



January 13, 2004

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MANAGER, CAPITAL METRO OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: Management Advisory – Vehicle Storage – Robert F. Kennedy Stadium,
Washington, D.C. (Report Number NL-MA-04-001)

This advisory confirms our verbal notification to Postal Service officials concerning conditions we observed at the Robert F. Kennedy Stadium (Project Number 03YR007TD000).

In July 2003, during unrelated audit work, we observed approximately 200 Postal Service vehicles stored at an unsecured Robert F. Kennedy Stadium parking lot in Washington, D.C. Our inspection of the stadium parking lot, and the vehicles stored there, identified safety and security concerns, evidence of vandalism and theft, and insufficient measures to prevent oil from leaking onto the asphalt surface. It is our practice to immediately advise management of significant observations we make, particularly if they involve safety, security, or environmental issues.

Our observations, subsequent inquiries, and review of relevant documents, suggested vehicles stored at the stadium created a potential danger to public safety, the environment, and the security of stored vehicles and equipment. The conditions existed because management did not fully consider safety, security, and environmental requirements. Throughout the course of our work, we verbally notified Capital Metro Area officials of our observations, and we recommended that management take immediate action. Management officials agreed with our recommendation and immediately took corrective action.

The Office of Inspector General considers recommendation 1 significant and closed because management's timely corrective actions resolved the identified issues. Consequently, the Postal Service can close the recommendation in their follow-up tracking system.

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesies provided by your staff. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Joe Oliva director, Network Operations and Logistics, at (703) 248-2100, or me at (703) 248-2300.

Mary W. Demory
Deputy Assistant Inspector General
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Attachment

cc: John A. Rapp
William P. Galligan
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INTRODUCTION

Background

The Postal Service Curseen-Morris Processing and Distribution Center is located in Washington, D.C. In June 2003, the Postal Service leased a nearby

Postal Service vehicles temporarily stored at a Robert F. Kennedy Stadium parking lot in Washington, D.C.



Robert F. Kennedy Stadium parking lot to temporarily store about 200 vehicles, while processing and distribution center vehicle storage areas were being repaved.

Objective, Scope, and Methodology

This management advisory confirms our verbal notification to Postal Service officials about conditions we observed

Vehicles were stored at the stadium while permanent storage areas were repaved.



at the stadium. We made these observations during unrelated work. We did not audit or comprehensively investigate the conditions we observed, but we noted

situations that suggested a potential threat to: (1) public safety; (2) the environment; (3) and the security of Postal Service vehicles and equipment. During our work, we inspected the site; identified all vehicles stored there; recorded vehicle identification numbers or other identifying information; photographed conditions; examined relevant policies and procedures; examined the parking lot lease; and recorded other factual information. Work associated with this advisory was conducted from July 2003 through January 2004. During our work we routinely notified Postal Service officials of conditions we observed, discussed our observations and recommendations with them, and documented their immediate response.

RESULTS

Public Safety, the Environment, and the Security of Postal Service Vehicles and Equipment

Conditions associated with vehicles stored at Robert F. Kennedy Stadium suggested a potential danger to public safety, the environment, and the security of the vehicles and equipment stored there. The conditions existed because officials did not fully consider policy governing safety, security, and environmental protection. For example: A letter from the Postal Service senior vice president, Operations, dated October 1, 2001, warned that because the Postal Service is a recognized and accepted presence

An open gate allowing free access to the parking lot. There were no security guards, cameras, or other surveillance devices.



throughout the nation, and enjoys high public trust, terrorist elements could take criminal advantage of Postal Service vehicles or equipment to gain unauthorized access to critical areas. Consequently, the senior vice president specified:

- Vehicles must be locked and secure at all times.
- Vehicle keys and government license plates must be secured at all times.
- Vehicle keys and government license plates must be inventoried every day.
- All plant managers, postmasters, and station managers must account for all vehicles, government license plates, and vehicle keys every day.
- When vehicles are stored at a contractor's facility, managers must contact the contractor every day to ensure vehicles are still accounted for and secure.

- When a vehicle or government license plate is missing, managers must immediately notify the local police; the Postal Inspection Service; and the servicing vehicle maintenance facility.
- When a vehicle or government license plate is reported missing, servicing vehicle maintenance facility managers must immediately report the loss to the area and headquarters.

The senior vice president emphasized that “in light of the recent terrorist attacks,” there were no exceptions to the requirements.

Keys and equipment left in stored vehicle.



In addition, Postal Service Handbook PO-701, Fleet Management, dated March 1991, requires Postal Service

Postal Service uniform jacket abandoned in stored vehicle.



vehicles to be secured at all times to prevent loss. Handbook PO-701 also prohibits engine oil drainage, even in small amounts, into public drainage systems.

However, our inspection of the stadium parking lot and the vehicles stored there, identified safety and security

**Government license plate on
stored vehicle.**



concerns, evidence of vandalism and theft, and insufficient measures to prevent oil from leaking onto the asphalt surface. For example, we found:

- An unlocked gate not under surveillance by a security guard or camera.
- A hole in the storage area chain-link fence.
- Unlocked vehicles.
- Vehicle keys in ignitions.
- Letter carrier uniforms, bags, and personal items in vehicles.
- Government license plates still on vehicles.
- Glass from broken headlights lying on front bumpers and on the ground, indicating damage was incurred after storage.
- Fire extinguishers removed from vehicles and lying on the ground.

- Plastic mail containers placed under vehicles to catch leaking oil.

These conditions resulted because the officials who leased the parking lot did not fully anticipate security or environmental issues before storing vehicles at the stadium. For example, our examination of the lease revealed no

Broken headlight and broken glass lying on bumper indicating damage was incurred after storage.



provisions for guards or other surveillance measures. A Capital Metro Area official we spoke to stated that a request for Postal Service police was made, and that a supervisor was sent to the area every day to inspect the vehicles. However, the same official conceded that he was unaware

Plastic mail container with absorbent material used to catch leaking oil.



of any Postal Service police actually assigned to secure the area, and a supervisor who inspected the area on July 17, 2003, reported to management that the area was not secure. With regard to environmental concerns, our

inquiries to Postal Service managers revealed that environmentally safe oil catch trays were not available, and consequently, plastic mail trays were used as an expedient. In addition, our inspection identified that trays were not properly placed under the vehicles, and as a result, oil was leaking onto the asphalt.

Recommendation

Throughout the course of our work, we verbally notified Postal Service management of our observations and we recommended the manager, Capital Metro Operations:

1. Take immediate action to address the safety, security, and environmental concerns associated with temporarily storing Postal Service vehicles at Robert F. Kennedy Stadium.

Management Response

Management agreed with our recommendation, and took immediate action to correct the identified deficiencies. For example, management immediately secured the parking lot; removed keys, government license plates, fire extinguishers and other Postal Service equipment from stored vehicles; replaced plastic mail containers with oil trays; cleaned oil residue from the asphalt surface; and on August 7, 2003, began moving vehicles to permanent storage facilities. On August 11, 2003, we confirmed that all Postal Service vehicles and equipment had been removed from the stadium parking area, and all debris had been cleared.

Evaluation of Management's Response

Management's timely corrective actions resolved our concerns and corrected the issues identified in the report.