


Management Instruction

Piece Count Recording System

This management instruction (MI) establishes the national policies and procedures for recording and reporting daily mail volume within Post Offices, and station and branch operations.

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Introduction

Purposes

- To establish standardized measurement methods for all Post Offices, stations, and branches to ensure accurate volume recording.
- Establish procedures to be used for automated end-of-run (EOR) data to increase reporting accuracy and require that other electronic methods of recording are used, if available (e.g., ADVANCE and the Carrier Piece Count (CPC) Report Web site).
- Provide standardized procedures for measuring, counting, and converting mail volume (where needed) into a piece count environment for delivery and customer service operations.
- Assist managers in projecting their workloads so they can effectively budget, staff, and schedule in their units.
- Give managers the workload information necessary to manage delivery and customer service operations more effectively.

Scope

This instruction supersedes all previous Management Instructions regarding the Piece Count Recording System (PCRS) and Delivery Unit Volume Recording System (DUVRS). Each delivery unit must follow a specific set of procedures, which are as follows:

- City Delivery Units with Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS):
 - Use a Data Collection Device (DCD) when available.

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- Use PS Form 3921, *Volume Recording Worksheet*, for support/backup or when no DCD is available.
- City Delivery Units without DOIS:
 - Use PS Form 3921 and convert linearly measured volume to pieces.
 - Enter daily recorded volumes on PS Form 3930, *Operations Analysis*.
- Customer Service Distribution Units and Post Office Box Distribution Units:
 - Use PS Form 3922, *Customer Services Volume Recording Worksheet*.
 - Transfer recorded volume daily to PS Form 3930, *Operations Analysis*.
- All Rural Delivery Offices:
 - The District office may require Rural Delivery Offices to use PS Form 3921.

Division of Responsibility

Area Vice Presidents

Area Vice Presidents are responsible for implementing and ensuring continued compliance with all provisions of this instruction.

District Manager

The District Manager must:

- Ensure that the necessary training is provided to all employees responsible for compliance with all procedures outlined within, including the use of volume data gathered to make decisions.
- Instruct and support subordinate managers at the District level and in Post Offices, stations, and branches to ensure that all levels of management understand and follow this instruction.

Managers, Operations Programs Support; Managers, Post Office Operations; and Postmasters Who Report Directly to the District Manager

Managers, Operations Program Support; Managers, Post Office Operations, and Postmasters who report directly to the District Manager are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the following procedures from this instruction are followed.

- Ensuring that daily unit-wide volume is recorded, posted, and properly used to make decisions.

Note: The Postmaster is responsible for approving any requests to allow an employee, other than management, to measure and record daily mail volumes.

All Other Postmasters; Managers, Customer Service Operations; Managers and Supervisors, Customer Service

All other Postmasters; Managers, Customer Service Operations; Managers and Supervisors, Customer Service are responsible for:

- Ensuring procedures used to measure and record daily workloads are consistent with this instruction.
- The use of the volume recording procedures in all their delivery and customer service operations are performed properly.
- Maintaining the integrity of the recorded data.

Volume Information

Volume Preparation

To ensure correct volume recording in each unit, the following standardized guidelines for staging mail have been established:

- Use measuring tapes on casing equipment to the fullest extent possible.
- Minimize the amount of equipment at the carrier's case by utilizing the flat bins and case ledge to stage the mail properly.
- Consolidate all mail in conveyance equipment (i.e., trays, flat bins, and tubs) to facilitate accurate recording. Do not mix mail types (letters and flats) in a single container.
- Stage linearly measured mail (including the prior day's curtailed mail) to the right of the carrier case (when possible).
- Stage Non Linear Measurement (NLM) mail to the left of the carrier case. NLM includes ADVANCE recorded, mailer facing slips, and special conversions (when possible).
- Stage sequence mail, directs, and segmentations needing no further office handling away from the carrier case to avoid linear measurement and unnecessary handling.
- Sort parcels directly into carrier hampers. When possible place small parcel rolls (SPRs) in flat bins inside the hampers so parcels are separate and mail counts will be accurate.

- Stage delivery point sequence (DPS) mail on the carriers' line of travel out of the office, as near to the exit as possible (exception: foot routes).
- If NLM mail must be curtailed, do the following while ensuring the color code placards remain with the mail at all times:
 1. Remove all NLM tags from mail or containers that **do not** have a mailer facing slip. This mail will now require linear measurement.
 2. Move this mail to the right side of the case and make all subsequent measurements linearly.
 3. Use the roll-in function the next day in DOIS sites.
 4. Curtailed NLM mail with mailer facing slips will receive the piece count from the facing slip (which must remain with the mail).

Volume Recording

Cased Volumes (Letters and Flats)

Cased mail volume will be received and recorded in the delivery units as, Non-automated cased mail, which requires linear measurement and recording, and Non Linear Measurement (NLM) mail, which does not require a measurement.

Linearly Measured Cased Volume

When linearly measuring the cased mail volume, letter and flat mail will be measured separately and all mail will be compressed as it is being measured and recorded to facilitate accurate recording. The linear measurement of cased mail volume will be rounded to the nearest quarter-foot increment, (e.g., .25, .50, .75, 1.0, 1.25, etc). DOIS sites will use the Data Collection Device (DCD) to record the volumes and upload the data into DOIS when available. When the DCD is used, clear the DCD after each upload into DOIS to prevent double counting and artificially inflating mail volumes.

When a DCD is not available and in Non-DOIS sites complete a PS Form 3921 daily (instructions on reverse side of form). City delivery and rural delivery route volumes will be entered on a separate PS Form 3921. If necessary, complete a separate PS Form 3921 for each 5-digit zone.

In all offices the first measurement of mail volume will be performed in the delivery unit prior to the carrier's arrival at the unit. Normal dispatches of mail to the unit should be measured and recorded prior to being released to the carriers.

When necessary withdrawals of mail are authorized by management, this mail can be linearly measured in inches and consolidated before recording. PS Forms 1627 or 3921 can be used as a worksheet to record

these volumes by route. The consolidated mail volumes measured in inches will be rounded to the nearest quarter-foot increments, (e.g., 3 inches = .25, 6 inches = .50, 9 inches = .75) and recorded with the final dispatch of mail to the carriers. This will help ensure the accuracy of mail volumes, which is central to effectively managing workload. These worksheets will be maintained in the unit as a historical record and for management analysis.

When consolidation of these volumes are normally less than .25 feet, management may use PS Form 1627 or 3921 to track these volumes by piece. The consolidated pieces will be reported with the final dispatch of mail to the carriers.

The manager, postmaster, or a designated substitute must record the type and time of all mail coming into the unit each day, including unscheduled and emergency trips.

Cased Mail Automation Counts

All automated volume received in delivery units, customer service mail distribution units, and Post Office box sections is recorded in pieces. This includes pieces in barcode sorter bins such as S999, M001, W001, COA1, etc.

The volume of caseable letters and flats sorted to the route level on automated equipment will be counted and recorded via the End of Run Report (EOR) and requires no linear measurement. This mail will be labeled as Non Linear Measurement (NLM) mail. In DOIS sites, these counts are electronically transmitted. Non-DOIS sites will receive an EOR report with the piece counts broken down to the appropriate section of the operation, (e.g., route, box section, etc.).

Automated mail volumes may be received in an office after the plant cut-off time is observed and not recorded into DOIS for the same day delivery, but will be included in the next day's EOR. This situation, if not corrected, may result in delivered mail volume being credited to the wrong delivery day. Delivery unit managers must adjust the volumes to ensure that mail volume is credited on the day the volume is delivered. This "zero based" adjustment must not result in any loss or extra credit for mail volumes. If the mail is delivered the same day it is received then the volume must be adjusted in DOIS to reflect the correct day of delivery. Volume adjustments that are shared between two days must balance each other out to avoid double counting of mail.

Example: On Monday, the delivery unit receives 1500 pieces of mail after the cutoff and all is delivered that same day. Adjust DOIS on Monday to reflect the 1500 pieces were handled and delivered Monday AND adjust DOIS on Tuesday (the day the 1500 shows on the EOR) to ensure the 1500 recorded on Monday is removed from Tuesday's EOR.

If the volume numbers generated by either EOR or DOIS seem incorrect, supervisors should:

- Refer to the CPC Web site (<http://cpc/cpcWeb>) and review the day's automated volume. Compare this information to DOIS automated volumes.
- Linearly measure mail that arrived that day. If there are discrepancies in the totals, adjust them to accurately reflect volumes.

Note: If you change and save a volume field in DOIS, DOIS will block any further EOR downloads for that day. This creates a situation similar to automated volumes missing the cut-off. EOR's may reflect volumes sent to delivery units for delivery today, however the volumes is credited on the following day's EOR. Supervisors must adjust volumes in DOIS to reflect these corrections.

Delivery Point Sequence Volume

In DOIS sites, the EOR download will record DPS volume in pieces, directly into DOIS. This volume includes mail designated to carrier routes and other bins as directed by station input e.g., Window Call (W001), Change of Address (COA1), Non-Delivery Day (N001), and Temp Hold (T001). Multiple Delivery Point Mail (M records) is considered cased volume. Non-DOIS sites will record DPS piece count information that is received from mail processing either from a printout dispatched with the DPS mail or may record the volumes obtained directly from the CPC Web site on PS Form 3921.

Sequenced Mail

Sequenced mailings, including letters and flats, that do not require casing must be recorded in DOIS as one set(s) per mail type. This will credit each route with one piece per residential delivery. If partial sets are delivered, enter the fraction (e.g., .25, .50) of the set delivered. This will provide for the appropriate percentage of residential deliveries that the sequenced mail was delivered to for the day. The remaining portion should be credited on the actual day of delivery. Non-DOIS sites make manual conversions, one piece for each residential delivery per AMS data.

Note: When there is a full coverage set of samples, the volume(s), must be entered in DOIS as sequenced mail and on the PS Form 3921 in pieces for each residential delivery. The Detached Address Label (DAL) is entered as one set of letters and the sample pieces as one set of flats provided they are not cased volume and are delivered the same day. When the DAL is cased, the letter volume will be entered as cased letter pieces in DOIS or PS Form 3921. Use the piece count from any mailer facing slip attached, or enter the number of residential deliveries

for the pieces being delivered. Local management is responsible for ensuring the integrity of these counts.

Conversion Rates

These charts will help you determine how many pieces of mail are in linearly measured mail volume. Example, if a route received 2.25 feet of cased letters; take the 2.25 feet of letters multiplied by 227 pieces per foot to equal 511 pieces.

Letter Type	Total Pieces per Foot
Manual	227
Automated (DPS)	215
Sequenced	227

Flat Type	Total Pieces per Foot
Manual	115
Automated	115
Sequenced	115

Other Types of Mail

Irregular Parcels and Pieces/Small Parcels and Rolls (IPP/SPRs)

Individual piece counts must be made of Irregular Parcels and Pieces/Small Parcels and Rolls (IPP/SPRs). These volumes must be entered for each route in DOIS.

Local mailers, Business Mail Entry Unit (BMEU), or ADVANCE mailing information must be used in lieu of a linear measurement. When a mailer facing slip is attached to each bundle, that information is used to determine the amount of credit for each route. This data provides the most accurate piece count information by route in a unit and should be entered directly into DOIS or onto PS Form 3921.

Under no circumstances should IPP/SPRs be counted using a linear measurement. This practice does not accurately reflect mail volume or workload.

Parcels and Priority Packages

All parcels will be piece counted on a daily basis, including Priority packages and recorded in DOIS or entered on PS Form 3921.

Segmented volume that is bundled and taken directly to the street for delivery and does not require further sortation in the office or on the street by a letter carrier is credited as one parcel.

How Volume Information is Used

General

To effectively manage a unit, you must evaluate the workload every day. You may do this by looking at the volume data for delivery, manual mail distribution, and post office box distribution and then matching the work hours to workload.

Unit managers will review and monitor the daily work performance of each employee while evaluating the daily workload of the unit. Clear unit goals and expectations must be shared with all employees in the unit.

Daily piece counts, recorded in accordance with these procedures, may be used in conjunction with other management records and procedures to monitor letter carrier performance and to assist supervisors in identifying and correcting performance deficiencies.

Additional information or tools that may be used to address city carrier performance issues are:

- Handbook M-39, *Management of Delivery Services*.
- Handbook M-41, *City Carrier Duties and Responsibilities*.
- PS Form 1838C, *Carriers Count of Mail – Letter Carriers Route Worksheet*.
- PS Form 1840, *Carrier Delivery Route – Summary of Count and Inspection*.

City Routes

The delivery unit manager should use daily piece counts for units, individual routes, or router assignments to determine if variances in the daily workload or work hours require management action. The counts are also used for effectively planning, scheduling, and budgeting employee workhours.

After entering all volume in DOIS or on PS Form 3921, the manager can determine the number of work hours needed for each assignment based on the day's recorded volume. This quantifiable data is available to DOIS sites using the Workload Status Report. The Workload Status Report is a primary supervisory tool to assist delivery unit supervisors manage the daily workload for letter carriers and control workhour usage. The volume information will be used as supporting documentation when completing PS Form 3996, *Carrier – Auxiliary Control*, and PS Form 1571, *Undelivered Mail Report*.

Rural Routes

Daily volume recording on rural routes must be conducted in the following circumstances:

- a. When the route is involved in a national or special mail count.
- b. For routes receiving sector/segment or DPS mail.
- c. As directed by Headquarters, Area, or District policy.

Customer Service Mail Distribution

Workload and productivity for customer service and Post Office box distribution are based upon accurate collection of data related to volume, either measured linearly or from EOR reports, and documented on PS Form 3922. For mail moving to manual operations from automation, record information from EOR reports provided by the plant, Delivery Distribution Center (DDC), or local automation operations. Linearly measured mail should be recorded only for mail requiring further distribution. Accurate daily recording of volumes helps the manager determine proper staffing and scheduling in the unit.

Further information on function four volume recording requirements can be found in MI PO-610-2002-3, *Function 4 Standardized Customer Service Workload Reporting System*.

Post Office Box Distribution

Accurate daily recording of volumes received for distribution into Post Office boxes and knowledge of existing variables enable the manager to project the required workhours on a given day to distribute mail volume received.

Historical

Historical data is used by every level within the organization, including budget forecasting, staffing and scheduling. The accumulation of volume data provides management with historical trend lines for comparison with current and forecasted mail volumes. Additional benefits are derived by using historical data to forecast periods of exceptionally high or low volume. This information is used as a general guide to assist in scheduling employees in relation to predicted variations of workload.