

# Daniel J. Doffyn Station in Chicago, IL: Delivery Unit Operations

## AUDIT REPORT

Report Number 23-139-2-R24 | October 11, 2023



# Transmittal Letter



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

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October 11, 2023

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** JEWEL MORROW  
MANAGER, ILLINOIS 1 DISTRICT

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joseph E. Wolski", is centered below the memorandum header.

**FROM:** Joseph E. Wolski  
Director, Field Operations

**SUBJECT:** Audit Report – Daniel J. Doffyn Station in Chicago, IL: Delivery Unit  
Operations (Project Number 23-139-2-R24)

This report presents the results of our audit of mail delivery operations and property conditions at the Daniel J. Doffyn Station in Chicago, IL.

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

Attachment

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

# Results

## Background

The U.S. Postal Service’s mission is to provide timely, reliable, secure, and affordable mail and package delivery to more than 160 million residential and business addresses across the country. The U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) reviews delivery operations at facilities across the country and provides management with timely feedback in furtherance of this mission.

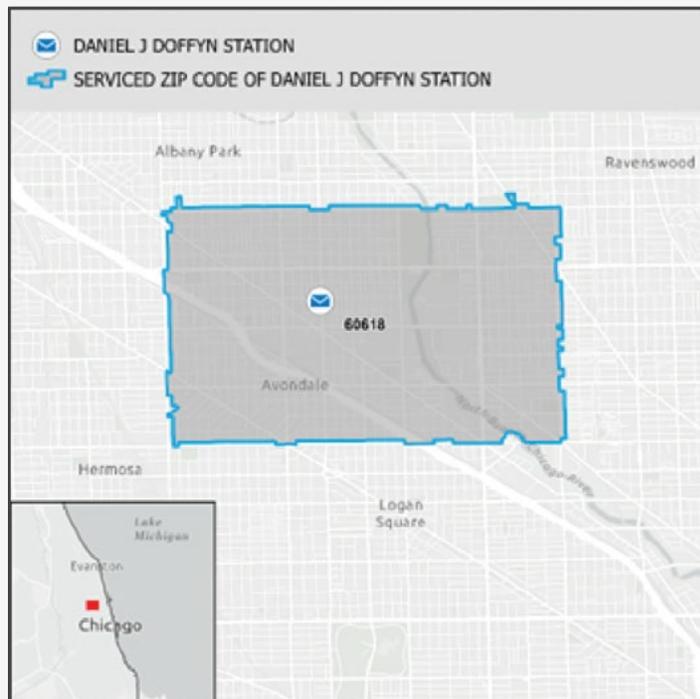
This interim report presents the results of our self-initiated audit of delivery operations and property conditions at the Daniel J. Doffyn Station in Chicago, IL (Project Number 23-139-2). The Daniel J. Doffyn Station is in the Illinois 1 District of the Central Area and services ZIP Code 60618 (see Figure 1). This ZIP Code serves about 93,166 people in an urban community.

This delivery unit has 59 city routes. The Daniel J. Doffyn Station is one of four delivery units<sup>1</sup> the OIG reviewed during the week of July 24, 2023, that are serviced by the Chicago Processing and Distribution Center (P&DC).

We assessed all units serviced by the Chicago P&DC based on the number of Customer 360<sup>2</sup> (C360) delivery-related inquiries,<sup>3</sup> Informed Delivery<sup>4</sup> contacts, Stop-the-Clock (STC)<sup>5</sup> scans performed at the delivery unit, and undelivered route information between April 1 and June 30, 2023.

We judgmentally selected the Daniel J. Doffyn Station primarily based on the number of Informed Delivery contacts. The unit averaged 26.1 contacts per route, 7.4 (40 percent) more than the district average.

Figure 1. ZIP Code Serviced by the Daniel J. Doffyn Station



Source: OIG.

## Objective, Scope, and Methodology

Our objective was to evaluate mail delivery operations and property conditions at the Daniel J. Doffyn Station in Chicago, IL.

To accomplish our objective, we focused on five audit areas: delayed mail, package scanning, arrow keys,<sup>6</sup> carrier complement and timekeeping, and property conditions. Specifically, we reviewed delivery metrics, including the number of routes and carriers, mail arrival time, amount of reported delayed mail, package scanning, carrier complement and timekeeping, and distribution up-time.<sup>7</sup> During our site visit we observed mail conditions; package scanning procedures; arrow key security procedures;

1 The other three units were the Cragin Station, Chicago, IL (Project Number 23-139-1), Northtown Station, Chicago, IL (Project Number 23-139-4), and Roger P. McAuliffe Station, Chicago, IL (Project Number 23-139-5).

2 A cloud-based application that enables Postal Service employees to diagnose, resolve, and track customer inquiries.

3 Delivery-related inquiries include package inquiries, package pickup, daily mail service, and hold mail.

4 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.

5 A scan event that indicates the 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."

6 A distinctively shaped key 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.

7 Time of day that clerks have completed distributing mail to the carrier routes.

timekeeping documentation; and unit safety, security, and maintenance conditions. We also analyzed the scan status of mailpieces at the carrier cases and in the “Notice Left” area<sup>8</sup> and interviewed unit management and employees. We discussed our observations and conclusions as summarized in Table 1 with management on September 26, 2023, and included their comments, where appropriate.

We are issuing this interim report to provide the Postal Service with timely information regarding conditions we identified at the Daniel J. Doffyn Station. We will issue a separate report<sup>9</sup> that provides the Postal Service with the overall findings and recommendations for all four delivery units. See [Appendix A](#) for additional information about our scope and methodology.

## Results Summary

We identified issues affecting delivery operations and property conditions at the Daniel J. Doffyn Station. Specifically, we found issues with all five areas we reviewed (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Summary of Results**

Audit Area	Issues Identified	
	Yes	No
Delayed Mail	X	
Package Scanning	X	
Arrow Keys	X	
Carrier Complement and Timekeeping	X	
Property Conditions	X	

Source: Results of our fieldwork during the week of July 24, 2023.

We did not identify any issues with carrier complement. However, we did identify issues with timekeeping management (see [Finding #4](#)).

<sup>8</sup> The area of a delivery unit where letters or packages that the carriers were unable to deliver are stored for customer pickup.

<sup>9</sup> Project Number 23-139.

# Finding #1: Delayed Mail

## What We Found

On the morning of July 25, 2023, we identified about 18,891 delayed mailpieces at 51 carrier cases, the supervisor's desk area, hot cases, and on the workroom floor. Specifically, we identified about 12,729 letters, 6,155 flats, and seven packages.<sup>10</sup> In addition, management did not accurately report this mail as undelivered in the Delivery Condition Visualization (DCV)<sup>11</sup> system. Although management reported 7,654 delayed letters from the previous day, this only represented 40.5 percent of the delayed mail we identified at the unit. See Table 2 for the number of pieces for each mail type and Figure 2 for the number of pieces for each mail type and Figure 2 for

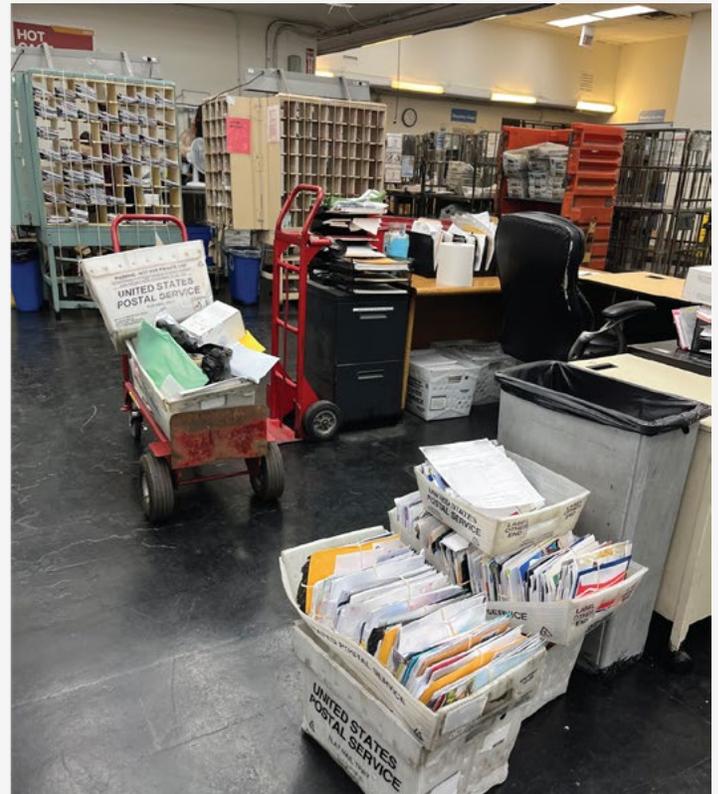
examples of delayed mail found at a carrier case and supervisor's desk.

Table 2. Type of Delayed Mail

Type of Mail	OIG Count of Delayed Mail
Letters	12,729
Flats	6,155
Packages	7
<b>Totals</b>	<b>18,891</b>

Source: OIG count of delayed mailpieces identified during our visit on July 25, 2023.

Figure 2. Examples of Delayed Mail in a Carrier Case and at Supervisor's Desk



Source: OIG photos taken on July 25, 2023.

<sup>10</sup> Count of mail included individual piece counts and OIG estimates based on Postal Service conversion factors in Management Instruction PO-610-2007-1, *Piece Count Recording System*.

<sup>11</sup> 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.

### **Why Did It Occur**

Management did not provide adequate oversight to ensure that all mail was delivered, and all delayed mail was reported in the DCV system. Specifically, management stated that employee availability, caused by unscheduled absences, impeded mail delivery. Further, the station manager stated other priorities, such as daily teleconferences, prevented him from ensuring appropriate disciplinary action of carriers was taken. In addition, the PM supervisor stated she did not update the DCV system with delayed mail brought back by carriers because she inputs that information in a shared file in Teams for the area manager.

### **What Should Have Happened**

Management should have verified delivery of all committed mail or accurately accounted for and reported delayed mail delivery volumes in the DCV system. Additionally, management should have ensured that enough resources were available to deliver all the mail each day. Postal Service policy<sup>12</sup> 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 required<sup>13</sup> 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.

<sup>12</sup> *Committed Mail & Color Code Policy for Marketing Mail* stand-up talk, February 2019.

<sup>13</sup> *Informed Visibility Delivery Condition Visualization User Guide*, March 2023.

## Finding #2: Package Scanning

### What We Found

Employees improperly scanned packages at the delivery unit, scanned packages away from the intended delivery point, and improperly handled packages at the unit. We reviewed package scanning data that occurred at the unit and removed any potentially accurate scans performed.<sup>14</sup> In total, employees improperly scanned 318 packages at the delivery unit between April and June 2023 (see Table 3). Further analysis of the STC<sup>15</sup> scan data for these packages showed that 71 percent of them were scanned “Delivered.”

**Table 3. STC Scans at Delivery Unit**

STC Scan Type	Count	Percentage
Delivered	227	71.4%
Delivery Attempted - No Access to Delivery Location	62	19.5%
Delivery Exception - Animal Interference	10	3.1%
No Authorized Recipient Available	10	3.1%
Receptacle Full / Item Oversized	6	1.8%
Refused	2	.6%
No Secure Location Available	1	.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>100%*</b>

Source: OIG analysis of the Postal Service’s Product Tracking and Reporting (PTR) System data. PTR is the system of record for all delivery status information for mail and packages with trackable services and barcodes.

\*Total percentage does not equal 100 percent, due to rounding.

We also reviewed 20 scans occurring away from the delivery unit and over 1,000 feet<sup>16</sup> from the intended delivery point between April and June 2023 (see Table 4). We removed scans that could have been performed within policy, such as animal interference and unsafe conditions. The unit had 20 STC scans

made over 1,000 feet away from the delivery point during this time. Specifically, our analysis of the STC scan data for these packages showed that 60 percent of them were scanned “Delivered.”

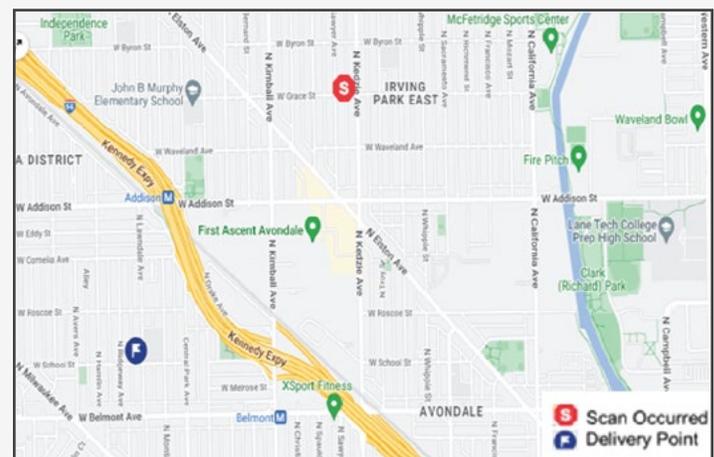
**Table 4. STC Scans Over 1000 Feet Away from the Delivery Point**

STC Scan Type	Count	Percentage
Delivered	12	60%
Delivery Attempted - No Access to Delivery Location	7	35%
Business Closed	1	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

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

For example, the map below (see Figure 3) shows an instance where a carrier scanned a package as delivered 0.86 miles away from the delivery point.

**Figure 3. Scan Away from the Delivery Point in Chicago, Illinois**



Source: Postal Service Single Package Look Up.

We also found issues with scanning and handling of packages in the unit. On the morning of July 25, 2023, before carriers arrived for the day, we selected

<sup>14</sup> This data does not include scans that could properly be made at a delivery unit, such as “Delivered - PO Box” and “Customer (Vacation) Hold.” Additionally, P.O. Box Scans at the Unit were only counted when the delivery point was an address away from the unit. This category does not include mail addressed for a P.O. Box.

<sup>15</sup> This data does not include scans that could properly be made at a delivery unit, such as “Delivered - PO Box” and “Customer (Vacation) Hold.” Additionally, P.O. Box Scans at the Unit were only counted when the delivery point was an address away from the unit. This category does not include mail addressed for a P.O. Box.

<sup>16</sup> Packages are expected to be scanned within a designated buffer distance from the delivery point. The U.S. Postal Service considers 900 ft. or less an acceptable buffer. Therefore, the OIG evaluates any package that was scanned more than 1,000 feet from the delivery point.

52 packages<sup>17</sup> to review and analyze scanning and tracking history. Of the 52 sampled packages, 24 (46 percent) had improper scans, including:

- Eight packages from the carrier cases were scanned at the same time at the delivery unit.
- Seven from the notice left area were missing STC scans to let the customer know the reason for non-delivery.
- Six packages from the carrier cases were scanned delivered, which should only be performed when a package is successfully left at the customer's delivery address.
- Three packages (one from the carrier case and two from the "Notice Left" area) were scanned away from the delivery point.

Further, eight packages in the "Notice Left" area were not returned to the sender, as required.<sup>18</sup> These packages ranged from 4 to 234 days past their scheduled return dates.

### Why Did It Occur

These scanning issues occurred because unit management did not adequately monitor and enforce proper package scanning and handling procedures. Additionally, the unit did not have a clerk regularly assigned to the notice left area.

### 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,<sup>19</sup> which includes scanning packages at the time and location of delivery.<sup>20</sup> Packages on 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 improve mail visibility, increase customer satisfaction, and enhance both the customer experience and the Postal Service brand.

<sup>17</sup> We judgmentally selected 30 packages from the carrier cases and 22 packages from the "Notice Left" area.

<sup>18</sup> *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.

<sup>19</sup> *Delivery Done Right the First Time* stand-up talk, March 2020.

<sup>20</sup> *Carriers Delivering the Customer Experience* stand-up talk, July 2017.

## Finding #3: Safeguarding Arrow Keys

### What We Found

Unit management did not properly manage and safeguard arrow keys. On the morning of July 27, 2023, we reviewed the unit's inventory log for arrow keys and conducted a physical inventory of keys at the unit. We found 12 of the 62 keys located at the unit were not listed on the inventory log and seven of the 59 keys listed on the inventory log could not be located. Unit management had not reported any of the missing keys to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and acknowledged that they were using an outdated arrow key inventory log. We observed seven arrow keys in a [REDACTED] that were not noted on the unit's manual log.

In addition, arrow keys were not always kept secure. Specifically, arrow keys were kept inside the [REDACTED], which was often left open and unattended throughout our visit. We also observed that carriers often left arrow keys on the [REDACTED] when they returned in the evening.

### Why Did It Occur

Management did not provide sufficient oversight to properly manage and safeguard arrow keys. Specifically, management stated that the assigned accountability clerk has been out on extended leave and most employees have not been trained on arrow key policies.

### What Should Have Happened

Management should have verified that arrow key security procedures were properly followed. According to Postal Service policy,<sup>21</sup> management must keep an accurate inventory of all arrow keys. Any missing keys must be immediately reported to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. In addition, policy 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 open mail receptacles, lost or damaged keys can result in undelivered mail.

<sup>21</sup> Standard Work: Arrow Key Accountability, January 2022 and USPS Arrow Key Standard Work, January 2022.

# Finding #4: Timekeeping Management

## What We Found

We determined that management did not retain completed PS Forms 2240, *Pay, Leave, or Other Hours Adjustment Request* for two pay adjustments made between April 8 through June 2, 2023. Specifically:

- One form was missing both the employee and supervisor signatures.
- One form was requested but not received.

In addition, the station had 24 disallowed time occurrences for the same period. Management did not complete and retain PS Forms 1017-A, *Time Disallowance Record*,<sup>22</sup> for any of these occurrences.

## Why Did It Occur

Management stated that she believed that signatures were not required for both the supervisor and the employee on the adjust pay certification nor that it was necessary to complete PS Form 1017-A for the disallowed time.

## What Should Have Happened

Postal Service policy<sup>23</sup> states that pay adjustment certifications are to be kept on file and attached to supporting documentation for the current calendar year plus the three previous years. Postal Service policy also states that unit personnel must complete PS Form 1017-A entries and place them in a notebook binder that is secured from unauthorized access documenting the reason for the disallowed time.

## Effect on the Postal Service and Its Customers

When proper documentation of pay adjustments, time disallowance, and unauthorized overtime is not completed, management could incur excess administrative time. In addition, the Postal Service risks violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act,<sup>24</sup> when unit management does not maintain documentation that shows the justifiable reason and employee notification for disallowed time.

<sup>22</sup> Form used only when a supervisor observes, or has reason to know, that an employee did not work, while "on the clock." The supervisor must document the basis for any such disallowance. These forms serve as a cumulative record of disallowed time.

<sup>23</sup> Handbook F-21, *Time and Attendance*, February 2016.

<sup>24</sup> 29 United States Code §8.

## Finding #5: Property Conditions

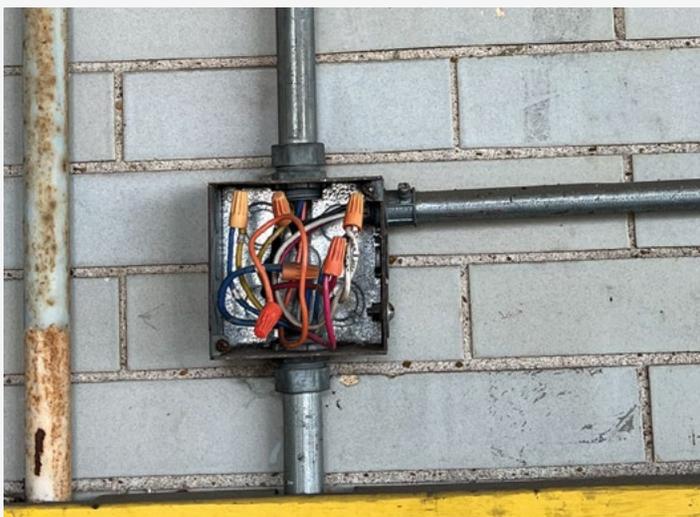
### What We Found

We found safety, security, and maintenance issues at the Daniel J. Doffyn Station including:

#### Property Safety:

- Exposed wires from electrical socket on dock (see Figure 4).
- Two blocked electrical panels.
- One blocked inspection service door in the workroom area.
- All eleven fire extinguishers were missing monthly inspections.
  - Two fire extinguishers missing from the wall.
  - No manual or audible fire alarm.
  - An unsecured ladder in the registry cage.
  - Malfunctioning handicap button and malfunctioning door at the front customer entrance.

**Figure 4. Exposed Wires from Electrical Socket on Dock**



Source: OIG photo taken on July 26, 2023.

#### Property Security:

- No signs posted around the facility stating that vehicles may be subject to search.

#### Property Maintenance:

- Numerous stained ceiling tiles throughout the facility due to previous roof leaks and air vent discharge (see Figure 5).
- Peeling paint on walls in workroom floor (see Figure 6).
- Overgrown landscaping and trash scattered around the grounds of the unit.
- Missing light fixture on the right-side of the front entrance.
- Improper storage of floor sealant on the workroom floor.
- Excess trash and equipment stored on the dock and vestibule of the workroom floor entrance.
- Dock awning support poles need painting due to excessive rust.

**Figure 5. Stained Ceiling Tiles**



Source: OIG photo taken on July 26, 2023.

**Figure 6. Peeling Paint on Walls**



Source: OIG photo taken on July 26, 2023.

### **Why Did It Occur**

Management did not provide sufficient oversight and take the necessary actions to verify that property condition issues were identified, corrected, and follow up on after significant time passed. Management stated that other duties, such as getting the mail out for delivery each day and managing frequent carrier absences, took priority over addressing facility condition issues.

### **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 to verify the issues were promptly addressed. 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.<sup>25</sup>

### **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's Comments**

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

<sup>25</sup> Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 and Postal Service Handbook EL-801, *Supervisor's Safety Handbook*.

# Appendix A: Additional Information

We conducted this audit from July through October 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 objective.

In planning and conducting the audit, we obtained an understanding of the Daniel J. Doffyn delivery operations internal control structure to help determine the nature, timing, and extent of our audit procedures. We reviewed the management controls for overseeing the program and mitigating associated risks. Additionally, we assessed the internal control components and underlying principles, and we determined that the following three components were significant to our audit objective:

- Control Activities
- Information and Communication
- Monitoring

We developed audit work to ensure that we assessed these controls. Based on the work performed, we identified internal control deficiencies in all three areas that were significant within the context of our objectives.

We assessed the reliability of Informed Delivery, PTR, DCV, and electronic Facilities Management System<sup>26</sup> data 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.

<sup>26</sup> 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.

# Appendix B: Management's Comments



October 2, 2023

JOHN CIHOTA  
DIRECTOR, AUDIT SERVICES

SUBJECT: Management Response: Daniel J. Doffyn Station in Chicago, IL: Delivery Operations (Report Number 23-139-2-DRAFT)

Thank you for providing the Postal Service an opportunity to review and comment on the findings contained in the draft audit report, *Daniel J. Doffyn Station in Chicago, IL: Delivery Operations*.

Management agrees with the five findings in the report on delayed mail, package scanning, arrow keys, carrier complement and timekeeping, and property conditions.

Management has begun taking steps to address the five findings.

*Delayed Mail:* Management implemented a process to ensure committed mail is accounted for and reported in DCV. Additionally, District management will conduct reviews to monitor for compliance.

*Package Scanning:* District management will conduct regular reviews to ensure all packages are scanned accurately.

*Arrow Keys:* The office will be trained on Standard Work and operating procedures for Arrow Key Management including updating key logs, reporting missing arrow keys to the USPS Inspection Service, and ensure arrow keys are verified and secured daily. Additionally, management created a checklist to use during reviews to verify compliance with arrow key policy.

*Timekeeping Management:* Local management will be retrained on proper record keeping when processing pay adjustments and disallowing time.

*Property Conditions:* Nine of the 17 property conditions sited during the visit have been abated and pictures provided as verification. Work orders/requisitions have been submitted to fix the remaining issues.

E-SIGNED by JEWEL MORROW  
on 2023-10-04 08:57:19 EDT

Jewel Morrow  
Manager, Illinois 1 District

cc: Vice President, Area Retail & Delivery Operations (Central)  
Corporate Audit Response Management

OFFICE OF  
INSPECTOR  
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UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE



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