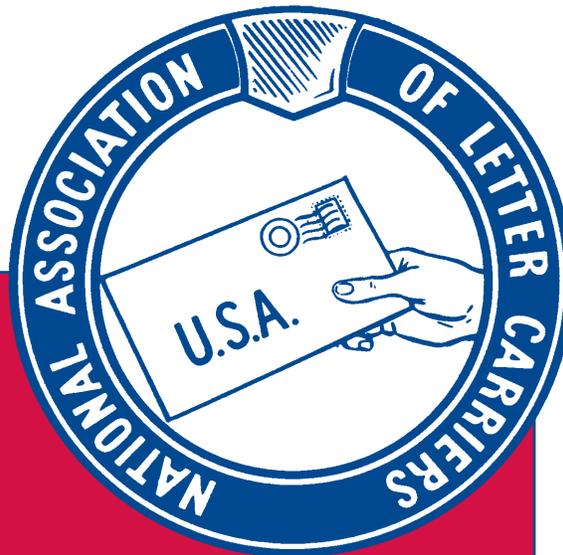


# NALC ROUTE PROTECTION PROGRAM





# National Association of Letter Carriers

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Dear NALC Activist:

A few weeks ago, we sent you a copy of Chapter 1 of the Route Protection Program, NALC's new educational resource material on route counts and inspections. At that time, we told you that additional chapters would follow to address other route evaluation and adjustment issues.

We have enclosed the new chapters, which were described in the Introduction sent with the first chapter. Chapter 2, *Route Examination and Adjustment for NALC Representatives*, provides additional information for NALC representatives who will assist and advise letter carriers through the inspection process. Chapter 3, *The Minor Route Adjustment Process*, describes management's use and misuse of the minor adjustment provisions in section 141 of the M-39 Handbook.

Also enclosed are some replacement pages for Chapter 1 containing a few minor corrections. Please replace the pages as described in the enclosure.

Additionally, we have sent you—and *every* letter carrier who is an NALC member—a Route Protection Program *Pocket Handbook*. Letter carriers can use the *Handbook* as a quick and convenient reference during the week of count and inspection.

We urge NALC activists at all levels to use these materials to ensure that letter carrier routes are fairly and accurately inspected, evaluated, and adjusted.

Sincerely,

William H. Young  
President

Fredric V. Rolando  
Director of City Delivery

# Chapter 3

## The Minor Route Adjustment Process

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## **A. Introduction**

For a period of approximately 14 months, from March 2003 through May 2004, the parties at the national level agreed to Memorandums of Understanding regarding application of the provisions of the Minor Route Adjustment procedures found in Section 141 of the M-39 Handbook (M-1505, M-1482). Prior to that time, many grievances were filed on various Minor Route Adjustment issues, most notably regarding management's violations of M-39 Section 141.18 for evaluating routes and M-39 Section 141.19 for adjusting routes.

Management's abuse of M-39 Section 141.18 was mostly driven by its desire to pre-determine the evaluations of the routes to mirror savings it had projected independent of any fair evaluation. Management's misuse of M-39 Section 141.19 was mostly driven by its desire to use the Minor Route Adjustment process even though it did not have reasonably current route inspection data and/or the

same carrier serving the route. Management proceeded with its evaluations and adjustments as if the methodologies described in M-39 Sections 141.18 and 141.19 were optional, and did not have to be followed.

The purpose of the Memorandums of Understanding was to minimize disputes regarding the Minor Route Adjustment process while the parties continued to meet on a task force to develop new methods for inspecting and adjusting routes. The terms of the memorandums were not intended to represent either parties' position outside their effective dates.

The memorandums defined the time period to be used in applying M-39 Section 141.18 for determining the current evaluation of a route. The memorandums also provided the Postal Service with procedures to use M-39 Section 141.19 to adjust a route when it did not have reasonably current data and/or the same carrier serving the route.

Now that the Postal Service has terminated the cooperative efforts regarding route inspections, and the Minor Route Adjustment Memorandums have expired, it is especially important to understand the provisions of Section 141 of the M-39 Handbook, Minor Adjustments.

## **B. Overview**

As explained in Chapters One and Two, management is required to make at least annual route and unit reviews. The reviews are utilized to verify adjustments that have been made, or need to be made, to maintain efficient service. Where necessary, management must proceed with mail counts and route inspections (M-39 Section 211.1).

In addition to these reviews that must be conducted at least annually, management must maintain the routes in reasonable adjustment throughout the rest of the year (M-39 Section 141.111). If minor adjustments have been made throughout the year as needed, few adjustments will be required after each Count and Inspection period (M-39 Section 242.11).

Management must review the nature and scope of the adjustments needed. If the review indicates that the necessary adjustments are beyond minor, Section 141 cannot be used. Instead, a mail count and route inspection must be conducted (M-39 Section 141.112).

Additionally, the parties have agreed that Minor Route Adjustments must be done using reasonably current route inspection data from a six-day count (M-1448). The Postal Service has also affirmed that the procedures in Section 141 of the M-39 Handbook must be accurately followed (M-00992). The formula for making Minor Route Adjustments found in the M-39 Section 141 requires that the previous Count and Inspection data be reasonably current and that the same carrier is still serving the route (M-39 Section 141.19). This is consistent with the M-39 design to adjust routes to the individual capabilities of the letter carriers assigned to the routes.

National Arbitrator Gamser recognized that design in a national level decision. In that

decision, he wrote the following concerning the adjustment of city carrier routes:

*Each carrier, due to his physical condition and experience, performs at a pace which must be taken into consideration in determining his time requirements.*

*These are not routine or repetitive jobs that can be paced by a machine or a belt. Nor has the Postal Service indicated a desire to force each and every carrier to perform in accordance with unilaterally determined so-called normal time requirements.*

(C-03213)

This principle is structurally built into the route examination and adjustment procedures required by Chapter 2 of the M-39 Handbook. It is also a basis for the requirement that only current route inspection data for the same carrier be used in the minor route adjustment process.

National Arbitrator Gamser in the same award made it crystal clear that the methodologies in M-39 Section 141.1 are indeed not optional. Rather, he ruled that management must not depart from the methods set forth in the M-39 for minor adjustments.

At the time of his award, the M-39 Section 141.1 language was in Section 228.1 of the M-39, and read as follows:

*228.1 Adjustment Without Special Inspection*

*.11 Routes should be maintained in reasonable adjustment throughout the year. Before determining that a special mail count and route inspection is necessary to properly adjust one or a group of routes, review the nature and scope of the adjustments needed. If the review discloses that only minor adjustments are necessary, the adjustments should be made from data available on Forms 3999 and 1840 from the most recent mail count and inspection. Current management records, Forms 1571, 1813, 3996, and 3997, should also be reviewed and considered in making adjustments. (Follow same procedure in reviewing Forms 1840 with the carrier.)*

*.12 A simple formula for effecting adjustments without count and inspection may be made in the following manner if the previous count and inspection contains reasonably current data and the same carrier in serving the route being considered:*

- a. Divide net office time or standard, whichever is lower, by total deliveries to obtain minutes office time used per delivery.*
- b. Deduct the to and from travel time (Form 3999) from street time and divide the remainder by the deliveries to obtain minutes street time used per delivery.*
- c. Add average office and street time per delivery and multiply by the number of deliveries being considered for addition or subtraction from route to determine the total time involved.*
- d. Add to or subtract from route involved.*

In his National Level Award, Arbitrator Gamser stated that... *“a grievable event would occur only if the post-master or supervisor making such [minor] adjustment without special inspection departed from the methods to be employed as set forth in the above quoted section 228.1.”*

## M-39 SECTION 141- MINOR ADJUSTMENTS

There are two sections under Minor Adjustments in Section 141 of the M-39 Handbook. Section 141.1, Route Adjustment Without Special Inspection, and Section 141.2, Special Office Mail Counts. Section 141.1 is divided into several subsections, which will be discussed before discussion of Section 141.2.

### *141 Minor Adjustments*

## **C. Section 141.1: Route Adjustment Without Special Inspection**

### *141.11 Minor Adjustments*

*141.111 The routes must be maintained in reasonable adjustment throughout the year. In order to fulfill this requirement, local managers may find it necessary to make minor route adjustments, to provide relief, add deliveries, capture undertime, etc.*

This section explains that the purpose of minor route adjustments is to maintain routes in reasonable adjustment throughout the year. This section indicates that the routes have already been properly adjusted from a Count and Inspection, and are now to be “maintained” as such throughout the year.

*141.112 When considering if a mail count and route inspection is necessary, review the nature and scope of the adjustments needed. If the review discloses that only minor adjustments are necessary, the adjustments should be made from current management records and information.*

This section explains that management must first review whether the necessary adjustments are only minor in nature and scope. If they are beyond minor, a mail count and route inspection must be used instead. If they are only minor, they should be made from current management records and information. These management records and information are described in M-39 Sections 141.18 and 141.19.

There is no nationally agreed upon definition of what would constitute a “minor adjustment” pursuant to the language in M-39 Section 141.112. Therefore, a common sense approach is necessary. If it is proposed to make major territorial changes and/or changes that have a major impact on other routes, the adjustment would clearly not be minor.

Conversely, if routes are maintained in adjustment with limited changes, the adjustments may well be minor in scope. The notion that necessary adjustments beyond those minor in nature and scope must be done with a full Count and Inspection is further supported in Arbitrator Gamser’s award. He wrote:

*“If the reviewing supervisor made a determination that only minor adjustments are necessary or possibly justified then the Adjustment Without Special Inspection Method could be utilized. If more than a minor adjustment were required, then a Special Inspection, outlined in Part 227.1, should be employed.”*

Note: The language from Gamser quotes “Part 227.1” of the M-39. This language is now found in Section 271 of the M-39.

*141.113 When it is observed that a delivery unit is regularly exceeding its daily authorized carrier hours, as indicated on the latest Form 3998, Unit Summary of City Delivery Assignments (see Chapter 3), management must first ensure that the applicable procedures in this Chapter are fully implemented and enforced. Particular attention must be given to carrier scheduling, receipt of mail, and carrier work methods in the office and on the street. Some other areas that should be reviewed are delivery unit changes in office routines, street management, and additional or more beneficial segmentations of mail.*

This section explains that once management observes that a delivery unit is exceeding its daily authorized carrier hours from Form 3998, it must first ensure that the procedures in M-39 Chapter 14 (141.12, 141.13, 141.14, 141.15) are fully implemented and enforced before using the minor route adjustment process.

The daily authorized hours are found on the Form 3998 from the reasonably current route inspection. Chapter 3 of the M-39 Handbook provides an overview of the form. Union representatives should ensure that all the relevant information contained on the Form 3998 is correct and based on the current route inspection data.

### *141.12 Office Routines*

*141.121 Delivery managers must continually review carrier office routines in order to determine whether all unnecessary time consuming practices have been eliminated or reduced to an absolute minimum. A review should be made of the unit layout to ensure that the workroom is arranged to minimize travel and to facilitate an orderly flow of mail. All excess and unnecessary equipment should be removed from the workroom floor. If this is not possible, place it in an area where it will not interfere with an efficient operation.*

*141.122 Where possible, at least 80 percent of the carrier's mail should be on the case ledge prior to the carrier reporting. At offices where it is impractical to place on or near the*

*carrier's case prior to the reporting time, management should consider establishing a fixed schedule for mail withdrawals or establishing a minimum number of controlled withdrawals. The withdrawals should be scheduled to coincide with the receipt of mail or the distribution needs of the office. Carriers must not be allowed to withdraw their mail except under controlled conditions in order to facilitate the volume recording process. However, regardless of the procedure used in the office, mail received from the main office or mail distributed at the unit while the carriers are on the street should be on the carrier cases when they return from the street.*

### *141.13 Street Management*

*141.131 Delivery managers must ensure that carriers hold the number of park points, swings, loops, and relays to the absolute minimum necessary to provide delivery. Unnecessary movement of vehicles and vehicle stops not only expand street time, but also waste energy.*

*141.132 Where carriers use public conveyances for transportation to and from their routes, leaving and returning times must be arranged to reduce carrier transportation waiting time to a minimum. In addition, relay runs should be arranged so that carriers do not have to wait for relays.*

*141.133 Deadheading and unnecessary retracing should be eliminated. Lines of travel as indicated by the case layout must be followed by the carrier. Unauthorized deviations generate customer complaints, waste both time and energy, and conflict with the order which the letters are placed in under Delivery Point Sequencing. When it is determined that more efficient travel patterns are possible, management should arrange for the appropriate changes in the sort plan, case labels and advise the carrier of the new line of travel.*

#### *141.14 Segmentations*

*Management must periodically review carrier mail volume to determine the need for additional or alternative segmentations of mail that could be prepared more efficiently for delivery by distribution personnel or mailers.*

### *141.15 Distribution*

*Delivery managers must coordinate mail flow into the delivery unit, mail preparation, and the establishment or abolishment of segmentations with the appropriate functional area manager.*

M-39 Sections 141.12 through 141.15 contain the procedures referenced in M-39 Section 141.113 that must be fully implemented and enforced prior to management considering making Minor Route Adjustments.

### *141.16 When to Consider Making Minor Adjustments*

*Once it is determined that standard operating procedures (SOPs) have been properly implemented and maintained, the delivery manager has considered all other alternatives, carrier workhours have not been reduced, or workhours can be reduced, then management should consider making minor route adjustments.*

This section explains that management should not consider making minor route adjustments until it determines that workhours have not been reduced by the proper implementation and maintenance of the procedures described above.

### *141.17 Advance Preparation*

*Prior to making any minor adjustment on a unit wide basis, management must notify the local union as far in advance as possible. Any proposed adjustments must be placed in effect within 45 calendar days after the end of the adjustment consultation with the carriers involved and changes should not be made between the period November 15 and January 1. Exceptions must be approved by the district manager.*

This section explains that when these minor changes are made to routes on a unit wide basis, the local union must be notified as far in advance as possible. Local representatives should review the data used to determine if appropriate advance notice was given. Also, management must consult with each letter carrier involved in the proposed adjustments. Remember, to consult means to seek an opinion as a guide to one's own judgment. It must not be a meeting to simply inform the carrier of the changes, but rather an opportunity for the carrier to offer meaningful input in time to influence the final adjustment.

The Summary Of Minor Adjustments Worksheet includes an area to record the carriers' input and comments regarding the proposed adjustment.

### *141.18 Preliminary Planning*

*Management should carefully review and analyze street management records, Forms 3997, 1813, 3996, 1571, 3921, and 3921-A, and carrier timecards or PSDS reports in order to determine the current evaluation for each route and the needed adjustments. The manager using Forms 1840 should prepare a Summary of Minor Adjustments Worksheet for each route.*

*The summary should contain the post office name, ZIP Code, delivery unit name, route number, carrier's name, ID number, age, length of service, length of service on the route, route designation, number of trips, type of route, type of vehicle used on route, and other appropriate information as indicated in exhibit 141.18.*

This section is critically important because it describes in detail the information that must be reviewed and analyzed to determine the current evaluation of the route. It also explains the form, Summary of Minor Adjustments Worksheet, which is used to record the minor adjustments made for

each route from the current Form 1840 for that carrier and route.

M-39 Section 141.18 is explicit as to the information that must be reviewed to determine the current actual time being used on the route so that the necessary amount and means of adjustment can be determined. These specific forms and records must be the basis for the evaluation.

Beware of additional forms not listed in M-39 Section 141.18 that may be used to skew the evaluation of the route. Also beware of management reviewing the forms and records for a selected time period that does not fairly reflect the actual route time.

If management attempts to evaluate the route based on its projection or analysis of volume changes, rather than a carrier's actual time, a grievance should also be filed.

Additionally, be sure that each Form 1840 used to prepare the Summary of Minor Adjustments Worksheet is from the previous Count and Inspection. This data must be reasonably current and for the same carrier currently serving the route.

Please review the sample Summary Of Minor Adjustments Worksheet on page 3-22. The information from the completed Form 1840 in Chapter 2 is used to illustrate proper completion of the Worksheet. A copy of the front and back of that 1840 is found on page 3-23.

The top section of the Worksheet contains the adjusted route information. This information comes from the reverse side of the Form 1840 (upper right side).

Additionally, in this example a time of 7:40 is entered as the current Route Evaluation (which would be determined from the review and analysis of the forms and records in M-39 Section 141.18). Also, the subsequent proposed (minor) adjustment of plus :20 to maintain the route in reasonable adjustment is entered.

The bottom section of the Worksheet contains the actual (minor) changes made to the route as well as the before (M-39 Section 141.18 evaluation) and after (adjusted per M-39 Section 141.19) route data.

#### *141.19 Formula for Making Minor Adjustments*

*A simple formula for making minor adjustments, without mail counts and inspection, may be made in the following manner if the previous count and inspection data is reasonably current and the same carrier is serving the route being considered:*

**SUMMARY OF MINOR ADJUSTMENTS WORKSHEET**

Post Office:	<i>Denver, CO</i>	Carrier name:	<i>J. Hart</i>
Delivery Unit:	<i>Sullivan Station</i>	Age:	<i>50</i>
Route No:	<i>4713</i>	Length of Service:	<i>26</i>
Route Designation:	<i>Reg</i>	Length of Service on Route:	<i>11</i>
Type of Route:	<i>Park &amp; Loop</i>		
Type of Vehicle:	<i>RHD</i>		

Route Office Time:	<i>3:33</i>	Route Evaluation (based upon analysis):	<i>7:40</i>
Route Street Time:	<i>4:25</i>	Proposed Adjustment (+/-):	<i>+ :20</i>
Possible Deliveries:	<i>369</i>		
Router Time:	<i>0</i>	Router Time:	<i>0</i>

Carrier Comments:

*Adding 20 minutes will make the route heavy some days but most days it will be around 8 hours.*

Actual Adjustment

Relief (R) Addition (A)	Block	Street	Deliveries	Time Value
<i>from 4711-A (A)</i>	<i>600-699</i>	<i>White Oak Court</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>:09/:11</i>

Route Before Adjustment:	<i>7:40</i>	Route Office Time:	<i>3:29</i>	Possible Deliveries:	<i>369</i>
Actual Adjustment:	<i>+ 0:20</i>	Route Street Time:	<i>4:31</i>	Reduction/Addition:	<i>+20</i>
Route After Adjustment:	<i>8:00</i>	Total Time:	<i>8:00</i>	After Adjustment:	<i>389</i>

Router Time After Adjustment: *0*

Comments:

*Carrier: These deliveries are all in an NDCBU and the time value is about right.*

*Manager: The time value of the addition is consistent with the times on the 3999 for Route 4711-A from the last count and inspection.*

(Signature)

Unit Manager

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Signature)

District Manager/Designee

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

United States Postal Service <b>Carrier Delivery Route - Summary of Count and Inspection</b>				Post Office <i>Denver, Colorado</i>		Delivery Unit <i>Sullivan Station - 80241</i>		Carrier Name <i>J. Hart</i>																																																																																																										
Route No. 4713				<input type="checkbox"/> EPM Rta. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-EPM <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reg. <input type="checkbox"/> Aux.		No. of Trips 1		Type of Route <input type="checkbox"/> Foot <input type="checkbox"/> Bus. <input type="checkbox"/> Res. <input type="checkbox"/> Mbrd <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle <input type="checkbox"/> Motorized <input type="checkbox"/> Curb Delivery <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park and Loop <input type="checkbox"/> Dismount																																																																																																										
Inclusive Dates 10/29 To: 11/4 From: 29				Type of Vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> LHD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RHD		Age 49		Length of Service 25 yrs. & 9 mos.		Length of Service on Route 10 years																																																																																																								
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Route Examiner and Date <i>Jan Tuck - 11/15/05</i>					Delivery Service Manager (Signature and title) <i>D. Cassell, Mgr. Sullivan Station</i>					Date Adjustments Made <i>1/7/06</i>																																																																																																								

PS Form 1840, November 1997

Adjustments Approved by Postmaster or Designee				Record of Office and Street Adjustments Made										
Item	Hours and Minutes	New Const. (Minutes)	Relief (R) Addition (A)		Numbers				Transferred To or From Rte. Number	Delys.	Office Time	Street Time	Adjusted Route	
					Begin	End	ZIP + 4 Sector/Segment						Item	Hours and Minutes
Office Time	4:22		(A)	<i>River Oak Drive</i>	600	899	37 37	18 19	4711-A	+19	+11	+14	Office Time	3:33
Street Time	5:24		(R)	<i>River Bend Way</i>	100	899	37 37	94 95	4711-A	-80	-48	-58	Street Time	4:25
Total Time	9:46		(R)	<i>River Bend Court</i>	600	899	37 37	96 97	4711-A	-20	-12	-15	Total Time	7:58
Router													Router	0
Addition													Possible Deliveries	369
Relief	1:46													
COMMENTS														
1. Office break option chosen <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no														
2. Base time selected for route evaluation purposes from Form 1840-B is <u>5</u> : <u>24</u> (hours and minutes).														
3. Street time selected for adjustment <u>5</u> : <u>24</u> (hours and minutes).														
4. Reasons for selection of street time: <i>The 1840-B street time is more representative for the route because it shows that the route usually gets 3 full coverages each week. During the week of count, there was only one full coverage day.</i>														
5. Office method for transfer: <i>1840 Average office time divided by possible deliveries</i> <i>Carrier states the evaluated office and street time are accurate, but he thinks the territory proposed to be transferred will make the route about 15-20 minutes short.</i>														

PS Form 1840, (DRAFT) (Reverse)

This part of M-39 Section 141.19 clearly states that if the previous Count and Inspection data is reasonably current and the same carrier is serving the route, the following formula for making minor adjustments may be used. Otherwise, management must conduct mail Counts and Inspections to make any adjustments to the route.

As explained above, the current evaluation of the route and needed adjustments are determined by reviewing and analyzing the forms and records listed in M-39 Section 141.18. The formula in M-39 Section 141.19 is then used to compute an “office time per delivery” and a “street time per delivery” in order to determine how many deliveries are needed to provide the necessary addition/relief to adjust the route to 8 hours.

In the example, the review and analysis in M-39 Section 141.18 documented that, during a period that fairly represents the route’s normal volume and workhours, the regular carrier averaged 3:20 office time and 4:20 street time for a total of 7:40.

**M-39 Section 141.19a** explains how to determine the “office time used per delivery” from the previous Count and Inspection of the route:

First, using the most recent Form 1840, management reviews the net and standard office times and selects the lesser of the two. The “Net Office Time” of 4:22 from the Form 1840 is the lesser.

Next management deducts the actual times used on lines 14, 15, 16, 19 & 21 during the week of inspection from the Net Office Time. The actual times used for those line items is found on the lower left corner of the front of the Form 1840.

The regular carrier’s average actual minutes used were 8 (line 14), 11 (line 15), 5 (line 19), & 31 (line 21). Management also deducts the 5 minute standard for line 20 (personal time), and the office break time.

Therefore total line item and break times of 70 minutes (8+11+5+31+5+10) are deducted from the Net Office Time of 4:22, which results in a remainder of 3:12 (4:22 minus :70).

Management then divides the remainder (3:12) by the number of possible deliveries found in Section H on the lower right hand side of the front of Form 1840 (450). The result is .43 (3:12, or 192 minutes, divided by 450 possible deliveries). The “office time per possible delivery” is .43 minutes.

**Note:** M-39 Section 141.19a provides that if the Standard Office Time had been selected as the lesser office time, then the Line Item deductions may be different. Standard Line Item values would be deducted instead of actual times, if the standard times were greater than the actual Line Items.

**M-39 Section 141.19b** explains how to determine the “street time per possible delivery” from the previous Count and Inspection of the route.

First, management determines the street time from the most recent Form 3999. This will be either the 3999 completed during the last Count and Inspection, or the 3999 completed after implementation of the latest adjustment.

Management reviewed the Form 3999 completed after implementation of the latest adjustment, which shows a street time of 4:30.

Next, management uses the Form 3999 to compute the following:

- vehicle loading time
- travel time to and from the route

- time spent collecting from collection boxes
- time spent for relays
- gassing vehicle
- vehicle moves
- replenishing mail after loop
- breaks, and comfort stops

In this example, management calculates a total of 65 minutes, and deducts this time (:65) from the 3999 street time (4:30). The result is 3:25.

Now management divides the 3:25, which is 205 minutes, by the possible deliveries. The possible deliveries from the Form 3999 (completed after implementation of the adjustments) is 369. The result is .56 minutes (205 divided by 369). The “street time per possible delivery” is .56 minutes.

**M-39 Section 141.19c** explains how to determine “time per delivery”. To compute this time management adds the “office time per possible delivery” (.43 minutes) and the “street time per possible delivery” (.56 minutes) for a total of .99 minutes per delivery (.43 plus .56 equals .99)

**M-39 Section 141.19d** explains how to determine the number of possible deliveries that need to be removed or added. In this example, it would be the number of deliveries that need to be added, since the route was evaluated at 7:40, or 20 minutes short.

The time being considered for addition (20 minutes) is then divided by the “time per delivery” (.99 minutes). The result of 20 (20 divided by .99) is the number of possible deliveries that need to be added.

### COMPUTING ROUTE TOTAL TIME

The office and street time added to the route are computed individually as follows:

Office:  $.43 \times 20 = 9$  minutes

Street:  $.56 \times 20 = 11$  minutes

The route time as a result of the Minor Adjustment is then listed on the “Summary of Minor Adjustments Worksheet” as:

Route Office Time: 3:29 (3:20 plus :09)

Route Street Time: 4:31 (4:20 plus :11)

Total Time: 8:00

The possible deliveries are now 389 (369 plus 20).

## UNUSUAL CONDITIONS

**M-39 Section 141.19f** states that if unusual conditions exist, the character of the area being transferred must be considered and a fair application of time should be made to office and/or street time allowances.

## ADJUSTMENT PROCEDURES

**M -39 Section 141.19g** explains that the adjustment provisions of the M-39 Section 243.2 apply to Minor Route Adjustments.

## EVALUATION OF ADJUSTMENTS

**M -39 Section 141.19i** states that Minor Route Adjustments should be evaluated as outlined in the M-39 Section 243.6. This section requires management to carefully study and analyze the specific forms and records listed in M-39 Section 243.6 to ensure that the objective of maintaining routes in reasonable adjustment has been met. After adjustments are implemented, a new Form 3999 must be completed to reflect the changes.

If an additional Minor Route Adjustment is needed prior to the next Count and Inspection, this most recent Form 3999 would then be used in the M-39 Section 141.19b formula to determine the “street time used per delivery”. However, the Form 1840 from the last Count and Inspection would still be used in the

M-39 Section 141.19a formula to determine the “office time used per delivery”.

## **D. Section 141.2: Special Office Mail Counts**

*When management desires to determine the efficiency of a carrier in the office, a count of mail may be made. The carrier must be given one day's advance notification of this special count. Use form 1838-C to record count and time items concerned. The carrier must be advised of the result of the office mail count.*

The application of M-39 Section 141.2, Special Office Mail Counts, is simple. When conducting minor adjustments, if management desires to determine the efficiency of a carrier in the office, a count of mail may be made.

The office count must be accomplished in accordance with the applicable provisions of the M-39 Handbook, including the carrier's right to verify the count if management performs the mail count (M-00017, -01216).

Additionally, a carrier not on the Overtime Desired List may be required to work overtime on his/her own route to complete the

office count only if the carrier is being accompanied on the street (M-01217).

Special Office Mail Counts are utilized as part of the Minor Adjustments Section of the M-39 Handbook. These one day counts of mail should only be utilized for the purposes intended by the M-39 Handbook, and local management must ensure they are not used for the purpose of harassment (M-00111).

Additionally, they must not be used to establish a standard (M-00829), as a basis for discipline (M-00005), or to measure pieces per minute (M-01181).

## **E. Summary**

Management has an obligation to maintain routes in reasonable adjustment throughout the year, and in limited circumstances may do so using the minor adjustment process.

Management may only use the minor adjustment process when there is reasonably current Count and Inspection data, the same carrier is serving the route, and the necessary adjustments are minor in scope and nature.

When employing the minor adjustment process, management is required to review specific records in

order to accurately determine the time actually being used by the regular carrier to perform the office and street duties of the route. Management must also apply specific formulas in order to make adjustments.

Arbitrator Gamser has ruled that management may not depart from the minor adjustment procedures in the M-39. His national level decision is binding on management as well as on regional arbitrators.

Branch officers must hold management accountable to strict compliance with the explicit minor adjustment procedures. They must remain alert for management attempts to depart from the required procedures found in the M-39. They must investigate and grieve any process where management evaluates and adjusts routes based on projections, preconceived numbers, volume analysis, etc.

The information provided in this chapter will assist stewards and branch officers with monitoring management's use and misuse of the minor route adjustment process.

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