



# AUDIT REPORT

## Mail Delivery Issues – Ypsilanti Main Post Office, Ypsilanti, MI

September 11, 2019



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Report Number DRT-AR-19-020



September 11, 2019

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** KARLETT E. GILBERT  
MANAGER, DETROIT DISTRICT

E-Signed by Hilderbrand, Sherry  
VERIFY authenticity with eSign Desktop  
*Sherry A. Hilderbrand*

**FROM:** Sherry A. Hilderbrand  
Director, Delivery and Retail Response Team

**SUBJECT:** Audit Report – Mail Delivery Issues –Ypsilanti Main Post  
Office, Ypsilanti, MI (Report Number DRT-AR-19-020)

This report presents the results of our audit of Mail Delivery Issues at the Ypsilanti Main Post Office, Ypsilanti, MI (Project Number 19RG031DRT000).

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesies provided by your staff. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Byron Bustos, Operations Manager, at [bbustos@uspsog.gov](mailto:bbustos@uspsog.gov), or me at 703-248-2100.

Attachment

cc: Corporate Audit and Response Management  
Vice President, Delivery and Retail Operations  
Vice President, Area Operations

## Background

This report presents the results of our audit of Mail Delivery Issues – Ypsilanti Main Post Office (MPO), Ypsilanti, MI (Project Number 19RG031DRT000). The Ypsilanti MPO is in the Detroit District in the Great Lakes Area. We conducted this audit in response to concerns related to delayed mail and package scanning raised by U.S. Representative Debbie Dingell, 12<sup>th</sup> District, Detroit, MI. Other concerns were directed to our Office of Investigations, as appropriate.

The Ypsilanti MPO has 44 city routes, 24 rural routes, and one contract delivery service route delivered by 104 carriers (47 full-time regular city carriers, 11 city carrier assistants, 26 regular rural carriers, three part-time flexible rural carriers, and 17 rural carrier associates). During fiscal year (FY) 2018, the Ypsilanti MPO did not have any instances of mail reported as delayed and had two instances of mail reported as curtailed.<sup>1</sup> The Ypsilanti MPO processed over 3.5 million mailpieces during FY 2018. During April, May, and June of 2019, there was one instance of delayed mail and eight instances of curtailed mail reported in the Customer Services Daily Reporting System.

## Objective, Scope, and Methodology

Our objective was to evaluate the curtailed/delayed mail and package delivery scanning at the Ypsilanti MPO in Ypsilanti, MI.

To accomplish our objective, we reviewed delivery metrics including the number of routes and carriers, delayed mail, package scanning procedures, and package scans. We used geolocation data to identify scans<sup>2</sup> that occurred at the delivery unit instead of the intended delivery address. During our site visit on July 16-17, 2019, we reviewed station security, Post Office Box and retail lobby conditions, and mail conditions; and interviewed unit management and employees. We also analyzed the scan status of mailpieces at the carrier cases and in the Notice Left area of the facility.

We relied on computer-generated data from the Product Tracking and Reporting system.<sup>3</sup> We did not test the validity of controls over this system; however, we verified the accuracy of the data by performing various tests and using reasonableness assertions. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

We conducted this audit from July through August 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 discussed our

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<sup>1</sup> All mail that remains at a reporting unit after the carriers have left the office to begin their street duties is either curtailed or delayed and must be reported in the Customer Services Daily Reporting System .

<sup>2</sup> A stop-the-clock scan indicates that the Postal Service has completed its commitment to deliver or attempt to deliver the package.

<sup>3</sup> The Product Tracking and Reporting System contains general information, search tools, label entry applications, and reports related to package and extra services tracking.

observations and conclusions with management on August 22, 2019 and included their comments where appropriate.

### **Finding # 1: Package Scanning and Delivery Access Issues**

The Detroit District and Ypsilanti MPO management stated that they have made improvements in delivery operations and package scanning since January 2019. The district reported recent changes and initiatives including new management at the unit, consistent managerial oversight, ongoing communication with elected officials, and establishment of a community advisory board to address and resolve concerns.

During our visit on July 16-17, 2019 and in subsequent analysis, we did not observe any delayed or curtailed mail; however, we identified deficiencies in package scanning, delivery access, and securing stamp stock. By improving package scanning and delivery access issues, management can improve mail visibility, increase customer satisfaction, and enhance the customer experience and Postal Service brand.

#### **Package Scanning**

We determined that unit employees were improperly scanning packages at the unit and not following package scanning and handling policies. The unit had an increase in package scans at the delivery unit between November 2018 and May 2019 (see Table 1). The scans occurred on multiple routes and were intended for multiple delivery addresses throughout the timeframe. Scanning at the delivery unit does not reflect accurate location information which customers rely on to track their shipment in real time.

**Table 1. Scans at Delivery Unit**

November 2018	December 2018	January 2019	February 2019	March 2019	April 2019	May 2019	Total
72	45	289	379	221	207	233	1,446

Source: U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) analysis of scan data from the Product Tracking and Reporting (PTR) system.

The unit has a process in place to identify potential missed scans at the end of the day and enter package scans at the unit if the scans were missed on the street. When carriers return from the street, they are required to check in with the supervisor to review their route scan data on Product Tracking and Reporting and the *End of Day* report.<sup>4</sup> If the carrier's route shows a missed package scan, they manually input the item as delivered if they recall delivering the package and are sent back out to deliver

<sup>4</sup> Provides the user with a list of "at risk" mailpieces. It is designed to use as a tool in identifying pieces with an Arrival at Unit scan event but no Stop-the-Clock event.

the package if they still have it. If they do not recall the package, nothing is done, and it remains on the report. Postal Service guidelines<sup>5</sup> state that the reports are for information only and should not be used as a reason to enter missed scans. We also judgmentally selected 34 packages that were at the unit before the carriers arrived for the day to review the scanning and tracking data. Of the 34 packages we identified, 18 were at the carrier cases and 16 were in the Notice Left area. We determined that there were no significant issues with the items in the Notice Left area; however, 13 of the 18 packages at the carrier cases were missing a scan or had improper scans. Specifically, six packages were scanned as “No Access” at points other than the delivery address, two packages were scanned as “Delivered,” and five packages did not have a stop-the-clock scan.

This condition occurred because local management did not adequately enforce scanning procedures. Customers rely on accurate scan data to track their packages in real time. The Postal Service’s goal is to ensure mail is delivered to the correct address with proper service,<sup>6</sup> which includes scanning every mailpiece at the point of delivery,<sup>7</sup> ensuring 100 percent visibility throughout the process.<sup>8</sup>

### Delivery Access Issues

We identified 35 routes with a total of 152 [REDACTED] to access buildings rather than using a postal-approved access method. Postal policy states that carriers are prohibited from accepting [REDACTED] on non-postal mail receptacles, buildings, or offices. Acceptable methods of building access include an [REDACTED] must incorporate an [REDACTED].<sup>10</sup>

In addition to access issues, [REDACTED] is a time-consuming task, especially when the route is delivered by a substitute carrier. See [Figure 1](#) for an example of [REDACTED] for one route. This condition occurred because management did not enforce policy for delivery access and coordinate with residential building owners or managers. As a result, carriers did not always have access to buildings and scanned packages as “no access” when they were unable to gain access to buildings with multiple delivery points.

<sup>5</sup> Postal Service Product Tracking and Reporting system homepage.

<sup>6</sup> *Delivering a Positive Customer Experience - Delivery Done Right* stand-up talk.

<sup>7</sup> *Where Is My Package (WIMP) and Scanning*, February 2017.

<sup>8</sup> *Scanning at a Glance – Delivering 100 percent Visibility*, August 2011.

<sup>9</sup> [REDACTED]

<sup>10</sup> [REDACTED]

**Figure 1. Example of [REDACTED] Used by Carriers to Access Buildings**



Source: OIG photograph taken July 16, 2019 at Ypsilanti MPO.

**Recommendation #1:** We recommend the **Manager, Detroit District**, instruct the unit management to follow delivery standard operating procedures for scanning.

**Recommendation #2:** We recommend the **Manager, Detroit District**, coordinate with building owners or managers to comply with Postal Service access and mail receptacle policies.

## **Finding # 2 Unsecured Stamp Stock**

Employees did not always properly secure and lock stamp stock. Specifically, during our site visit on July 16, 2019, we observed stamp stock valued at \$2,277 in an unlocked drawer (see [Figure 2](#)). This condition occurred because neither the clerk nor evening supervisor followed established procedures that would have resulted in the stock being secured. Safeguarding controls<sup>11</sup> reduces the potential for loss or misappropriation of assets.

<sup>11</sup> Handbook PO-209, *Retail Operations* Section 6-5, Stock and Levels of Security.

**Figure 2. Unsecured Drawer Containing Stamp Stock**

Source: OIG photograph taken at the Ypsilanti MPO on July 16, 2019.

**Recommendation #3:** We recommend the Manager, Detroit District, instruct unit management to follow proper retail and closeout procedures to secure stamp stock.

### Management's Comments

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

Regarding recommendation 1, management will follow scanning standard operating procedures. Management has communicated the Standard Work Instruction for scanning to ensure compliance with proper scanning procedures. This was completed on September 4, 2019.

Regarding recommendation 2, management will identify the routes and addresses where [REDACTED] are being used and provide a letter of notification to the building owners/managers to enforce compliance. The target implementation date is September 30, 2019.

Regarding recommendation 3, management will follow proper retail and closeout procedures to secure stamp stock. Management has communicated the proper retail and closeout procedures and stamp stock security to prevent future lapses. This was completed on September 4, 2019.

## Evaluation of Management's Comments

The OIG considers management's comments responsive to the recommendations in the report. Recommendations 1 and 3 will be closed with the issuance of this report. Recommendation 2 requires OIG concurrence before closure. Consequently, the OIG requests written confirmation when corrective actions are completed. Recommendation 2 should not be closed in the Postal Service's follow-up tracking system until the OIG provides written confirmation that the recommendation can be closed.

## Appendix A. Management’s Comments

DISTRICT MANAGER  
DETROIT DISTRICT



09/05/2019

**LAZERICK POLAND**  
DIRECTOR, AUDIT OPERATIONS

**SUBJECT: Mail Delivery Issues – Ypsilanti Main Post Office, Ypsilanti, MI (Report Number DRT-AR-19-DRAFT)**

Detroit District Management agrees with the report and findings.

### Finding #1: Package Scanning and Delivery Access Issues

#### Package Scanning

**OIG determined that unit employees were improperly scanning packages at the unit and were not following package scanning and handling policies.**

#### Recommendation #1

Manager, Detroit District instruct the unit management to follow delivery standard operating procedures for scanning.

#### Management Response/Action Plan:

Management agrees with the recommendation.

Manager, Detroit District, Karlett Gilbert and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] on 09/04/2019 at 2:00 p.m. EST to provide recommended instruction. It was validated during discussion that the Postmaster is aware and has communicated the Standard Work Instruction for scanning. Standard Work Instructions AAU/ ADE and SPM Scanning was Issued on 7/23/18. (Attached)

**Implementation Date: 09/04/2019**

Responsible Official(s): Manager, Detroit District, Karlett Gilbert and [REDACTED]

#### Delivery Access Issues

**OIG identified 35 routes with a total of 152 [REDACTED] to access buildings rather than use a postal-approved access method.**

#### Recommendation #2

1401 W. FORT STREET  
DETROIT, MI 48233-9992  
(313) 226-8605  
FAX: (313) 226-8001



Manager, Detroit District, Karlett Gilbert and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] on 09/04/2019 at 2:00 p.m. EST to provide recommended instruction. It was validated during discussion that the Postmaster is aware and has communicated the proper retail and closeout procedures and security of stamp stock.

**Implementation Date: 09/04/2019**

Responsible Official(s): Manager, Detroit District, Karlett Gilbert and [REDACTED]



Karlett Gilbert  
District Manager  
Detroit District