9, 2009:

APWU/USPS-1. The interrogatory is stated verbatim and followed by the response.

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

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APWU/USPS-1 The following questions relate to the materials submitted on October 8, 2009 on the mystery shopper program.

- a. Page 12 of the presentation attached to the response indicates that the mystery shopper evaluations are conducted in the POS ONE locations with revenue of \$500,000 or more. Almost half of the September 2 listing of stations and branches proposed for further study have walk-in revenues of less than \$500,000. Would any of these offices have had an examination of wait time under the mystery shopper program in the past year?
- b. Page 12 also indicates that there is a minimum of eight evaluations per office per fiscal year with regular shop no closer than 21 days apart and random checks no closer than 5 days. What is the average and median number of evaluations performed for each unit?
- c. Please explain how the time for the mystery shopper visit is determined.
- d. Page 15 provides the confidence levels the Postal Service places on the mystery shopper results. Please confirm that this level of statistical confidence is measured only at the national level.
- e. What is the statistical confidence, if any, attached to measurement of average WTIL or change in WTIL over time using Mystery Shopper data for a given site?
- f. Please provide an explanation about how a few data points from mystery shopper evaluations done at varying times and on different days of the week is used to evaluate a site in the SBOC process.
- g. Please explain how these data can be used to estimate or evaluate what the wait in line time will be at the gaining office during peak hours after a nearby station or branch is closed.
- h. On page 29 (not numbered) of the presentation a 95% confidence level for CSM data is reported. Please confirm that this confidence level is for national reporting.
- i. What confidence level, if any, can be attached to conclusions based on data for a specific station or branch?
- j. What questions in the CSM survey are used in evaluating individual sites in the SBOC process?
- k. Please explain how these CSM data can be used to estimate or evaluate what the wait in line time will be at the gaining office during peak hours after a nearby station or branch is closed.

RESPONSE

- a. No. The Mystery Shopper Program is a management diagnostic tool designed to evaluate opportunities for improving operations at certain retail locations. It is not designed to provide statistically reliable facility-

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- specific measures of retail service performance or customer experience.
- Available facility-specific data pertinent to SBOC candidate stations and branches are examined as indicated in response to subpart (g) below, but the program's reach does not extend to all such stations and branches.
- b. For FY 2009, the average number of shops per location surveyed was 7.4 and the median per shop surveyed was 8.
 - c. The day/hour part spread is randomly distributed at the district level each quarter. The shopper is requested to *only* shop during the day/time period suggested on their evaluation.
 - d. Confirmed.
 - e. As confirmed by the response to subpart (d), the system is not designed to provide statistically reliable data at the facility-specific level.
 - f. Local knowledge of day-to-day retail customer service operations by local retail managers, customer input collected during the public input process, combined with available Wait Time In Line (WTIL) data, provide indicators that inform the consolidation feasibility judgment of local SBOC review teams.
 - g. Local knowledge of day-to-day retail customer service operations by local retail managers, combined with available WTIL data, and Retail Data Mart (RDM) Earned/Actual Staffing model based on typical mailing months

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- (October/March) provide indicators that inform the consolidation feasibility judgment of local SBOC review teams.
- h. Not confirmed. The system is designed to produce data with a 95 percent confidence level for each Performance Cluster.
- i. As indicated by the responses to subparts (a) and (h), the system is not designed to provide statistically reliable data at the facility-specific level. Accordingly, the data are not used by the Postal Service as representative of customer experience at particular retail facilities. See also the response to subpart (g).
- j. For purposes of the SBOC Initiative, data generated by responses to the following question in the Customer Satisfaction Measurement residential survey are considered: "During your most recent visit to the post office window, how long did you wait in line for a window clerk?"
- k. Local knowledge of day-to-day retail customer service operations by local retail managers, combined with available WTIL data, and RDM Earned/Actual Staffing model based on typical mailing months (October/March) provide indicators that inform the consolidation feasibility judgment of local SBOC review teams.