



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS

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July Consultative Meeting Agenda via ZOOM July 8, 2020

US Postal Service Headquarters

Bruce Nicholson, USPS Labor Relations
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National Association of Postal Supervisors

Brian Wagner, NAPS President
Ivan Butts, NAPS Executive VP
Chuck Mulidore, NAPS Secretary Treasurer
Tim Ford, NAPS Chairman of the Board

0720-01

NAPS has received the following concerns in regards to delivery operations from various NAPS Executive Board members, as well as various articles posted in The Washington Post and on Comondreams.org, Business Insider, Postaltimes.com, and others.

- EAS have been instructed to delay 1st class mail to meet transportation leave times in plants.
- EAS have been instructed in the field to delay mail to avoid usage of penalty overtime.
- EAS have been instructed in the field to leave outgoing mail at local offices if a truck “bulks out” to avoid late or extra trips.
- EAS have been instructed in the field to non-deliver 1st class mail and Priority mail to avoid the usage of penalty OT.
- EAS have been instructed to have minimal or no SDO usage to cover vacant assignments.
- EAS potentially having to pay for late trips (see attached)
- EAS have been instructed to deliver mail.
- EAS have been instructed to work the window to cover vacancies.
- There is no pre-tour OT in plants or customer service units. Therefore, it is acceptable to delay mail and parcels.

NAPS is concerned that these directives are being put out verbally by USPS leadership, which by doing so, has affixed no accountability to what could become numerous contractual and procedural violations.

NAPS is concerned that these actions will lead to grievances, union payouts, poor TOE, and impacts to NPA.

NAPS is also concerned that these directives will lead to an increase in JSOWV complaints filed under the documented NALC strategy for removing EAS from supervisory positions for adhering to verbal instructions such as these noted above.

NAPS is concerned that no one at the local level is willing to put these national directives in writing. NAPS is also concerned that EAS delaying mail and recording non-deliveries will subject them to disciplinary actions for following these verbal instructions.

NAPS is requesting in writing these directives that are being coordinatively verbalized across the USPS.

Response: These directives were not given by headquarters. The emphasis from headquarters is focusing on the reduction of the additional transportation trips. Another point of emphasis from headquarters is the amount of overtime that is paid and the reasons for it. There has been no communication on elimination of overtime but to be aware of what one is spending and exercising caution in approving overtime because of the Postal Service's financial situation.

Encouragement has been given on getting carriers out of the office on time and returning on time. These are simple management tactics that have always been done but now there is a greater focus on it to conserve cash. The intent is to balance these initiatives while meeting service standards.

Spending millions on extra transportation trips as well as spending unnecessary overtime when it's not required are poor management practices and attention to it will help the Postal Service to control costs and improve performance.

The pandemic has created its challenges with staffing and we continue to monitor those situations. Organizational changes are being prepared and NAPS will be notified in advance of announcement of those changes and we will work with NAPS throughout implementation.

NAPS Updated Response: After this consultative was held, PMG DeJoy testified to two congressional committees in August on the delay of mail. During the PMG's testimony, he confirmed it was his policy to ensure all trips leave on time, ultimately resulting in service declines that he claims should not have happened. NAPS believes that the initiatives mentioned in this consultative item were initiated by Postal Headquarters. NAPS cannot fully accept the USPS response on this agenda item.

0720-02

NAPS HQ received a safety issue from Kevin Trayer, NAPS Michiana Area Vice President. Due to the COVID pandemic, EAS (NAPS members) in the Greater Michigan District are being instructed to conduct and complete rural route inspections (PS 4248's) by following the respective rural carrier's vehicle along the route while conducting the route inspection audit by following the carrier in a separate postal vehicle.

Per Mr. Trayer, NAPS members have expressed concern that conducting such rural route inspection audits via a separate postal vehicle is a safety issue related to distracted driving because the EAS employee must operate a vehicle at the same they are taking inspection notes and entering route inspection information in an electronic device while driving the vehicle. The members also claim this is also an OSHA violation. NAPS is requesting an official USPS HQ response to the following:

- Is driving a separate postal vehicle, while following another postal vehicle, in the performance of a city (PS Form 3999) or rural (PS Form 4248) route inspection audit deemed unsafe per USPS policy?
- Is driving a separate postal vehicle, while following another postal vehicle, in the performance of a city (PS Form 3999) or rural (PS Form 4248) route inspection audit deemed a violation of OSHA safety guidelines?

Response: Conducting these observations are not unsafe and not deemed a violation of OSHA guidelines. Conducting these observations in this manner is a standard practice and not anything new.

There may be limited situations when following behind a carrier could create challenges in efficiency and we are not asking employees to compromise safety for efficiency. The expectation is that the observations should be performed safely.

Electronic devices can be utilized for recording purposes when safe to do so. Electronic devices also give the observer an opportunity to set an audible recording to be taken throughout the observation. Standard Work Instructions (SWI) have been created for conducting rural route inspections. The SWIs will be emphasized in offices with recently promoted supervisors and training provided, when needed.

NAPS Updated Response: NAPS continues to consider this as distracted driving which is not permitted in most states. Further, the reason these observations were suspended in March and April 2020 was due to the onset of the pandemic, which has not abated at this time. This policy change should be revisited, and the suspension of these observations continued until such time as the global pandemic abates.

0720-03

The Postal Service has recently demonstrated the extreme importance of conducting route inspections by resuming this process during the current COVID-19 world pandemic.

The physical process covers about eight months out of the year. However, some EAS continuously work on this detail assignment for the entire year. There are also numbers of EAS that are Involuntarily Reassigned to walk teams, presumably due to there being no willing EAS volunteers.

NAPS is requesting that the position of Route Inspector be made permanent positions. NAPS contents that most of these EAS never go back to the office that they belong to. The creation of a permanent job would open up vacate (due to detail) positions. This action would also reduce the cost of having EAS detail year-round, paying to put the EAS up in hotels and paying per diem for doing details and or jobs nobody wants.

Any detail assignment that exceeds one year requires approval from an Area Vice President. If this is occurring, it should be discussed locally.

The route examiner position was eliminated in 2011. It was determined that the position was not needed throughout the year. Temporary assignments are established to support route inspections, if needed. EAS annuitants can also be utilized for this purpose.

Rural route inspections are conducted at a specific time during the year and a permanent route inspector would not resolve a need for additional examiners during a national rural count or city route inspections in an entire office.

We recommend further development of a proposal by NAPS on this position and the expected duties and responsibilities of the position.

0720-04

NAPS is concerned with sending either terminal leave or settlement checks for retired members.

It appears that the policy for making such payments involves the processing of the invoice at Eagan, and the check is sent to the last or current duty station.

NAPS requests that when the USPS is sending a check to a retired or separated employee for a settlement, terminal leave, or any other situation that the check is required, the payment be sent to that person's current or last known mailing address as shown in USPS records.

Response: Administration of a terminal leave check was modified in 2019 and is transferred electronically to an individual's account by direct deposit. Individuals are notified of this when completing retirement paperwork.

Individual's that choose not to have direct deposit, should notify their prior duty station of their address as well as any changes so a check can be forwarded to the individual. The Postal Service database does not keep a record of employee addresses after separation.

Changes to this process could require up to \$50k in costs and notification to all employee organizations. A new process would still require individuals to update their address after each move.