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VICE PRESIDENT, SOUTHWEST AREA OPERATIONS



April 16, 2002

DISTRICT MANAGERS
SOUTHWEST AREA

SUBJECT: Scheduled Leaving Times for Rural Carriers

As we finalize adjustments to rural routes resulting from the recent count, we must address our customers' concern about inconsistent delivery times. In order to maximize savings but ensure that service is maintained we must build a stable foundation. This adjustment period presents many opportunities to support both cost efficiency and service initiatives.

Maximizing regular routes will eliminate the need to create multiple auxiliary routes requiring six-day coverage. Routes built in the 40K to 43K levels will provide staffing stability and more efficient use of relief employees. Typically one auxiliary route will be sufficient in most delivery zones and the creation of additional auxiliary routes should be carefully reviewed to ensure proper justification.

This maximization approach will support our goal to effectively manage carrier-leaving times and ultimately provide consistent times of delivery to all customers. Consistent time of delivery does not necessarily require the carrier to deliver the mail at the same time every day, however there must be a pattern to the delivery times. An example would be, on high volume days, every Monday, the customer would receive their mail at 3:30 to 4:00, on normal volume days the customer would receive their mail from 3:00 to 3:30.

Another method that is available is the adjustment of schedules for earlier report times on days when the projected mail volume is greater than normal in order to maintain scheduled leaving times. It is important to remember that consistent time of delivery is not an acceptable reason for requiring rural carriers to take DPS to the street, however the failure to meet their daily evaluation on a regular basis would be justification

On May 4, 2002 the new route evaluations will become effective. New daily schedules must be created using the new route information from the *PS Form 4241-A, Rural Route Evaluation*. Schedules for leaving should be established on the *PS Form 4240*, however management may approve up to a 20-minute delay in the leaving times. Exceptions are made only when preferential mail cannot be cased and tied out within the 20 minute leeway, provided the later departure allows the carrier to meet the normal dispatch schedule.

I am confident that the maximization of our regular rural routes will minimize the impact to our regular rural carrier workforce in addition to enhancing our efforts to improve customer satisfaction.

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