



September 15, 2006

MANAGERS, DELIVERY PROGRAMS SUPPORT (AREA)  
MANAGERS, HUMAN RESOURCES (AREA)  
MANAGERS, LABOR RELATIONS (AREA)  
MANAGERS, HUMAN RESOURCES (DISTRICT)  
MANAGERS, OPERATIONS PROGRAMS SUPPORT (DISTRICT)

SUBJECT: National and Special Rural Mail Counts

Management, at some postal facilities will be conducting special rural mail counts beginning September 18, 2006. The purpose of this directive is to make certain those counts, and all subsequent rural mail counts, are conducted in accordance with the decision by Arbitrator Dana Eischen in his national award involving the 2002 rural mail count. This award may be found on the corporate intranet at:

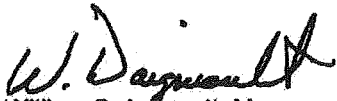
[http://blue.usps.gov/delivery/rural/rural\\_mail\\_count\\_eischen\\_award.pdf](http://blue.usps.gov/delivery/rural/rural_mail_count_eischen_award.pdf)

The emphasis of this award is that the basic purpose of a mail count is an accurate recording of mail count data to determine the route's evaluation. It is not permissible to create, enforce, publish, and impose standards or limitations on markups, loading time and other ("column R") time prior to and during the count "so as to make the count data for those targeted elements conform to preconceived intended outcomes."

It has always been the Postal Service's position that it is unacceptable for either management or rural carriers to take actions that affect the integrity of the mail count. It is essential that only the actual time be recorded for elements that are timed, and actual piece counts be recorded for elements that are counted. These principles are of central importance. We recognize that the strategy of establishing benchmarks for columns J, Q, and R predicated on national averages has not been utilized in any subsequent mail counts since the 2002 national mail count. This memo is simply intended to ensure that we continue to management future mail counts without limiting legitimate credit based on actual time or pieces of mail.

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Consistent with the above, areas, districts, and subordinate postal facilities shall not establish, explicitly or implicitly, any caps, ceilings, benchmarks, targets, or thresholds based on averages that may be designed to limit the time or credit for any element of a mail count in advance of or during the mail count. However, postal management should continue to take steps to ensure that the most efficient and best practices are followed in every mail count and may continue to target and review legitimate outliers or inappropriate credit.



William Daigheault, Manager  
Contract Administration (NRLCA)  
Labor Relations



Patrick S. Conrad  
Manager, Rural Delivery  
Delivery Programs