

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

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POSTAL RATE AND FEE CHANGES, 1997

POSTAL RATE COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Docket No. R97-1

RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
TO INTERROGATORIES OF  
THE NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION  
REDIRECTED FROM WITNESS PAFFORD  
(NNA/USPS-T3-6) T1-3-6)

The United States Postal Service hereby provides responses to the following  
interrogatories of the National Newspaper Association: NNA/USPS-T3-6, filed on  
August 29, 1997, and redirected from witness Pafford.

Each interrogatory is stated verbatim and is followed by the response.

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

By its attorneys:

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September 12, 1997

RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
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(REDIRECTED FROM WITNESS PAFFORD)

**NNA/USPS-T1-3.** Please cite and explain in detail any actions taken by the Vice President/Operations Support since the issuance of this report to convert measurement of mail volumes to calculations by piece count rather than by weight and conversion factors. If implementation has not yet occurred, please provide estimates of targeted implementation schedules.

**RESPONSE:**

As the Postal Service installs new equipment, it has been emphasizing the need to conduct piece counts of mail, wherever feasible. In addition, the Postal Service has been testing the workability of developing end of run piece count volumes of letter size Delivery Point Sequence mail, and as well as studying options for changing the manner in which we account for mail inventory prior to induction into the first mail processing operations.

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**NNA/USPS-T1-4.** Please confirm that audits of DUVRS included in this report covered only delivery units within urban and suburban areas and specifically did not include audits of rural post offices. If you cannot confirm, please explain.

RESPONSE:

Confirmed.

**RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
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**NNA/USPS-T1-5.** Please refer to page 11 of H220. Describe any actions taken by the Postal Service to raise a red flag that would indicate falsification of volume data to show enhanced productivity.

**RESPONSE:**

The Postal Service relies upon the Inspection Service's audit process to indicate instances where such activity may be taking place.

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**NNA/USPS-T1-6.** Please refer to Postal Bulletin 21952 dated August 14, 1997.

(a) Please provide the estimated date of completion of the National Mail Count on Rural Routes.

(b) Has the Postal Service ever conducted a similar rural mail count study before? If so, please provide a report of the study.

(c) If the Postal Service has conducted such a study in the past, how were the results used to alter or verify data used for RPW reports or other volume measurement systems.

(d) How will the Postal Service use the data from the September 1997 study to alter or verify data used for RPW reports or other volume measurement systems?

(e) What percentage of rural carriers were invited to participate in the September 1997 study? What percentage are expected to participate?

(f) Will this study produce data on the total mail volumes handled by individual rural post offices?

(g) Will this study provide mail volume data by class and/or by subclass?

(h) Please provide copies of questionnaires and training materials to be used by rural carriers during this test.

**RESPONSE:**

(a) September 29, 1997. Please see Attachment A to this response.

(b) The National Count of Mail on Rural Routes is not a study, and no "report" is generated. The mail count is used "to determine eligibility for evaluated compensation or adjustment in evaluated compensation." *Agreement between United States Postal Service and National Rural Letter Carriers' Association*, Article 9.2.C.3.a. Please see Attachment B to this response.

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(c) Please see the response to subpart (b), above. The information is not used to adjust the Postal Service's revenue or volume systems.

(d) Please see the response to subpart (c), above.

(e) As provided in the *Agreement between United States Postal Service and National Rural Letter Carriers' Association*, Article 9.2.C.3.a(2), all regular carriers have the option to participate in the count. Please see Attachment B to this response. The Postal Service will not know the number of routes participating until after the completion of the count.

(f) No.

(g) Please see data collection forms in Attachment A to this response.

(h) Please see Attachment A to this response.

ALL OFFICES WITH RURAL DELIVERY

## National Count of Mail on Rural Routes

In accordance with Article 9.2.C.3.a(2) of the 1995 National Agreement between the Postal Service and the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA), a 24-day National Count of Mail will be conducted September 2-29, 1997. The count will be conducted on encumbered regular rural routes where either the employer or the regular rural carrier opted for a count by June 27, 1997, and on any auxiliary or vacant regular rural route where management elects to count. Additionally, where mutually agreed to by management and the regular rural carrier, the carrier may conduct the count, as provided by the March 14, 1997, USPS/NRLCA Memorandum of Understanding on National Mail Count on Rural Routes and Route Inspection Procedures.

### Mail Count Procedures

Mail count procedures for all 24 days of the count must be in accordance with Chapter 5 of Handbook PO-603, *Rural Delivery Carrier Duties and Responsibilities* (June 1991 edition), except part 535.12, which is revised as follows:

### Handbook PO-603, *Rural Delivery Carrier Duties and Responsibilities*

#### 5 Inspection, Count, and Adjustment of Rural Routes

• • • • •

#### 530 Rural Route Mail Counts

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#### 535 Mail Count Forms

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**535.12 Completion.** During the entire mail count period, complete PS Form 4239 daily for each route. Transfer the totals daily from PS Form 4239 to PS Form 4241. Use the following guidelines to complete PS Form 4239:

##### a. Column A — Letter-Size Mail

- (1) Enter in this column all letter-size mail, including ordinary letters, cards, newsletter type mail, and circulars five inches or less in width that can be cased in the separations of the carrier cases. Small magazines and small catalogs 5 inches or less in width and 3/8 inch or less in thickness are included in this column. Include detached address labels (specifically addressed) for sample merchandise, magazines, and catalogs in the letter count.

**Note:** The maximum thickness of 3/8 inch applies only to small magazines and small catalogs. Letter-size mail is mail that fits in the width of the case separation in use, regardless of thickness. All detached address cards (with a specific address) for sample merchandise, shared mail, magazines, and catalogs are included in the letter count.

(2) Do not include newspapers, boxholders, flats, and rolls even though they may be cased with letter mail. Count each direct or segmented bundle (see part 225.4) distributed and tied out at mail distribution cases as one parcel and enter that number in column D. Do not count direct or segmented bundles tied out at the carrier case (see part 225.5) as parcels. Do not include registered, certified, COD, numbered insured, Express Mail, and other accountable mail in this column. For special delivery articles see column F.

##### b. Column B — Sector/Segment Letters

Enter in this column all mail up to 6 1/8 inches in width that is processed on automated equipment in sector/segment order.

##### c. Column C — Papers, Magazines, Catalogs, Flats, Other Non-Letter-Size Mail

Enter in this column newspapers, flats, magazines, catalogs, rolls, and other non-letter-size mail that can be cased for delivery using carrier casing equipment. This includes catalogs cased with other mail or cased separately. This does not include those items specifically referenced in column D, Parcels.

**Exceptions:** Count simplified address articles, including mail with detached labels, as boxholder mail and enter the number in column E. Count each direct or segmented bundle distributed and tied out at mail distribution cases (see part 225.4) as one parcel and enter the number in column D. Do not count direct or segmented bundles tied out at the carrier case (see part 225.5) as parcels. Do not count registered, certified, COD, numbered insured mail, Express Mail, and other accountable mail in this column. For special delivery articles see column F.

##### d. Column D — Parcels

(1) A parcel is any rigid article that exceeds any one of the following dimensions:

- (a) 5 inches in height.
- (b) 18 inches in length.
- (c) 1 9/16 inches in width.

**Examples:** A rigid article that measures 4" x 15" x 1 3/4" is recorded as a parcel because the 1 3/4" thickness exceeds the 1 9/16" criteria. However, a rigid article that mea-

sures 5" x 18" x 1 9/16" is recorded as a flat because none of the dimensions exceed the stated criteria. (This includes articles properly prepared and endorsed "Do Not Fold or Bend" in accordance with *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM) C010.8.2c.)

(2) In addition, any nonrigid article that does not fit in the letter or flat separations (where flat separations are used) with other mail is considered a parcel. (This includes articles that have not been prepared in accordance with DMM C010.8.2c, even though the mailer has endorsed them "Do Not Fold or Bend." These nonrigid articles should be carried and credited as parcels, provided that they do not fit in the letter or flat separation (where flat separations are used) with other mail without damage to the article).

(3) The carrier has the option of handling odd-size articles either with flat mail or separately, regardless of how it is credited.

(4) Parcels with detached labels do not belong in this column. They are counted as boxholders in column E. Only specifically addressed samples too large to be cased are included in the parcel count.

(5) Each direct or segmented bundle distributed and tied out at the mail distribution cases (see part 225.4) is counted as a parcel. Direct or segmented bundles tied out at the carrier case (see part 225.5) are not counted as a parcel.

(6) Registered, certified, COD, numbered insured, Express Mail, and other accountable mail are not counted in this column. (For special delivery articles see column F.)

#### e. Column E — Boxholders

Enter the daily number of boxholders (families, boxes, or deliveries, as appropriate) taken out for delivery on the route. This includes all simplified address mail, including samples with simplified address (see DMM A040). When samples are received with detached address labels (specifically addressed), enter the total number of samples. (See part 535.12.a, column A, for recording the label count.) Include simplified address, detached labels (no specific name or address) in this column. The number of pieces of boxholder mail must not exceed the number of families or boxes (as appropriate) on the route for each mailing. Include in this column all boxholders, whether cased or not.

#### f. Column F — Registered Mail, Certified Mail, Numbered Insured Articles, Express Mail, and Other Accountable Mail.

(1) Enter the number of articles received daily for delivery in this column. Entries in this column preclude entries for the same items in columns A, B, C, D, or H.

**Note:** Where the carrier dismounts or leaves the line of travel to effect delivery or attempt delivery of special delivery mail, enter the number of special delivery articles in this column. Otherwise, enter them in columns A, B, C, or D as

appropriate. Do not record any articles entered in columns A, B, C, D, or L in column F.

(2) On high-density (L) routes where multiple accountable items are received for one address, enter the items on PS Form 3883. The route receives credit for one accountable article per page or partial page completed.

**Example:** If a route received 10 accountable articles of which five were for delivery to one address, the route would receive credit for six accountable items: one item each for the five articles for delivery to individual addresses, and one item for the five articles entered on PS Form 3883, *Firm Delivery Book for Accountable Mail*, for delivery to the one address. Under no circumstances use a PS Form 3883 for delivery of only one accountable item.

(3) When a PS Form 3883 is authorized for use on high-density (L) routes, additional credit is allowed for handling return receipts on items listed in the book (see column T).

#### g. Column G — CODs and Customs Due Received for Delivery

Enter daily the number of articles received for delivery.

#### h. Column H — Postage Due

Enter the number of postage due articles taken out for delivery. Do not include postage due items in columns A, B, C, or L.

**Note:** A carrier can receive a double credit for a postage due parcel.

**Example:** An ordinary parcel with postage due would be credited as a parcel in column D, *Parcels*, and in column H, *Postage Due*.

#### i. Column I — Change of Address (COA)

Enter in this column the number of change of address orders (PS Form 3575, *Change of Address Order*, or PS Form 3546, *Forwarding Order Change Notice*) received and entered during the count period. PS Form 3546, initiated by the carrier, is creditable as a forwarding order, provided that it is not a duplication of a previous action. There must be no accumulation of change of address orders at the start of the count period.

**Note:** Do not record the entry of a new or additional customer's name on PS Form 1564, *Address Change Sheet*, or PS Form 4232, *Rural Delivery Customer Instructions*, as a change of address order.

#### j. Column J — Marked Up Mailpieces

(1) In this column, record the number of pieces of all classes of mail marked up. Markups are mailpieces undeliverable as addressed that require the carrier to endorse the mail with the reason for nondelivery specified in DMM F010.4. Do not record mail missorted to a route as a markup. Do include missorted and missent mail in the original count



of mail. This applies where routes have been adjusted, territory has changed, or the mail is routed to the wrong carrier.

(2) In instances where mailing addresses have been changed from rural routes and box numbers to street names and numbers, mail is not credited as a markup on the route where the territory transferred to or from. This is considered a hand-off and credit is given in the original count of mail.

(3) Markup credit is provided for the following categories of undeliverable mail:

(a) *Mail Sorted to the Undeliverable-as-Addressed Separations or Designated Location at the Carrier Case.* Credit one markup for each bundle of the following categories of mail:

(i) A-Z separations/machinable or non-machinable.

(ii) Insufficient address.

(iii) Undeliverable-as-addressed, unable to forward.

(iv) Undeliverable bulk business mail.

(v) Other undeliverable bulk business mail.

(b) *Excess Boxholders.* Carriers will do all of the following:

(i) Bundle separately each set of excess boxholder mail. (A sack, hamper, tray, etc., may be used for this purpose.)

(ii) Endorse a facing slip *In Excess of Requirements*, initial, and attach to each bundle, and

(iii) Receive one markup credit for each set.

(c) *Mail Individually Endorsed by the Carrier.* Credit a markup for each piece of mail in the following categories:

(i) Attempted--Not Known.

(ii) No Such Number.

(iii) Deceased.

(iv) No Mail Receptacle.

(v) Refused.

(vi) *Vacant.* Only First-Class Mail, Periodicals, endorsed Standard Mail (A) or Standard Mail (B) addressed to *Occupant*. Do not endorse undeliverable bulk business mail.

(vii) *Undeliverable-as-Addressed (Parcels).* Do not credit as a markup parcel post endorsed only to indicate that an attempted delivery notice was left.

(viii) *No Record Mail.* Credit as a markup each piece of mail given to the carrier under the provisions of 242.4, whether or not the piece is marked up by the carrier.

(ix) Other required individual carrier endorsements in DMM F010.4.2, as appropriate, and undeliverable mail the postmaster or supervisor requires the carrier to individually endorse.

#### k. Column K — PS Form 3821 Completed

Enter only the number of completed PS Forms 3821, *Clearance Receipt*.

#### l. Column L — Delivery Point Sequence (DPS) Letters

Enter in this column all mail up to 6 1/8 inches in width that is processed on automated equipment as Delivery Point Sequence mail.

**Exception:** If fewer than 2,400 pieces of DPS mail are averaged per week during the entire mail count period and/or the route was not validated before the count as meeting the 98 percent quality threshold, mail processed as DPS will be cased and recorded as sector/segment mail in column B on PS Form 4241, *Rural Delivery Statistics Report*, or, if it does not qualify as sector/segment mail, recorded in column A, Letter Size, or column C, Newspapers, Magazines, Flats, Catalogs, and Rolls, as appropriate.

**Note:** Casing of DPS mail will not change mail count procedures or time standards applied to DPS or other mail.

#### m. Column M — Money Order Applications

Record in this column the number of money order applications received on the route. If rural carriers reside on the route they serve and regularly purchase money orders throughout the year, they will receive credit. Postmasters or supervisors review each money order application daily.

#### n. Column N — Letters and Flats Collected

Enter in this column the number of letters and flats collected on the route. If mail is received in bundles, count each bundle as one piece. Do not count each piece in the bundle. Do not include mail picked up from a collection box or cluster box unit (CBU) collection compartment. Centralized delivery equipment collection compartments receive a standard allowance.

Enter in column R the actual time required to open the collection boxes, remove the mail, and close the boxes.

#### o. Column O — Ordinary and Insured Parcels Accepted

(1) Enter in this column the number of ordinary and insured parcels accepted on the route. That is:

(a) Parcels that require the carrier to weigh, rate, and affix postage to the article, or

(b) Parcels weighing more than 2 pounds for which postage has been prepaid.

(2) Do not enter obvious letter- and flat-size mail, including filmpacks, etc., whether the carrier affixes postage or not. Count presacked parcels for which postage has been computed as one parcel for each sack. Do not credit parcels that a customer refuses or are not deliverable as a parcel accepted.

**p. Column P — Registers and Certified Accepted**

Record in this column the number of registered and certified articles accepted on the route. Do not include in the count those articles returned when PS Form 3849 has been left for the customer. *Time credit for No Response — Left Notice Items* is included in the time factor for delivery.

**q. Column Q — Loading Vehicle**

Enter the time spent transferring mail from the carrier's work area to the vehicle. This time should include taking mail from the work area to the vehicle, placing mail in the vehicle, and returning the equipment to a designated location. Postmasters or supervisors must observe the loading operation daily to ensure that carriers operate efficiently. Include only the time required to place mail in gunneys or hampers in loading time if mail cannot be placed in the conveyance during strap out. In offices where the carrier does not normally withdraw all mail for the route, the required final withdrawal from the designated distribution case, or other equipment, will be accomplished in conjunction with the loading operation, and the actual time required included in the loading allowance. Do not include the time used for this function if the carrier receives the withdrawal allowance. Loading time in excess of 15 minutes must be fully explained in the Comments section of PS Form 4239. However, do not interpret the loading allowance to be a minimum 15 minutes daily. The actual time shown for loading the vehicle must not include time for arranging parcels in delivery sequence; this is included in the time allowance for those items in column D.

**r. Column R — Other Suitable Allowance**

(1) A reasonable time allowance may be claimed for unusual conditions, or for other services rendered on a daily or weekly basis that are not accounted for under the normal work functions. This does not include time for vehicle breakdowns. Management must authorize items for which time is claimed under this heading. These items must recur daily or weekly. Weekly safety talks must be conducted, and the actual time required (usually 5 minutes per week) recorded in column R.

(2) The actual time required to place Central Markup System/Computerized Forwarding System (CMU/CFS) mail in the designated location is credited in column R.

(3) Where no office personnel are on duty when the carrier returns from serving the route on Saturday, the carrier receives actual time allowance only for those duties performed over and above the normal functions of this day and the fol-

lowing work day. (This does not include time spent counting mail or completing count forms.)

(4) Those carriers who serve a nonpersonnel rural unit receive a minimum allowance of 15 minutes daily for each unit served. Boxes located in these units are not included in the route totals on PS Form 4241. Additional time above 15 minutes claimed for servicing a nonpersonnel unit must be explained in the Comments section.

(5) Personal time, or time used for purchasing and checking stamp stock, should not be entered. These times are credited when the evaluation is processed at the Information Service Center (ISC).

(6) No entries are made in this column for those routes using USPS-owned or -leased vehicles. The ISC will automatically credit appropriate time allowances as indicated in 535.23. Time spent waiting for vehicle repair or tow while on the route is not a recurring function, and is not granted.

(7) All entries in column R require explanation in the Comments section.

**Note:** No entries are made in this column for those routes with collection compartments, or parcel post lockers located in centralized delivery equipment.

**s. Column S — Purchasing Stamp Stock**

All rural routes will be automatically credited with 20 minutes per week for purchasing and checking stamp stock.

**Note:** The Minneapolis ISC will credit the 20 minutes per week and record the proper allowance on PS Form 4241-A, *Rural Route Evaluation*.

**t. Column T — Return Receipts**

On high-density (L) routes, an additional credit is received only for those return receipts for accountable items handled via PS Form 3883 (see column F). Enter in this column the number of return receipts attached to those accountable items entered on PS Form 3883. Do not credit return receipts on accountable items delivered other than those listed on PS Form 3883.

**Example:** If a route received 10 accountable items and each had a return receipt attached, but only four of the items were listed in a firm delivery book, the route receives credit for four return receipts in column T.

**u. Column U — Authorized Dismounts**

The number of authorized dismounts is shown daily. (See part 313 for those instances where dismount deliveries may be authorized.)

**Example:** A carrier is authorized to dismount at a school. The school office is closed on Saturdays. The route would be credited with a dismount Monday through Friday, but would not receive dismount credit on Saturday. Authorized dismounts must be explained in the Comments section. When a

carrier dismounts primarily to provide other services, such as delivery or pickup of accountable mail, COD, Express Mail, etc., do not authorize dismount credit; existing time allowances include time for dismounting.

**v. Column V — Authorized Dismount Distance (In feet)**

(1) Enter the authorized dismount distance (in feet) traveled daily by the carrier. The distance entered could vary daily depending upon the number of dismounts authorized each day (see column U). Before determining the authorized dismount distance, the postmaster or supervisor must:

(a) For single delivery point dismounts such as CBUs, a school, mailroom, etc., establish the authorized parking location at the closest practicable point.

(b) For multiple deliveries requiring a dismount (such as multiple apartment buildings served from one park point, shopping centers, etc.), a parking location is established at the most advantageous point or points, and the authorized dismount line of travel between delivery points is laid out in the most efficient travel pattern. To avoid unnecessary trips to the vehicle and to ensure employee safety, the postmaster or supervisor may authorize the use of a carrier satchel or satchel cart.

(2) When determining the authorized dismount distance, the postmaster or supervisor must measure the most direct and/or efficient distance from the point of dismount from the vehicle to the delivery point, or points, and return to the vehicle. Record measurements to the closest foot. Make all entries on the basis of the number of trips required by the carrier each day.

**Example:** A school is authorized as a dismount delivery point. The total dismount distance from the vehicle to the delivery point and return is 140 feet. If, on the first day of the mail count, the volume for this delivery requires only one trip by the carrier, the carrier would receive credit for one dismount in column U and 140 feet dismount distance in column V. If, however, on the second day, the volume for this delivery required two trips, the carrier would receive credit for one dismount in column U and 280 feet in dismount distance.

(3) There must be a reasonable expectation that the line of travel established for the dismount is available to the carrier at least 90 percent of the time. This consideration is especially important in areas that experience consistently heavy snowfalls where direct dismount routes (not coinciding with existing sidewalks) will be blocked most of the winter.

**w. Column W — Counting Time**

Enter the number of minutes actually used to count the mail. Only the carrier's time is recorded and not the postmaster's or supervisor's counting time.

**x. Column X — Waiting Time**

Enter the number of minutes the carrier spent waiting for mail after the official starting time.

**y. Column Y — Intermediate Offices Served Daily, Services Performed at Intermediate Offices**

(1) Enter the number of intermediate post offices served daily. Carriers who perform functions or services at intermediate offices for which time allowances are provided will receive appropriate time credit for these services.

(2) Record daily on PS Form 4239 all functions performed or services provided at intermediate offices, and forward, in a sealed envelope, to the postmaster at the carrier's originating office.

(3) When a non-L route carrier purchases stamp stock at an intermediate office, show the actual time required to perform this function, not to exceed 5 minutes daily, in the *Other Suitable Allowance* column and explain in the *Comments* section. During the mail count period, maintain the normal frequency of stamp purchases at the intermediate office.

**Note:** For high-density (L) route carriers to receive this additional allowance, their purchases must meet the minimum requirements of 150 times the First-Class Mail postage rate.

(4) When completing PS Form 4241 for the week, the postmaster or supervisor at the office from which the route begins will include in the proper *Total* columns the items applicable to the intermediate office, and writes in above the signature line the words, "includes services performed at intermediate office." Indicate on the form, in the *Comments* section, the functions or services performed.

**z. Column Z — Weight of Locked Pouches Carried Daily**

Enter the weight carried in pounds (rounded to the nearest whole pound) of all mail, including outside pieces, to or from designated offices. Carriers serving nonpersonnel rural units do not receive credit for a locked pouch.

**Note:** To determine the daily weight, total the pouch weight of all days and divide by 24. Then divide the daily weight by the number of locked pouch stops from line C, Additional Information, to determine the average daily weight. Enter this number in column Z on PS Form 4241-X.

Future editions of Handbook PO-603 will include the changes in part 535.12 as published. Postmasters must hold joint conferences to discuss mail count procedures and instructions with supervisors and rural carriers involved in the count *no later than close of business on Saturday, August 16, 1997.*

### Completion of PS Form 4239

PS Form 4239, *Rural Route Count of Mail* (March 1994) (NSN 7530-02-000-9205, Quick Pick Number 316), is in stock and may be ordered from the material distribution centers (MDCs) using PS Form 7380, *MDC Supply Requisition*, or by Touch-Tone Order Entry. At least 24 forms are required for each rural route being counted. Instructions for completing this form are included with this article.

### Completion of PS Form 4241

PS Form 4241, *Rural Delivery Statistics Report* (May 1994), is included on page 19 of this *Postal Bulletin* and must be reproduced locally as needed. Because this is a four-week national mail count, two PS Forms 4241 will be required for each route being counted. Transfer data daily from PS Form 4239 and total PS Form 4241 at the end of each 2-week period. Completion instructions for this form are found in Part 535.2 of Handbook PO-603, *Rural Delivery Carrier Duties and Responsibilities* (June 1991 edition).

### Completion of PS Form 4241-X

One PS Form 4241-X, *Rural Delivery Statistics Summary Report* (May 1995), will be required for each route being counted. Transfer data from PS Forms 4241 at the end of each 2-week period. Completion instructions for this form are the same as PS Form 4241. PS Form 4241-X is not in stock at the MDCs. A copy of PS Form 4241-X is included on page 21 of this *Postal Bulletin* and must be reproduced locally as needed.

### Completion Requirements and Dates

In addition to completing PS Form 4239 and transferring the information daily to PS Form 4241, individual postmasters and supervisors are responsible for completing and reviewing PS Forms 4241 and PS Form 4241-X for accuracy by October 1, 1997.

In accordance with Handbook PO-603, individual rural carriers are given 2 days to review PS Form 4241-X before signing it. Rural carrier reviews must be completed by October 3, 1997, so that all forms are submitted and received by the district no later than October 4, 1997.

### APO/FPO Changes

Make the following ink change to the most recent APO/FPO tables published in *Postal Bulletin* 21951 (7-31-97).

APO/FPO	Action	Effective Date	See Restrictions
09866	Not Active	Immediately	

—International and Military Mail Operations,  
International Business Unit, 8-14-97

Individuals responsible for input of mail count data through the Distributed Data Entry/Data Reporting (DDE/DR) application must be familiar with the entry screen to ensure data is properly entered and recorded in the correct column. Data entry may begin on October 1, 1997. All DDE/DR data entry must be completed by close of business on October 31, 1997. Do not submit PS Forms 4241-X to the Minneapolis Information Service Center (ISC).

### PS Form 4241-A, *Rural Route Evaluation*

PS Form 4241-A, *Rural Route Evaluation* (July 1994), is a laser-printed form generated by the DDE/DR systems. This form is not available from the MDC. Minneapolis will process all counts November 1, 1997, and complete and mail this form to each district and associate office for receipt by November 7, 1997.

### National Mail Count Training

Districts conducting national mail count training should notify the NRLCA state stewards of the date, time, and location of all training sessions. Administrative leave to attend one of these sessions should be approved for each state steward. State stewards may use annual leave or request leave without pay to attend other district-authorized mail count training sessions.

### Option Election for Rural Routes Not Being Counted

Regular rural carriers who qualify for a high or low option and who do not count in September are eligible to elect a high option (see Article 9.2.C.8 of the USPS-NRLCA Agreement) for the new guarantee year by completing PS Form 4015-A, *Rural Carrier Agreement to Use Annual Leave Pursuant to Election of Higher Route Classification*. Option changes are entered by processing PS Form 4003, *Official Rural Route Description*, and are effective with the beginning of the new guarantee period, November 8, 1997 (PP 24-97).

—Delivery Policies and Programs,  
Operations Support, 8-14-97



## Rural Delivery Statistics Report

(Follow instructions in Chapter 5 of Handbook PO-803)

Post Office, State, and ZIP + 4

[illegible][illegible]

(A) <input type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Special <input type="checkbox"/> Amended	(F) Current Detour <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	In the event that I am eligible to elect a higher route classification, I agree to use sufficient annual leave during the guarantee period to assure that my total actual work hours will not exceed 2,080 during the guarantee period.
(B) Families Served	Detour Miles (Hundreds)	
(C) Number of Looked Pouch Stops	Seasonal Route? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Carrier's Signature
(D) Mail Withdrawal <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	In Season? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Time Used During Count (Hrs. & Mins.) (Subtract Lunch Time from Office and/or Route Time as Reported on Form 4240)	(G) Seasonal Miles (Hundreds)	Date of Local Conference
Office Time	Regular Boxes Central Boxes	
Route Time	(H) <input type="checkbox"/> EMA <input type="checkbox"/> OEMA <input type="checkbox"/> Govt. Veh.	Certified To Be Correct
(E) Net Total Time	(I) If 30:00 Plus Convert to Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Auditory Assistance Used	(J) High Option <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Carrier's Signature
Office	(K) Leave Commitment <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Route	(L) Rotating Relief Day <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Postmaster's Signature and Date
Waiting and Counting Time		

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# Rural Delivery Statistics Summary Report

(Follow Instructions in Chapter 5 of Handbook PO-803)

Post Office, State, and ZIP + 4

District				District ZIP Code				Carrier's Name									
Date of Count From - Through		Finance Number		Route Number		Route Miles (Hundredths)		Regular Boxes		Centralized Boxes		NDCBU Coll. Comps.		Parcel Lockers		Vehicle Stops	
Date	Letter Size (A)	Sector/Segment Letters (B)	Papers, Magazines, and Catalogs (C)	Parcels (D)	Box Holders (E)	Reg. Cert. Ins. Spec. Exp. (F)	COD Customs Due Del. (G)	Postage Due (H)	Change of Address (I)	Mark-Ups (J)	Firm 3821 (K)						
Weeks 1 & 2																	
Weeks 3 & 4																	
Total																	
Date	DPS Letters (L)	M.O. Applications (M)	Letter Size and Flats Coll. (N)	Ord. Ins. PP Accepted (O)	Reg. & Cert. Accepted (P)	Loading in Actual Minutes (Q)	Other Suitable Allowance (R) *	Put. Stamp Stack (S)	Return Receipts (T)	Auth. Daily Diamounts (Total) (U)	Total Distance of Auth. Daily Diamount Del. (Feet) (V)	Locked Pouch Weight (W)					
Weeks 1 & 2																	
Weeks 3 & 4																	
Total																	

(A) ☐ National ☐ Amended

(B) Families Served

(C) Number of Locked Pouch Stops

(D) Mail Withdrawal ☐ Yes ☐ No

(E) Time Used During Count (Hrs. & Hund.) (Subtract Lunch Time from Office and/or Route Time as Reported on Form 4240)

Office Time									
Route Time									
Net Total Time									
Auxiliary Assistance Used									
Office Route									
Waiting and Counting Time									

\* All Entries in Column "R" Must Be Explained on Reverse.

In the event that I am eligible to elect a higher route classification, I agree to use sufficient annual leave during the guarantee period to assure that my total actual work hours will not exceed 2,080 during the guarantee period.

(F) Current Detour ☐ Yes ☐ No

Detour Miles (Hundredths)

Carrier's Signature

Seasonal Route? ☐ Yes ☐ No

In Season? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Date of Local Conference

(G) Seasonal Miles (Hundredths)

Regular Boxes

Central Boxes

Certified to be Correct

Carrier's Signature

(H) ☐ EMA ☐ OEMA ☐ Government Vehicle

(I) If 30:00 Plus Convert to Regular ☐ Yes ☐ No

(J) High Option ☐ Yes ☐ No

Postmaster's Signature

(K) Leave Commitment ☐ Yes ☐ No

(L) Rotating Relief Day ☐ Yes ☐ No

Date Signed



# AGREEMENT

## Index

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[illegible]

1905-1906

[illegible]



- e. Rural carrier relief employees.
- f. Auxiliary rural carriers.
- g. Employees appointed as regular rural carriers during the guarantee period not covered by Section 7(b)(2) of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

In the event the provisions of this section conflict with any Postal Service regulation, manual, or handbook, the provisions of this section shall be deemed controlling.

## B. Rural Carrier Schedule

1. The Rural Carrier Schedule is the basis for non-evaluated rural carrier compensation. Increases negotiated as a result of collective bargaining shall be applied in accordance with past policies and procedures.
2. Regular rural carriers assigned to RCS routes in excess of thirty (30) miles shall be compensated on the basis of the Rural Carrier Schedule and in accordance with Article 9, Section 2, Subsection A, pursuant to Section 7(b)(2) of the Fair Labor Standards Act.
3. Regular rural carriers assigned to RCS routes of thirty (30) miles or less shall be compensated on the basis of the Rural Carrier Schedule. In addition, compensation for hours of required service in excess of forty (40) actual work hours during a week shall be at the overtime rate in accordance with Section 7(a) of the Fair Labor Standards Act.
4. Temporary Route Deviations. A temporary change in salary shall be authorized when route deviations continue for more than thirty (30) calendar days. All salary changes will become effective at the beginning of the first pay period following completion of the first thirty (30) days of the detour and at the beginning of the first pay period after the deviation is terminated.

## C. Evaluated Compensation

### 1. Definition

Evaluated compensation is additional compensation above that provided in the Rural Carrier Schedule. The Evaluated Schedule shall show the annual compensation for evaluated hours of required service per week, up to and including forty-eight (48)

hours, based on the compensation for a 42-mile route established by the Rural Carrier Schedule as a compensation of an evaluated 40-hour week. Compensation for required evaluated service in excess of forty (40) hours per week shall be valued at 1 1/2 the hourly rate of the 40-hour per week rate to determine annual compensation on routes where the required evaluated service exceeds forty (40) hours, but does not exceed forty-eight (48) hours per week.

### 2. Evaluated Compensation

Evaluated compensation will be authorized on the basis of evaluated time, as determined by the office and route time standards, after subtracting any relief time and in accordance with the following:

- a. Regular rural carriers assigned to evaluated routes evaluating to thirty-five (35) hours or more shall be compensated on the basis of the Evaluated Schedule and in accordance with Article 9, Section 2, Subsection A, pursuant to Section 7(b)(2) of the Fair Labor Standards Act.
- b. Regular rural carriers assigned to evaluated routes evaluating to less than thirty-five (35) hours shall be compensated on the basis of the Evaluated Schedule. In addition, compensation for hours of required service in excess of forty (40) actual work hours during a service week shall be at the overtime rate in accordance with Section 7(a) of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

### 3. Mail Counts

- a. The official evaluation of a route to determine eligibility for evaluated compensation or adjustment in evaluated compensation shall be determined by a mail count. Mail counts will be conducted as follows:
  - (1) In 1996, all vacant and auxiliary routes will be counted. The only other routes to be counted will be those in which either the Employer or the regular carrier opts for a count by the last Friday in June, 1996. These routes will be counted for 12 working days, beginning September 17 and ending September 30.
  - (2) In 1997, the only routes to be counted will be those in which either the Employer or the regular carrier

Article 9.2.C.3.a(2)

opts for a count by the last Friday in June, 1997. These routes will be counted for 24 working days, beginning September 2 and ending September 29.

- (3) In 1998, all vacant and auxiliary routes will be counted for 12 working days, beginning September 17 and ending September 30. The only other routes to be counted will be those qualifying for a special count under the provisions of Article 9.2.C.12., unless both the Employer and the regular carrier agree not to count.

- (4) In 1999, the only routes to be counted will be those in which either the Employer or the regular carrier opts for a count by the last Friday in June, 1999. These routes will be counted for 24 working days, beginning September 7 and ending October 4.

- (5) The Employer reserves the right to conduct a national count of mail for all rural routes during the last twelve (12) working days in September of any year. The Employer agrees to notify the Union at the national level at least thirty (30) days in advance of the commencement of the count.

- b. Whenever a carrier represents that certain unusual conditions or special services were not reflected in the latest evaluation, the evaluated time may be adjusted by an appropriate allowance as determined by the Employer. Such additional allowance may be authorized only when the carrier's actual work time exceeds the current evaluated time for the route.

4. Route Reviews

Route reviews will be conducted in 1998 during the month of April (utilizing data from March). The route reviews will be conducted in accordance with existing guidelines and will consist of at least an analysis of workload changes (boxes, miles, mail volume, etc.).

5. Centralized Delivery

Centralized delivery, for the purpose of establishing a rural time allowance, is defined as any mail receiving unit where the carrier has access to more than one individual customer's receptacle by opening only one door, such as Cluster Box

Article 9.2.C.6.d

Units, Apartment Receptacles, Delivery Centers, Postal Centers, Mailrooms, etc.

6. Relief Days

- a. Assistance in the form of relief days on evaluated routes, except during the Christmas period, will be provided when the evaluated time exceeds forty-six (46) hours per week or as necessary to keep the total actual work hours under 2,080 during the guarantee period. When such relief is provided, the rural carrier's compensation will be on the basis of the remaining hours of required evaluated service per week.
- b. When the leave replacement is unavailable for service on the scheduled relief day, the regular carrier, if mutually agreeable between the carrier and the installation head, may serve the carrier's assigned route provided another day is scheduled within the next eight (8) weeks and such action does not cause the carrier to exceed the hours of the annual guarantee or fifty-six (56) actual work hours within one (1) week. The carrier may select the day to be scheduled off within the eight (8) weeks, subject to the availability of a leave replacement and the approval of the installation head.
- c. However, regular carriers shall be prohibited from scheduling any relief day worked ("X day") referenced above from the beginning of the guarantee period through the end of the designated Christmas period. Except, if a regular rural carrier is required to work the relief day ("R day") during the period that starts with the beginning of the guarantee period through the end of the designated Christmas period, the carrier must be given a relief day worked ("X day") within the same pay period in which the relief day ("R day") was worked.
- d. When relief days are authorized on J and K routes, regular rural carriers may be offered the opportunity to select a rotating relief day schedule. Once a selection is made, it shall remain in effect until the end of the guarantee period, unless a change is mutually agreeable to the postmaster and the rural carrier serving the route. Employees who elect the rotating relief day schedule are not eligible for additional Saturday leave opportunities, as specified in Article 10, Section 4, above what they would have been eligible for under a fixed relief day schedule.

## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I have this day served the foregoing document upon all participants of record in this proceeding in accordance with section 12 of the Rules of Practice.



Anne B. Reynolds

475 L'Enfant Plaza West, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20260-1137  
September 12, 1997