

Mail Delivery, Customer Service, and Property Conditions Review – Select Units, Florida 3 District



AUDIT REPORT

Report Number 23-050-R23 | May 15, 2023



Flagler Station



Allapattah Station



Doral Branch



Princeton Branch



Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Cover | |
| Transmittal Letter | 1 |
| Results | 2 |
| Background | 2 |
| Objective, Scope, and Methodology | 2 |
| Results Summary | 3 |
| Finding #1: Delayed Mail..... | 3 |
| What We Found | 3 |
| Why Did It Occur | 4 |
| What Should Have Happened | 5 |
| Effect on the Postal Service and its Customers..... | 5 |
| Management Actions..... | 5 |
| Recommendation #1 | 5 |
| Recommendation #2 | 5 |
| Recommendation #3..... | 5 |
| Finding #2: Package Scanning | 5 |
| What We Found | 5 |
| Why Did It Occur | 6 |
| What Should Have Happened | 6 |
| Effect on the Postal Service and its Customers..... | 6 |
| Management Actions..... | 7 |
| Recommendation #4..... | 7 |
| Finding #3: Truck Arrival Scanning | 7 |
| What We Found | 7 |
| Why Did It Occur | 7 |
| What Should Have Happened | 7 |
| Effect on the Postal Service and its Customers..... | 7 |
| Management Actions..... | 7 |
| Recommendation #5..... | 8 |
| Finding #4: Arrow Keys | 8 |
| What We Found | 8 |
| Why Did It Occur | 8 |
| What Should Have Happened | 8 |
| Effect on the Postal Service and its Customers..... | 8 |
| Management Actions..... | 8 |
| Recommendation #6..... | 9 |
| Recommendation #7 | 9 |
| Finding # 5: Property Conditions..... | 9 |
| What We Found | 9 |
| Why Did It Occur | 10 |
| What Should Have Happened | 10 |
| Effect on the Postal Service and its Customers..... | 11 |
| Management Actions..... | 11 |
| Recommendation #8..... | 11 |
| Management’s Comments | 11 |
| Evaluation of Management’s Comments..... | 11 |
| Appendix A: Management’s Comments..... | 12 |
| Contact Information | 16 |

Transmittal Letter



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

May 15, 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR: MICHAEL V. VECCHITTO
MANAGER (A)
FLORIDA 3 DISTRICT

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph E. Wolski".

FROM: Joseph E. Wolski
Director, Field Operations

SUBJECT: Audit Report – Mail Delivery, Customer Service and Property Conditions
Review – Select Units, Florida 3 District (Report Number 23-050-R23)

This report presents the results of our audit of Mail Delivery, Customer Service and Property Conditions Review – Select Units, Florida 3 District.

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesies provided by your staff. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Jennifer Schneider, Operational Manager, or me at 703-248-2100.

Attachment

cc: Postmaster General
Corporate Audit and Response Management
Chief Retail & Delivery Officer & Executive Vice President
Vice President, Delivery Operations
Vice President, Retail & Post Office Operations
Vice President, Southern Area Retail & Delivery Operations
Director, Retail & Post Office Operations Maintenance

Results

Background

This report presents a summary of the results of our self-initiated audits assessing mail delivery, customer service, and property conditions at four select delivery units in the Florida 3 District in the Southern Area (Project Number 23-050). These delivery units included the Allapattah Station, Doral Branch, and Flagler Station in Miami, FL, and the Princeton Branch in Homestead, FL.

We judgmentally selected these delivery units based on the number of Customer 360¹ and Informed Delivery² contacts associated with the unit, undelivered route information, and Stop-the-Clock (STC)³ scans performed at the unit.

We previously issued interim reports⁴ to district management for each of these units regarding the conditions we identified. In addition, we issued a report on the efficiency of operations at the Miami Processing and Distribution Center (P&DC),⁵ which services these four delivery units. The delivery units have 145 city routes and 14 rural routes that serve about 219,160 people in several ZIP Codes (see Table 1), which are considered urban communities.⁶

Objective, Scope, and Methodology

Our objective was to evaluate mail delivery, customer service, and property conditions at the Allapattah Station, Doral Branch, Flagler Station, and Princeton Branch in the Florida 3 District.

We reviewed delivery metrics, including the number of routes and carriers, mail arrival time, amount of reported delayed mail, package scanning, and distribution up-time.⁷ In addition, during our site visits the week of January 30, 2023, we reviewed mail conditions; package and truck arrival scanning procedures; arrow key⁸ security procedures; and unit

safety, security, and maintenance conditions. We also analyzed the scan status of mailpieces at and around carrier cases and in the “Notice Left” area.⁹ Finally, we interviewed unit management and employees.

Table 1. Service Area and Population

| Delivery Units | Service Area ZIP | Population | City Routes | Rural Routes |
|--------------------|--|----------------|-------------|--------------|
| Allapattah Station | 33142, 33242 | 52,444 | 31 | 0 |
| Doral Branch | 33172, 33192, 33206, 33222 | 37,076 | 24 | 0 |
| Flagler Station | 33128, 33129, 33130, 33131, 33132, 33136 | 87,503 | 79 | 0 |
| Princeton Branch | 33031, 33032, 33039 | 42,137 | 11 | 14 |
| Total | | 219,160 | 145 | 14 |

Source: U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) analysis of Postal Service National Labeling List and Esri data.

We conducted this audit from January through May 2023 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards and included such tests of internal controls as we considered necessary under the circumstances. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit

1 A cloud-based application that enables Postal Service employees to diagnose, resolve, and track customer inquiries.
 2 Informed delivery is a free and optional notification service that gives residential customers the ability to digitally preview their letter-sized mail and submit inquiries for mailpieces that were expected for delivery but have not arrived.
 3 A scan event that indicates the U.S. Postal Service has completed its commitment to deliver or attempt to deliver the mail piece. Examples of STC scans include “Delivered,” “Available for Pick-up,” and “No Access.”
 4 *Mail Delivery, Customer Service, and Property Conditions Review – Allapattah Station* (Report Number 23-050-1-R23, dated April 10, 2023); *Mail Delivery, Customer Service, and Property Conditions Review – Doral Branch* (Report Number 23-050-2-R23, dated April 10, 2023); *Mail Delivery, Customer Service, and Property Conditions Review – Flagler Station* (Report Number 23-050-3-R23, dated April 10, 2023) and *Mail Delivery, Customer Service, and Property Conditions Review – Princeton Branch* (Report Number 23-050-4-R23, dated April 10, 2023).
 5 *Efficiency of Operations at the Miami Processing and Distribution Center, Miami, FL*, (Report Number 23-049-R23 dated April 10, 2023).
 6 We obtained ZIP Code information related to population and urban/rural classification from Esri, which is based on 2010 Census Bureau information.
 7 Time of day that clerks have completed distributing mail to the carrier routes.
 8 A distinctively shaped key that carriers use to open mail-receiving receptacles, such as street collection boxes and panels of apartment house mailboxes equipped with an arrow lock. Arrow keys are accountable property and are subject to strict controls.
 9 The area of a delivery unit where letters or packages that the carriers were unable to deliver are stored for customer pickup.

objective. We discussed our observations and conclusions with management on April 28, 2023, and included their comments, where appropriate.

We assessed the reliability of the Product Tracking and Reporting (PTR)¹⁰ system, the Delivery Condition Visualization (DCV) tool,¹¹ the Surface Visibility Web (SVWeb)¹² database, and data from the electronic Facilities Management System (eFMS)¹³ by reviewing existing information, comparing data from other sources, observing operations, and interviewing Postal Service officials knowledgeable about the data. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

Results Summary

We identified issues affecting mail delivery, customer service, or property conditions at all four delivery units. Specifically, we found delayed mail and deficiencies with package scanning, truck arrival scanning, arrow key controls, and property conditions (see Table 2).

Table 2. Summary of Results – Miami, FL, Delivery Units

| Controls Reviewed | Deficiencies Identified – Yes or No | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|
| | Allapattah Station | Doral Branch | Flagler Station | Princeton Branch |
| Delayed Mail | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Package Scanning | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Truck Arrival Scanning | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Arrow Keys | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Property Conditions | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |

Source: Results of our fieldwork during the week of January 30, 2023.

Finding #1: Delayed Mail

What We Found

On the morning of January 31, 2023, we identified about 15,246¹⁴ pieces of delayed mail at the four delivery units (see Table 3). For each location, management did not accurately report this delayed mail in the DCV system. See Figure 1, Figure 2, and Figure 3 for examples of delayed mail we found.

Table 3. Delayed Mail

| Type of Mail | Allapattah Station | Doral Branch | Flagler Station | Princeton Branch | Total |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|
| Letters | 643 | 75 | 4,931 | 1,605 | 7,254 |
| Flats | 96 | 1,272 | 5,120 | 250 | 6,738 |
| Packages | 0 | 1,191 | 63 | 0 | 1,254 |
| Total | 739 | 2,538 | 10,114 | 1,855 | 15,246 |

Source: OIG count of delayed mail pieces identified during our visit on January 31, 2023.

Figure 1. Delayed Mail at the Flagler Station



Source: OIG photo taken January 31, 2023.

¹⁰ A system of record for all delivery status information for mail and packages with trackable services and barcodes.

¹¹ A tool for unit management to manually self-report delayed mail, which provides a snapshot of daily mail conditions at the point in time when carriers have departed for the street.

¹² Surface Visibility collects end-to-end data by linking multiple scans of a single asset to create visibility data to support planning, management, and optimization of the surface network.

¹³ A custom-built Postal Service system used to manage work orders, contracts, and payments for facility construction, repairs, and alteration contracts, along with real estate contracts.

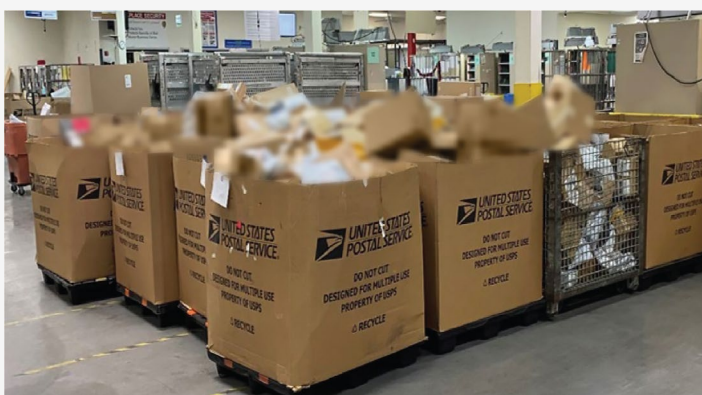
¹⁴ Count of mail included individual piece counts and estimates based on conversion factors.

Figure 2. Delayed Mail at Princeton Branch



Source: OIG photo taken January 31, 2023.

Figure 3. Delayed Packages at Doral Branch



Source: OIG photo taken January 31, 2023.

Why Did It Occur

Delayed mail occurred for multiple reasons, including lack of arrow keys, lack of experienced staff, and insufficient staffing to accommodate mail volumes. In addition, the delayed mail was not reported in

DCV because of a lack of management oversight. Specifically:

- Management at the Allapattah Station stated that the carriers returned with undeliverable mail because they were unfamiliar with the route and arrived after the business closed. The PM supervisor stated he was aware of the requirements to report the delayed mail in DCV; however, other duties took precedence over reporting the delayed mail.
- Management at the Doral Branch stated that they did not adequately monitor operations to verify all mail was cleared from the unit and taken to the street for delivery or reported in the DCV system because they were busy with other duties. Management stated that they did not monitor the carrier cases because Monday was a heavy mail day, and they were busy with other tasks, including additional time spent with newer employees. Additionally, management did not effectively elevate a logistics issue. They stated that the 1,190 packages on the workroom floor were not delivered because they required – but did not receive – support from P&DC logistics to deliver the large volume of packages the previous day. Postal Vehicle Service (PVS) drivers typically come twice a day from the Miami P&DC to deliver packages that carriers cannot deliver to high volume customers due to volume and vehicle space constraints. On the day prior to our visit (January 30, 2023), only one PVS driver came, and there was insufficient space on the truck to deliver all the packages. Unit management raised the issue to P&DC logistics but did not receive the support needed to deliver the mail that day, and they did not pursue it any further. Also, unit management was unaware that they needed to report the 1,190 pieces of delayed mail in the DCV system.
- Management at the Flagler Station stated the unit was experiencing a shortage of clerks to distribute mail to the carriers. In addition, they stated that the delivery unit did not have enough arrow keys for all carriers on routes that required them for delivery. Specifically, the unit had 59 arrow keys to share among 75 carrier routes.
- Management at the Princeton Branch stated that delayed mail was due to missent¹⁵ mail arriving after carriers left for street operations.

¹⁵ Missent mail is mail that was sorted to the wrong delivery unit, station, or branch and has a barcode or ZIP code for another office.

Management stated that competing responsibilities, such as training a replacement supervisor, prevented them from monitoring and verifying that all mail was cleared from the unit and taken to the street for delivery. In addition, management did not recognize missent mail as delayed, therefore, they did not report it in the DCV system.

What Should Have Happened

Management should have ensured that all mail was processed and delivered daily, and that there were enough resources to deliver all the mail each day. Postal Service policy¹⁶ states that all types of First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, and Priority Express Mail are always committed for delivery on the day of receipt. In addition, managers are required¹⁷ to report all mail in the delivery unit after the carriers have left for their street duties as either delayed or curtailed in the DCV system. Further, management must update the DCV system if volumes have changed prior to the end of the business day.

Effect on the Postal Service and its Customers

When mail is delayed, there is an increased risk of customer dissatisfaction, which may adversely affect the Postal Service brand. In addition, inaccurate reporting of delayed mail in the DCV system provides management at the local, district, area, and headquarters levels with an inaccurate status of mail delays and can result in improper actions taken to address issues.

Management Actions

During our audit, management at the Allapattah Station and Princeton Branch provided training records documenting that they retrained management on how to properly identify and record delayed and curtailed mail into DCV.

Recommendation #1

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District** verify that the Flagler Station obtains enough arrow keys for all carrier routes that need them for delivery.

Recommendation #2

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District** develop and execute a plan so that all committed mail is delivered daily, and that management conduct a daily sweep to identify delayed mail at the Allapattah Station, Doral Branch, Flagler Station, and Princeton Branch.

Recommendation #3

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District** develop and execute a plan that requires all delayed mail volume be entered into the proper system and that management systematically enforce reporting compliance at the Allapattah Station, Doral Branch, Flagler Station, and Princeton Branch.

Finding #2: Package Scanning

What We Found

Employees improperly scanned packages at all four delivery units. Specifically, employees scanned 7,096 packages at the delivery units instead of at the customers' delivery points between October and December 2022 (see Table 4). Further analysis of the STC scan data for these packages showed that about 92.38 percent were scanned "Delivered." This data excludes scans that could properly be made at the unit, such as "Delivered - PO Box" and "Customer (Vacation) Hold," but rather represents scans performed at the delivery unit that should be made at the point of delivery. In addition, we only included "Delivery Attempted - No access to Delivery Location" scans performed Monday through Friday to avoid legitimate scans for businesses closed over the weekend.

In addition, on the morning of January 31, 2023, before carriers arrived for the day, we selected 211 packages to review and analyze scanning and tracking history. We judgmentally selected 103 packages from the carrier cases and 108 packages from the "Notice Left" area.

Of the 103 sampled packages at the carrier cases, 81 (78.64 percent) had missing or improper scans, or handling issues. For example, 55 of these packages were scanned "Delivered," which should only be performed when a package is successfully left at the customer's point of delivery.

Further, 84 of the 108 (77.78 percent) reviewed packages in the "Notice Left" area had scanning or handling issues. For example, 45 of these packages were not returned to sender, as required.¹⁸ These packages ranged from two to 159 days past their return dates.

¹⁶ *Committed Mail & Color Code Policy for Marketing Mail* stand-up talk, February 2019.

¹⁷ *Informed Visibility Delivery Condition Visualization User Guide*, March 2022.

¹⁸ *Notice Left and Return Guidelines*, dated July 2007, states that domestic packages should be returned to sender on the 15th calendar day after a notice is left and international packages should be returned to sender on the 30th calendar day after a notice is left.

Table 4. STC Scans at Delivery Unit

| STC Scan Type | Allapattah Station | Doral Branch | Flagler Station | Princeton Branch | Total | Percent |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Delivered | 2,613 | 163 | 3,496 | 283 | 6,555 | 92.38% |
| Delivery Attempted - No Access | 37 | 9 | 134 | 11 | 191 | 2.69% |
| Receptacle Full / Item Oversized | 17 | 4 | 25 | 81 | 127 | 1.79% |
| No Authorized Recipient | 4 | 0 | 104 | 1 | 109 | 1.54% |
| No Secure Location | 15 | 2 | 21 | 19 | 57 | 0.80% |
| Rescheduled to Next Delivery Day | 0 | 0 | 22 | 0 | 22 | 0.31% |
| Refused | 2 | 0 | 17 | 1 | 20 | 0.28% |
| Animal Interference | 6 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 15 | 0.21% |
| Total | 2,694 | 178 | 3,820 | 404 | 7,096 | 100.00% |

Source: OIG analysis of Postal Service’s PTR System data.

Why Did It Occur

These scanning issues occurred because unit management did not adequately monitor and enforce proper package scanning and handling procedures. Specifically:

- Management at the Allapattah Station explained that it was their understanding that packages scanned to firm sheets¹⁹ could have their STC scans performed at the delivery unit instead of at the point of delivery, if the scans were made prior to 3 p.m. Therefore, management incorrectly allowed carriers to perform “Delivered” scans for these packages at the delivery unit.
- Management at the Doral Branch indicated that they were not aware of available scanning exception reports they could have used to monitor and enforce proper package scanning and handling procedures.
- Management at the Flagler Station stated that they have several customers that pick up their mail at the delivery unit, which may have contributed to a higher scan percentage at the station.
- Management at the Princeton Branch stated that they were unaware of the improper handling

and scanning of packages found at the carrier cases. The PM supervisor stated that competing responsibilities, such as training a replacement supervisor, prevented them from monitoring mail brought back by carriers. In addition, management stated that they were unaware of the overdue “Notice Left” packages. Unit employees indicated that there was no specific person assigned to review the “Notice Left” section.

What Should Have Happened

Management should have monitored scan performance daily and enforced compliance. The Postal Service’s goal is to ensure proper delivery attempts for mailpieces to the correct address with proper service,²⁰ which includes scanning packages at the time and location of delivery.²¹ Packages in the “Notice Left” area should have been reviewed for second notices and returned to sender if they remained after the prescribed number of days.

Effect on the Postal Service and its Customers

Customers rely on accurate scan data to track their packages in real time. When employees do not scan mailpieces correctly, customers are unable to determine the actual status of their packages. By improving scanning operations, management can potentially improve mail visibility, increase customer

¹⁹ A list of packages for delivery to one address documented with a single barcode. Firm sheets are used to link packages sent to one address on a single form.

²⁰ *Delivery Done Right the First-Time* stand-up talk, March 2020.

²¹ *Carriers Delivering the Customer Experience* stand-up talk, July 2017.

satisfaction, and enhance the customer experience and Postal Service brand.

Management Actions

During our audit, management at the Allapattah Station and Princeton Branch provided training records documenting that they retrained employees on how to properly scan and handle packages.

Recommendation #4

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District**, require unit management to review package scanning performance data daily and enforce compliance at the Allapattah Station, Doral Branch, Flagler Station, and Princeton Branch.

Finding #3: Truck Arrival Scanning

What We Found

Employees did not scan all incoming trailer/truck barcodes²² at any of the four delivery units, as required. We reviewed data related to morning truck arrival scans from October 1 to December 31, 2022, and found that employees did not perform a scan for 1,474 of the 1,901 trips (77.54 percent) arriving from the Miami Processing and Distribution Centers (see Table 5).

Table 5. Truck Arrival Scans from October 1 through December 31, 2022

| Delivery Units | Inbound AM Trips | Missed Arrive Scans | Missed Scan Percent |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Allapattah Station | 159 | 159 | 100% |
| Doral Branch | 940 | 620 | 65.96% |
| Flagler Station | 556 | 555 | 99.82% |
| Princeton Branch | 246 | 140 | 56.91% |
| Total | 1,901 | 1,474 | 77.54% |

Source: OIG analysis of data extracted from the Postal Service's SVWeb System.

During our site visits we performed observations of truck arrival scanning procedures. Employees at the Allapattah Station did not scan the truck barcodes

upon arrival, while those at the Doral Branch, Flagler Station, and Princeton Branch did.

Why Did It Occur

Management did not monitor scan performance data to ensure that all trucks received an arrival scan. Specifically:

- Management at Allapattah Station did not monitor truck scans and enforce compliance. Although the clerk knew they were supposed to complete truck scans, they did not.
- Management at the Doral Branch did not monitor truck arrival scan performance because they assumed the scans were being done by others when an assigned employee was absent during most of October through December 2022. Further, management was unaware that truck scanning performance reports existed that allowed them to monitor scanning compliance.
- Management at the Flagler Station stated that she knew about the requirement but was unaware that clerks were not scanning incoming trucks.
- Management at the Princeton Branch did not monitor scan performance data to verify that trucks received an arrival scan because they were not aware of the report that could be used for monitoring the scans. The AM supervisor stated that he was confident that the clerks were performing the scans and relied on them to tell him if there was a problem.

What Should Have Happened

Management should have performed reviews of truck arrival tracking reports to ensure that employees were performing all expected truck scans. According to Postal Service policy,²³ employees must scan the trailer barcode on Postal Service trailer/trucks and Highway Contract Route trucks arriving at the delivery unit during local operating hours.

Effect on the Postal Service and its Customers

When employees do not scan the truck barcode, the Postal Service does not receive timely transportation information and is unable to address issues that may be causing mail delays, which could affect customer service.

²² The trailer barcode on the back door and inside right and left walls of the trailer.

²³ United States Postal Service Standard Operating Procedure - Subject: Trailer Scans at the Delivery Units.

Recommendation #5

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District**, develop and execute a plan that requires management to review truck/trailer arrival scanning performance data daily and enforce compliance at the Allapattah Station, Doral Branch, Flagler Station, and Princeton Branch.

Finding #4: Arrow Keys

What We Found

Management did not properly manage arrow keys at three of four of the delivery units. Specifically, at the Doral and Princeton branches, management did not adequately track arrow keys issued to employees. At the Flagler Station management did not adequately track arrow keys issued to employees and did not always ensure that the arrow keys were adequately secured. In addition, we found 105 of the 129 keys listed in the logs, and an additional 10 keys that were not listed on the logs (see Table 6).

Table 6. Arrow Key Inventory

| Delivery Units | Keys on Inventory Log | Keys Found | |
|------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| | | Listed on Log | Not Listed on Log |
| Doral Branch | 29 | 27 | 1 |
| Flagler Station | 76 | 59 | 1 |
| Princeton Branch | 24 | 19 | 8 |
| Total | 129 | 105 | 10 |

Source: OIG analysis of the Arrow Key inventory during our visit week of January 31, 2023.

Why Did It Occur

These issues occurred because unit management did not properly manage and/or safeguard arrow keys. Specifically:

- Management at the Doral Branch stated they did not update or use the log, as required, because the supervisor did not understand the importance of tracking who has possession of the arrow keys daily. He believed that if the semi-annual arrow key inventory was conducted and keys were kept in a secure location, it was not important to track when the keys were issued to carriers.

- Management at the Flagler Station stated that they were aware of the policy to maintain an accurate arrow key log and properly account for arrow keys when they are assigned to carriers. However, due to staffing issues, they did not have enough clerks to maintain the key log and assist with carriers signing keys out. In addition, management explained that acquiring replacements for broken and lost keys was a lengthy process.
- Management at the Princeton Branch stated that the unit used an old inventory log and was unsure when it was last updated prior to our visit. In addition, unit management indicated that they were unaware of the process for reporting lost or damaged arrow keys.

What Should Have Happened

Management should have ensured that arrow key security procedures were properly followed. According to Postal Service policy,²⁴ management must keep an accurate inventory of all keys and conduct semiannually a physical survey of all building keys. In addition, policy²⁵ states that arrow keys must remain secured until they are individually assigned to personnel. A supervisor or clerk must supervise employees signing out keys on the inventory log. Upon return, arrow keys should be deposited in a secure location and a supervisor or clerk must verify all keys have been returned and accounted for daily.

Effect on the Postal Service and its Customers

When there is insufficient oversight and supervision of accountable items, such as arrow keys, there is increased risk of mail theft. These thefts damage the Postal Service's reputation and diminish public trust in the nation's mail system. Additionally, because arrow keys are used to open mail receptacles, lost or misplaced keys could impact mail delivery.

Management Actions

During our audit, management at the Doral Branch took corrective action by updating the unit's arrow key inventory log on February 6, 2023. The unit also instructed the carriers to sign the arrow keys out and back in each day, which we observed carriers doing. In addition, the extra key that was not listed was added to the inventory log.

Management at the Princeton Branch provided training records documenting that they retrained

²⁴ Administrative Support Manual Issue 13, Sections 273.461, 273.464, and 273.471, July 1999 - updated through March 31, 2022.

²⁵ Standard Work: Arrow Key Accountability, January 2022, and USPS Arrow Key Standard Work, January 2022.

management on the Arrow Key standard operating procedures.

Recommendation #6

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District**, develop and execute a training plan that instructs management on the proper arrow key inventory procedures at the Flagler Station.

Recommendation #7

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District**, establish a schedule to periodically review arrow keys to verify they are properly logged and accounted for at the Flagler Station and Princeton Branch.

Finding # 5: Property Conditions

What We Found

We found safety, security, and maintenance issues at three of the four delivery units.

At the Allapattah Station, we identified overgrown landscaping in the employee parking lot that can provide points of concealment (see Figure 4), an electrical outlet hanging loose from the wall, cracked tiles in the PO Box and retail lobby areas, and stained and missing ceiling tiles on the workroom floor.

Figure 4. Overgrown Landscaping in Employee Parking Lot



Source: OIG photos taken January 31, 2023.

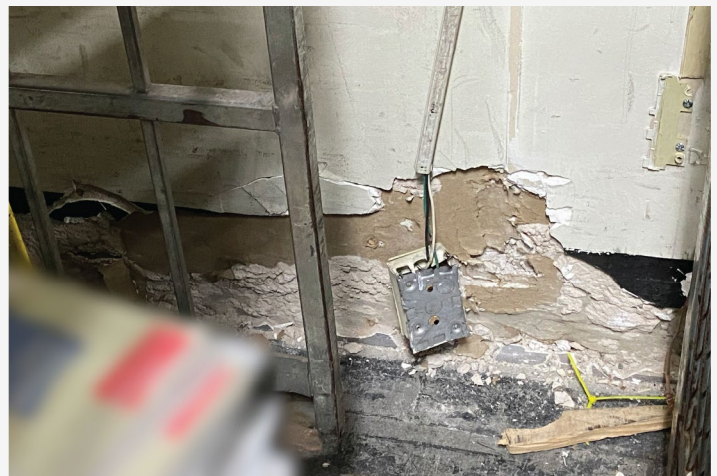
At the Flagler Station, we identified issues including five blocked fire extinguishers, missing annual and monthly fire extinguisher inspections, stained ceiling tiles throughout the facility, a leak in the electronics room (see Figure 5), an unsecured swing door in the lobby, a broken handrail in the dock area, and a damaged wall and detached electrical socket in the workroom (see Figure 6).

Figure 5. Leak in Electronics Room



Source: OIG photo taken January 31, 2023.

Figure 6. Damaged Wall and Detached Electrical Socket in Workroom



Source: OIG photo taken January 31, 2023.

At the Princeton Branch, we identified issues, including a blocked electrical panel (see Figure 7), an unmarked exit, two blocked internal Postal Inspection Service doors, missing monthly fire extinguisher inspections, non-working dock lights, no signage posted around the facility stating that employee vehicles may be subject to search, trash and dirt on the lobby floor, dirty and scratched walls in the workroom, missing and damaged ceiling tiles, and dirty air vents in the workroom (see Figure 8), and dirty landscaping wall in front of the facility.

Figure 7. Blocked Electrical Panel



Source: OIG photo taken February 2, 2023.

Figure 8. Damaged and Stained Ceiling Tiles



Source: OIG photo taken February 2, 2023.

Why Did It Occur

Management did not take the necessary actions to ensure that property conditions were corrected because other duties, such as addressing customer inquiries and getting the mail out for delivery each day, took priority. Furthermore, management indicated that they were not aware of the safety hazards at their units. Specifically:

- Management at the Allapattah Station did not provide adequate oversight to verify property conditions issues were corrected timely. Management allowed the parking lot landscaping to become overgrown. The local police department brought the issue to management's attention two weeks prior to our visit, but the issue remained unresolved during our site visit. Management stated that they were not aware of the loose electrical outlet or the cracked tiles in the lobby. Management had ordered and received the ceiling tiles on the workroom floor and was trying to obtain a scissor lift to install them.
- Management at the Flagler Station stated that they were unaware of some of the issues and were more focused on delivering mail.
- Management at the Princeton Branch did not take the necessary actions to verify that facility conditions issues were corrected because they were unaware of some issues, such as the dirty lobby floor, and unaware of some requirements, such as employee parking lot signage. Also, unit management stated they were waiting for the completion of the building addition, which will allow them to clear space in the delivery unit to perform repairs. Further, the unit had been without a custodian for the two weeks prior to our visit.

What Should Have Happened

Management should have provided sufficient oversight of personnel responsible for maintaining facilities, reported safety and maintenance issues as they arose, and followed up for completion. The Postal Service is required to maintain a safe environment for employees and customers. In addition, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires employers to provide a safe and healthy workplace free of recognized hazards.²⁶

²⁶ OSHA Act of 1970 and Handbook EL-801, *Supervisor's Safety Handbook*.

Effect on the Postal Service and its Customers

Management's attention to maintenance, safety, and security deficiencies can reduce the risk of injuries to employees and customers; reduce related costs, such as workers' compensation claims, lawsuits, and OSHA penalties; and enhance the customer experience and Postal Service brand.

Management Actions

During our audit, management addressed all the issues we identified at the Allapattah and Flagler Stations by providing support for the corrective action or an approved work order for the repair. For the Princeton Branch, management addressed all issues except for the non-working dock lights, the landscaping in front of the building, and the missing ceiling tiles. Management stated they will address the remaining issues upon completion of the new addition to the building.

Recommendation #8

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District**, address all outstanding building safety, security and maintenance issues identified at the Princeton Branch.

Management's Comments

Management agreed with the findings and recommendations in the report. See [Appendix A](#) for management's comments in their entirety.

Regarding recommendation 1, management stated that they ordered and received replacement arrow keys that will sufficiently cover all routes at the Flagler Station. A copy of the requisition and key log will be provided to close this recommendation. Management's target implementation date is June 30, 2023.

Regarding recommendation 2, management stated that they will follow the established standard operating procedure to ensure committed mail is delivered daily. Unit management will conduct a daily sweep and use the revelation log to track and document compliance. Management's target implementation date is June 16, 2023.

Regarding recommendation 3, management stated that station managers will conduct daily floor sweeps and review DCV to ensure any delayed or curtailed mail is recorded in the system and document the revelation log. Management's target implementation date is June 16, 2023.

Regarding recommendation 4, district management stated that management at all four stations have been retrained on standard operating procedure for properly scanning and handling packages. In addition, management will conduct daily reviews to ensure compliance and record issues on the revelation log and take appropriate corrective action when applicable. Management's target implementation date is June 16, 2023.

Regarding recommendation 5, management stated that they have retrained applicable personnel on the standard operating procedures for scanning and recording trip arrival times. In addition, management will review surface visibility scans daily and will record any issues on the revelation log. They will address any non-compliance immediately. Management's target implementation date is June 16, 2023.

Regarding recommendation 6, management stated that they have retrained employees on the standard operating procedure for arrow key management including updating key logs, reporting missing arrow keys to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and ensuring arrow keys are verified and secured daily. Training records were provided to close this recommendation upon issuance of the final report.

Regarding recommendation 7, management stated that the Manager of Post Office Operations, Manager of Customer Service Operations, or Postmaster will periodically review arrow keys to verify they are properly logged and accounted for at the Flagler Station and Princeton Branch. Management's target implementation date is August 31, 2023.

Regarding recommendation 8, management stated the remaining three property conditions will be addressed upon completion of the new building addition. Management's target implementation date is January 31, 2024.

Evaluation of Management's Comments

The OIG considers management's comments responsive to the recommendations in the report.

Recommendations 1,2,3,4,5,7, and 8 require OIG concurrence before closure. Consequently, the OIG requests written confirmation when corrective actions are completed. Recommendations 1,2,3,4,5,7, and 8 should not be closed in the Postal Service's follow-up tracking system until the OIG provides written confirmation that the recommendations can be closed. We consider recommendation 6 closed upon issuance of this report.

Appendix A: Management's Comments



May 5, 2023

JOHN CIHOTA
DIRECTOR, AUDIT OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: Management Response - Mail Delivery, Customer Service, and Property Condition Review - Select Units, Florida 3 District (23-050-DRAFT)

Thank you for providing the Postal Service with an opportunity to review and comment on the findings and recommendations contained in the draft audit report, *Mail Delivery, Customer Service, and Property Condition Review - Select Units, Florida 3 District*.

Recommendation 1:

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District**, verify that the Flagler Station obtains enough arrow keys for all carrier routes that need them for delivery.

Management Response/Action Plan:

Management agrees with this recommendation. Management ordered and received replacement arrow keys sufficient to cover all routes at the Flagler Station. A copy of the requisition and key log will be provided to close this recommendation with issuance of the final report.

Target Implementation Date: 06/30/2023

Responsible Official: Manager, Customer Service (Flagler Station)

Recommendation 2:

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District**, develop and execute a plan so that all committed mail is delivered daily, and that management conduct a daily sweep to identify delayed mail at the Allapattah Station, Doral Branch, Flagler Station, and Princeton Branch.

Management Response/Action Plan:

Management agrees with this recommendation. Management will follow the established standard operating procedure to ensure committed mail is delivered daily. Unit management conducts a daily sweep and uses the revelation log to track and document compliance.

Target Implementation Date: 06/16/2023

Responsible Official: Postmaster, Miami and Manager Post Office Operations

Recommendation 3:

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District**, develop and execute a plan that requires all delayed mail volume be entered into the proper system and that management systematically enforce reporting compliance at the Allapattah Station, Doral Branch, Flagler Station, and Princeton Branch.

Management Response/Action Plan:

Management agrees with this recommendation. Station managers conduct daily floor sweeps, and review DCV to ensure any delayed or curtailed mail is recorded in the system and documented on the revelation log.

Target Implementation Date: 06/16/2023

Responsible Official: Postmaster, Miami, and Manager Post Office Operations

Recommendation 4:

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District**, require unit management to review package scanning performance data daily and enforce compliance at the Allapattah Station, Doral Branch, Flagler Station, and Princeton Branch.

Management Response/Action Plan:

Management agrees with this recommendation. Management at all four stations have been retrained on standard operating procedure for properly scanning and handling packages. Management will conduct daily reviews to ensure compliance and record issues on revelation log. Appropriate corrective action will be taken as applicable.

Target Implementation Date: 06/16/2023

Responsible Official: Postmaster, Miami, and Manager Post Office Operations

Recommendation 5:

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District**, develop and execute a plan that requires management to review truck/trailer arrival scanning performance data daily and enforce compliance at the Allapattah Station, Doral Branch, Flagler Station, and Princeton Branch.

Management Response/Action Plan:

Management agrees with this recommendation. Management has retrained applicable personnel on the standard operating procedure for scanning and recording trip arrival times. Management reviews SV scans daily, records on revelation log and addresses non-compliance immediately.

Target Implementation Date: 06/16/2023

Responsible Official: Postmaster, Miami, and Manager Post Office Operations

Recommendation 6:

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District**, develop and execute a training plan that instructs management on the proper arrow key inventory procedures at the Flagler Station.

Management Response/Action Plan:

Management agrees with this recommendation. Management has retrained employees on the standard operating procedure for Arrow Key management including updating key logs, reporting missing arrow keys to the US Postal Inspection Service, and ensuring arrow keys are verified and secured daily. Training records are provided to close this recommendation with issuance of the final report.

Target Implementation Date: 06/16/2023

Responsible Official: Manager, Customer Service (Flagler Station)

Recommendation 7:

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District**, establish a schedule to periodically review arrow keys to verify they are properly logged and accounted for at the Flagler Station and Princeton Branch.

Management Response/Action Plan:

Management agrees with this recommendation. The MPOO, MCSO or Postmaster will periodically review arrow key logs during site visits at Flagler Station and Princeton Branch.

Target Implementation Date: 08/31/2023

Responsible Official: Management Post Office Operations, Postmaster, Manager, Customer Service Operations

Recommendation 8:

We recommend the **District Manager, Florida 3 District**, address all outstanding building safety, security and maintenance issues identified at the Princeton Branch.

Management Response/Action Plan:

Management agrees with this recommendation. As stated in the draft report, the remaining three property conditions will be addressed upon completion of the new building addition.

Target Implementation Date: 01/31/2024

Responsible Official: Manager, Post Office Operations

E-SIGNED by Michael.V Vecchitto
on 2023-05-05 07:23:52 CDT

Michael Vecchitto
District Manager, Florida 3 District

cc: *Acting Vice President, Area Retail & Delivery Operations (Southern)
Manager, Corporate Audit Response Management*

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

UNITED STATES



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