



AUDIT REPORT

Mail Delivery Issues – Barrington Station, Los Angeles, CA

March 6, 2019

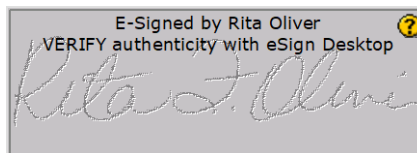


Report Number DR-AR-19-004



March 6, 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR: KEN A. SNAVELY
DISTRICT MANAGER, LOS ANGELES DISTRICT

An e-signature block showing a handwritten signature "Rita F. Oliver" in blue ink. Above the signature, it says "E-Signed by Rita Oliver" and "VERIFY authenticity with eSign Desktop" with a yellow question mark icon.

FROM: Rita F. Oliver
Director, Delivery, Retail & Vehicle Operations

SUBJECT: Audit Report – Mail Delivery Issues – Barrington Station, Los Angeles, CA (Report Number DR-AR-19-004)

This report presents the results of our audit of mail delivery issues at the Barrington Station, Los Angeles, CA (Project Number 19RG006DR000).

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

Attachment

cc: Corporate Audit and Response Management
Kevin L. McAdams
Larry P. Munoz

Background

This report presents the results of our audit to assess mail delivery on selected routes at the Barrington Station, Los Angeles, CA (Project Number 19RG006DR000). The Barrington Station is in Los Angeles, CA in the Los Angeles District of the Pacific Area. We conducted the audit to provide U.S. Postal Service management with timely information on potential operational risks at the Barrington Station. See [Appendix A](#) for more information about this audit.

The Barrington Station has 87 city routes and 133 carriers. We selected the Barrington Station to review because it had 2,931 customer cases in the Enterprise Customer Care (eCC) application during fiscal year (FY) 2018. Over 90 percent of the customer complaints related to mail and packages not received and delivered to the wrong address (see [Table 1](#)). Additionally, we reviewed other delivery metrics, such as Carriers Returning After 1800, Overtime and Penalty Overtime Performance and staffing when selecting this site.

Finding # 1: Mail Delivery Service Issues

Our audit results indicated misdeliveries, no deliveries and improper stop-the-clock scan¹ events occurred on selected routes at the Barrington Station. The Barrington Station had 2,931 eCC contact records during FY 2018. As shown in [Table 1](#), 74 percent of the complaints related to “Where is My Package.”

Table 1. Barrington eCC Cases in FY 2018

Where is My Package	% Where is My Package	Where is My Mail	% Where is My Mail	Other	% Other	Total Cases
2,169	74%	512	17%	250	9%	2,931

Source: Application System Reporting (ASR).

We analyzed the 2,169 “Where Is My Package” eCC cases and identified 578 (27 percent) cases indicated the package was “irretrievably lost.” Of these 578 “irretrievably lost” packages, 408 (71 percent) had a stop-the-clock scan of “Delivered.” In addition, our observations showed that Barrington Station employees did not always follow prescribed scanning policies on routes. The U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) identified 12 packages in the “Left Notice” area at the station, which showed 5 of 12 packages had a stop-the-clock scan of “Delivered” while they were awaiting pick up² or were eligible to be re-delivered to the customer. Carriers at

¹ When a carrier attempts to deliver a package at the delivery location, it gets a stop-the-clock scan, indicating the Postal Service has completed its commitment to deliver or attempt to deliver the package.

² *Delivery and Retail Standardization*, Tab 3, Section 5, *Scanning Reference Guide* states that the final delivery scan cannot be made until the piece is delivered or returned to sender.

the station indicated they have scanned packages as “Delivered” prior to arrival at the delivery point.

We determined that mail delivery service issues occurred because supervisors did not always provide adequate oversight of delivery routes to identify and correct mail service issues. Specifically, delivery supervisors were not reviewing eCC cases to identify ongoing delivery service issues on multiple routes in order to correct these issues and set performance expectations for carriers. Carriers informed the OIG that they rarely, if ever, were counseled by supervisors about improper scans identified in eCC complaint cases. Our analysis showed that 10 of the unit’s 87 routes accounted for about 25 percent of the total eCC cases for FY 2018. See [Table 2](#) below.

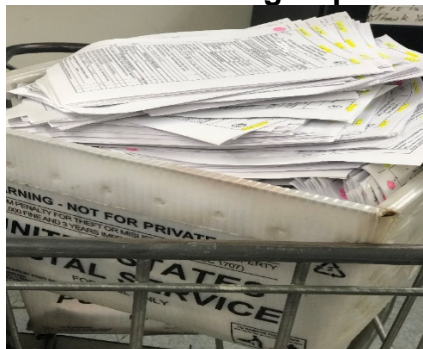
Table 2. eCC Cases Per Route

Zip Code and Route Number	Number of eCC Cases	Percentage of eCC Cases
90024-C007	111	3.79%
90024-C093	105	3.58%
90024-C092	72	2.46%
90049-C015	68	2.32%
90024-C001	64	2.18%
90049-C028	63	2.15%
90024-C023	62	2.12%
90024-C008	61	2.08%
90024-C089	59	2.01%
90049-C029	54	1.84%
Total %		24.53%

Source: OIG analysis of eCC data.

At the time of our visit, we also found eCC cases at the delivery unit dating back to August 2018, with no supervisory review or signature indicating resolution (see [Figure 1](#)).

Figure1. eCC Cases Awaiting Supervisory Review



Source: OIG Photograph taken on November 28, 2018.

The station manager indicated that supervisors were not directed to use this data as a tool to identify coaching opportunities for carrier engagement and setting expectations.

Many routes had multiple eCCs and opportunities for engaging carriers. The station manager added that four of the six delivery supervisors are currently in a Success Improvement Plan (SIP) targeted at improving their engagement with carriers and improving delivery service. However, the SIPs do not mention eCC case data as a source to identify delivery service issues.

According to Postal Service policies, supervisors are responsible for monitoring routes with multiple eCC cases³ and for setting daily expectations for carriers to improve performance on routes.⁴

Ensuring carriers are aware of policies and managing delivery operations can improve mail delivery service on routes and ultimately increase customer satisfaction and enhance the customer experience.

<p>Recommendation #1: We recommend the Manager, Los Angeles District, develop a plan to ensure timely supervisory review and approval of eCC cases and use of the information, as appropriate, to improve unit operations.</p>

Finding # 2: Late Mail Arrival

Mail arrived consistently late at Barrington Station. The OIG analysis of the Distribution Up Time (DUT) shows that between October 25 and November 24, 2018, the station's DUT of 8:30 a.m. was not met. The DUT indicates the time that clerks have completed sortation to distribute mail to each delivery route. Carriers must wait for the DUT to be completed to retrieve the remainder of mail and packages to be delivered on their routes. The average delay for this time was one hour and twelve minutes, see [Table 3](#).

³ eCC Leader Standard Work, 08-16-2018.

⁴ Handbook M-39, *Management of Delivery Services*, Section 115.3, Obligation to Employees.

Table 3. Distribution Up Time at Barrington Station

Date	Scheduled Distribution Up Time	Actual Distribution Up Time	Variance
10/25/2018	08:30	09:29	+00:59
10/26/2018	08:30	09:20	+00:50
10/27/2018	08:30	09:31	+01:01
10/29/2018	08:30	09:18	+00:48
10/30/2018	08:30	09:20	+00:50
10/31/2018	08:30	09:30	+01:00
11/1/2018	08:30	09:53	+01:23
11/2/2018	08:30	09:52	+01:22
11/3/2018	08:30	12:43	+04:13
11/5/2018	08:30	09:10	+00:40
11/6/2018	08:30	09:30	+01:00
11/7/2018	08:30	09:36	+01:06
11/8/2018	08:30	09:28	+00:58
11/9/2018	08:30	09:17	+00:47
11/10/2018	08:30	09:39	+01:09
11/13/2018	08:30	09:17	+00:47
11/14/2018	08:30	09:43	+01:13
11/15/2018	08:30	09:27	+00:57
11/16/2018	08:30	09:38	+01:08
11/17/2018	08:30	09:56	+01:26
11/19/2018	08:30	09:45	+01:15
11/20/2018	08:30	10:01	+01:31
11/21/2018	08:30	09:28	+00:58
11/23/2018	08:30	09:28	+00:58
11/24/2018	08:30	10:33	+02:03
Average Variance			+01:12

Source: OIG analysis of Scan Point Management System.

Station Management stated that after carriers leave the station to begin mail deliveries, management frequently instructs them to either meet at a designated location or return to the station to obtain more mail that arrived late to the station. Carriers returning to the office or deviating from their routes to obtain more mail to deliver can add delays and result in carriers using more than the daily time allotted for delivery on routes.

Barrington Station did not have an updated and signed Integrated Operating Plan (IOP) showing agreed upon arrival times and the mail mix for the station. The Postal Service designed Mail Arrival Profiles (MAP) to help stabilize mail flow by setting delivery unit and processing facilities' expectations for the arrival and quality of mail.⁵ The IOP is a contract between the mail processing plant and the delivery unit. A signed copy must be

⁵ *Staffing and Scheduling Tool, Function 4 Applications User Guide*, Section 3.1-3.2, November 2012, version 2.0.

on file in the delivery unit.⁶ This information is critical to establishing appropriate staffing and reporting times to eliminate carrier delays. District management stated they were aware of the late mail arrivals at Barrington Station from the Los Angeles Processing & Distribution Center. Management attributed the late mail arrival to a high turnover in the plant manager position - three plant managers in the past year. An updated and signed IOP would ensure consistency during any personnel changes.

When carriers are delayed by late mail arrival or expending time retrieving additional mail for delivery, the customer can experience inefficient and untimely mail delivery.

Recommendation #2: We recommend the **Manager, Los Angeles District** update Mail Arrival Profile and the Integrated Operating Plan for Barrington Station and the Los Angeles Processing and Distribution Center to reflect accurate mail arrival times and mail mix.

Management's Comments

Management agreed with the findings and recommendations.

In response to recommendation 1, management agreed with the need to develop a plan to ensure timely supervisory review and approval of eCC cases and the use of the information, as appropriate, to improve unit operations. Management stated eCC cases that cannot be resolved by the eCC advocate will be forwarded to the Supervisor, Customer Service(SCS) and/or Manager, Customer Service (MCS) for resolution. Additionally, copies of all eCC issues will be forwarded to the SCS to share with carriers daily and route logs will be reviewed by the MCS to address any issues. Management also stated they will ensure the SCS will share eCC issues with carriers, that carriers receive additional training on scanning, and that late carrier performance is reported to the MCS. Finally, management stated the District Marketing Team will conduct monthly audits to ensure these procedures are being followed.

Management's target implementation date is March 29, 2019.

In response to recommendation 2, management agreed with the need to update the MAP and the IOP for Barrington Station and the Los Angeles Processing and Distribution Center to reflect accurate mail arrival times and mail mix. Management stated the Los Angeles Senior Management Team will formulate an IOP Plan and MAP agreement that will provide the correct mail mix and arrival times that allow Barrington Station to meet their Distribution Up Times and that variances will be reported and addressed at the daily Mail Arrival Quality meeting.

Management's target implementation date is March 29, 2019.

⁶ Field Operations Standardization Development, Morning Standard Operating Procedures II Guidebook, Section 2.2, 2007

See [Appendix B](#) for management's comments in their entirety.

Evaluation of Management's Comments

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

All recommendations require OIG concurrence before closure. Consequently, the OIG requests written confirmation when corrective actions are completed. All recommendations 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.

Appendix A: Additional Information

Scope and Methodology

Our objective is to assess mail delivery on selected routes at Barrington Station, Los Angeles, CA.

To accomplish our objective, we:

- Analyzed eCC case data to assess mail delivery of selected routes servicing the Barrington Station.
- Evaluated the process completed by delivery personnel in response to eCC cases.
- Interviewed carriers and management on delivery processes at Barrington Station.
- Obtained and analyzed distribution up time data from the Scan Point Management System.
- Interviewed Los Angeles District personnel on delivery operations in the district and at Barrington Station.
- Obtained and analyzed complement data from WebCoins.

We assessed the reliability of eCC data by conducting data reliability testing for accuracy and validity. We determined the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

We conducted this audit from November 2018 through March 2019, in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. 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 objective. We discussed our observations and conclusions with management on February 7, 2019, and included their comments where appropriate.

Appendix B: Management's Comments

DISTRICT MANAGER
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT



March 1, 2019

Lazerick Poland
Acting Director, Audit Operations

SUBJECT: Mail Delivery Issues – Barrington Station, Los Angeles, CA
(Report Number DR-AR-19-DRAFT)

Management has reviewed the results of the Mail Delivery Issues Audit at the Los Angeles, Barrington Post Office and concur that there is an opportunity for improvement of delivery route oversight to identify and correct mail service issues.

Recommendation #1:

The Manager, Los Angeles District, develop a plan to ensure timely supervisory review and approval of eCC cases and use of the information, as appropriate, to improve unit operations.

Management Response/Action Plan:

Management agrees with the Findings and Recommendation.

To improve eCC (Enterprise Customer Care) and "Where is my Package" Performance at Barrington Post Office, all eCC cases that cannot be resolved by the eCC advocate will be forwarded to the Supervisor, Customer Service (SCS) and/or Manager, Customer Service (MCS) for resolution. The MCS will call at least one customer with an eCC issue daily. In addition, copies of all eCC issues will be forwarded to the SCS to share with carriers, daily and route logs will be reviewed by the MCS to address any issues.

Supervisor, Customer Service will conduct a daily Meet and Greet to guarantee all parcels were delivered and to share misdelivery eCC issues with the carriers. Carriers will receive additional training to certify scanning tools are being used properly and parcels are scanned correctly. An all clear will be sent to the Manager Customer Service Operations - CSO Area 3 each evening with a daily cadence on late carrier performance.

The District Marketing Team will also conduct monthly audits to ensure the unit is in compliance and properly following outlined procedures.

DISTRICT MANAGER
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT

Target Implementation Date:

March 2019

Responsible Official:

Manager Customer Service – Barrington Post Office
Manager Customer Service Operations - CSO Area 3
District Marketing Manager

Recommendation #2:

We recommend the Manager, Los Angeles District update Mail Arrival Profile and the Integrated Operating Plan for Barrington Station and the Los Angeles Processing and Distribution Center to reflect accurate mail arrival times and mail mix.

Management Response/Action Plan:

Management agrees with the Findings and Recommendation.

The Los Angeles Senior Management Team will formulate an Integrated Operating Plan and Mail Arrival Profile agreement that will provide the correct mail mix and arrival times that allow the Barrington Post Station to meet their Distribution Up Times.

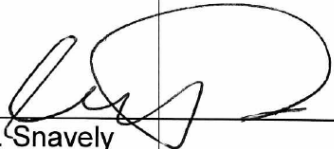
All variances will be reported and addressed at the daily Mail Arrival Quality meeting.

Target Implementation Date:

March 2019

Responsible Official:

Manager Customer Service Operations - CSO Area 3
Senior Manager Mail Distribution Operations
Manager Transportation, Los Angeles P&DC
Manger, In-Plant Support, Los Angeles P&DC



Ken A. Snavely
District Manager
Los Angeles District

cc: Kevin L. McAdams, VP Delivery Operations
Larry P. Munoz, Pacific Area Vice President
Sally K. Haring, Manager Corporate Audit and Response Management
Ken Lucas, Manager Accounting Pacific Area
Joe Zapata, Postmaster, Los Angeles