

# National Association of Letter Carriers

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## Memorandum

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April 07, 2000

From the Desk of **A. P. "TONY" MARTINEZ**  
*Vice President*

To: Resident Officers and National Business Agents

Subject: **IMPLEMENTATION OF VERTICAL FLAT CASING**

Attached you will find a copy dated March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2000, from the United States Postal Service, concerning the implementation of the vertical flat casing memorandum. I apologize for the poor quality of the original, however, this is the best we have at this time.

In order to assist you, in reading the memo, I had it retyped and attached it to the back of the Postal Service's memorandum.

If you have any question or concerns, please contact me.

APM/dw  
opeiu #2

Attachment





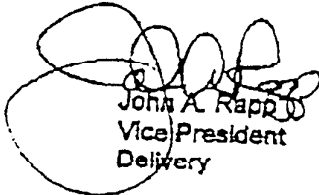
March 27, 2000

MANAGERS, OPERATIONS SUPPORT (AREA)  
MANAGERS, DELIVERY PROGRAMS SUPPORT (AREA)

SUBJECT: *City Carriers Work Methods and Case Configuration*

Attached is the guideline for implementing the March 21, 2000 Memoranda of Understanding between the Postal Service and the National Association of Letter Carriers, as they relate to the selection and conversion to the DPS work method and case configuration of choice. Please expedite the distribution and handling of this guideline so that we can convert all appropriate routes to the vertical flat casing DPS work method, using five shelf cases.

If you have any questions related to the attached please contact William Bothwell at (202) 268-4332 directly.



John A. Rapp  
Vice President  
Delivery

Attachment

IMPLEMENTATION AND CONVERSION GUIDELINES FOR  
DPS WORK METHODS AND CASE CONFIGURATIONS

On March 21, 2000 the United States Postal Service and the National Association of Letter Carriers entered into Memoranda of Understanding that, in part addressed DPW Work Methods and Case Configurations to be used on city delivery routes. The intent of this guideline is to describe management's expectations for implementation of these MOUs and the conversion of routes to the desired DPS work method and case configuration.

I. Background In 1999, a joint USPS/NALC study was conducted. The purpose was to determine the relative efficiency of the composite (third) bundle DPS work method and the Vertical Flat Casing (VFC) DPS work method, i.e., casing residual letters and flats together. The results of this study indicated that the VFC DPS work method was overall the more efficient method. As a result, the Postal Service has established its objective relative to DPS work methods and case configurations on city delivery routes. That objective is to maximize the number of routes that use the VFC DPS work method, using five shelf cases.

The following are general guidelines that will assist in a more orderly transition to meet this objective.

II. Area Offices are responsible for disseminating these guidelines to all Districts and monitoring that the following implementation priorities and methodologies are completed in an orderly manner in the fastest time possible and that actions taken by District offices and field units are consistent with the March 21, 2000 MOUs.

III. District Offices are responsible for disseminating these guidelines to all associate post offices and collecting and analyzing the following information:

- A list of five digit zones with the District indicating: (a) those zones that ordinarily receive multiple sets of detached address label and/or unaddressed flat mailings per week; (b) those zones that ordinarily receive one detached address label and/or unaddressed flat mailing per week; and (c) those zones that ordinarily receive less than one detached address label and/or unaddressed flat mailing per week, or none at all.

- The number of park & loop and foot routes in each five digit zone that currently use the DPS composite (third) bundle work method.
- The individual park and look and foot routes within each zone that ordinarily receive 60% or more DPS mail.

These three categories will be the basis for prioritizing the implementation of the MOU changes within each District. The general intent is that routes in zones that ordinarily receive more detached address labels and/or unaddressed flat mailings, and those zones with the highest number of park & loop and foot routes using the DPS composite (third) bundle work method, are considered to be in the highest priority group for conversion to the VFC DPS work method, using five shelves. Park & loop and foot routes that ordinarily receive a high DPS percentage are also to be considered in the high priority group even if they do not ordinarily receive detached address labels and/or unaddressed flat mailings on a frequent basis.

IV. Postmasters are responsible for disseminating these guidelines to all delivery units and for preparing and providing the necessary information (see above) to the District office and for identifying any special circumstances that should be considered in the implementation priority; such as, five digit zones where the "interim" fourth bundle agreements have resulted in a large number of routes casing DPS mail. Where this condition exists these routes are to be given a high priority for conversion to the VFC DPS work method using five shelf cases, regardless of which category the zone or routes would have fallen into otherwise.

In addition, Postmasters are responsible for reviewing all city delivery routes to identify the existing DPS work methods and case configurations. Upon review the number of routes in each of the following categories should be determined.

- Park & loop or foot routes using the DPS composite (third) bundle work method
- Park & loop or foot routes using the vertical flat casing (VFC) DPS work method

- Curblineline or dismount routes using DPS composite (third) bundle method
- Curblineline or dismount routes using the vertical flat casing (VFC) DPS work method

Each of these categories of routes will require a different depth of activity to reach the objective, i.e., conversion to the VFC DPS work method, using five shelf cases. Nonetheless, in the actual conversion process Postmasters must, at a minimum, consider the following:

- the fact that any interim agreements regarding handling of detached address label mailings (fourth bundle) continues in effect until conversion to the VFC DPS work method
- the number of pieces and type of equipment required for each route
- estimated floor space requirements for each route
- the number of possible deliveries that can be accommodated by each case configuration
- estimated letter and flat volumes that can be accommodated by each case configuration

## V. Equipment

### A. Cases

- Casing equipment should be minimized so that there is preferably no more than two full cases and one wing case on each route or, only in exceptional circumstances and only if necessary, a route may have three full cases
- every route must have at least one number 124 case so that a ledge is available

- unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as, very heavy or very light volume, a one inch separation, where residual letters and flats will be cased, should be provided for each address
- to the extent practicable DPS work methods and case configurations should be standardized within the delivery unit or at least on all similar types of routes within the delivery unit, i.e., all park & loop routes should have the same work method and case configuration

#### B. Case Labels

- routes that are currently using the DPS composite bundle work method and will not be using the VFC DPS work method on five shelves may need new case labels since the current labels used on the flat case probably are not designed to accommodate one address per one inch separation or they are designed for a four shelf rather than a five shelf case; also the labels currently used on the letter case are designed for a six shelf case and will not be interchangeable with a five shelf case.
- routes that were using the VFC DPS work method on four shelves will now need case labels designed for five shelves.

#### C. Dividers

- the usual city dividers might be too small to provide maximum effectiveness when used in conjunction with the VFC DPS work method on five shelves; standard rural type dividers (114R) might be a better fit. (Note: the absence of rural type dividers is not a reason to delay the conversion of any routes).

## VI. Savings

Using the approved methods to adjust routes and/or reduce workhours, the expectation is that once converted to the VFC DPS work method a route has an increased potential to provide savings since the VFC DPS work method has been demonstrated to be more efficient and less time consuming than the composite bundle DPS work method. In addition, on park & loop and foot routes when a detached address label (unaddressed flat) mailing is present there is no longer a need to case or collate the unaddressed flats in order to avoid a fourth bundle of mail. Instead, the mail previously determined to be a fourth bundle will now be carried at the back of the residual letter/flat bundle as an allowable third bundle.

On all park & loop and foot routes, whether or not they are in a DPS environment, the three bundle limitation still applies, i.e., unless the carrier volunteers the carrier cannot be required to carry more than three bundles of mail. This limit on the number of bundles applies on all days, even those when a detached address label (unaddressed flat) mailing is not present. Therefore, on those days a carrier serving a park & loop or foot route can be required to carry a (separate) third bundle of mail, e.g., a sequenced letter mailing. Carriers serving on routes other than park & loop and foot, e.g., curblines and dismount routes, are not affected by a limitation on the number of bundles of mail that can be carried.

Capturing savings should be realized via adjustments to routes that result in a reduction of overtime and/or auxiliary assistance, stabilizing increases in the number of routes due to growth and reductions or consolidations of existing auxiliary routes. Methods that can be used to effect any needed adjustments are: (1) minor route adjustments to recapture time on routes that were adjusted with office time built in for casing or collating unaddressed flats or for casing DPS mail in order to avoid the "fourth" bundle (once these routes are converted to the VFC DPS work method there is no longer a need to have this time built into the office); (2) special route inspections determined by management on specific routes that provide the greatest potential for capturing savings or because a simple adjustment cannot be made; (3) full delivery unit route inspections and

adjustments to realign all routes, especially those using the "new" DPS work method; (4) utilization of one day office counts to determine individual efficiency and appropriate follow-up actions.

## VII. Special Considerations

### A. Horizontal Flat Casing

Routes that use the DPS composite bundle work method along with the horizontal method for casing flats must be reviewed to determine that they are finalizing flats in a single handling, i.e., they do not have to sequence the flats into strict delivery order after the first sort. This horizontal flat casing is typically done for business deliveries, apartment house deliveries, and deliveries to NDCBUs or CBUs. If the review indicates that these routes via horizontal flat casing are, in fact, still finalizing the flats in a single handling there is no expectation to convert the route to the VFC DPS work method. If, however, sequencing via a second handling is found to be necessary, these routes (or significant portions of the route) should be converted to the VFC DPS work method, using five shelf cases.