

Christmas Pay Procedures for Rural Carriers

The 2012 Christmas period for rural carriers begins Saturday, December 1, 2012 (Week 1, Pay Period 26-2012), and ends Friday, December 21, 2012, Week 1 of Pay Period 01-2013. During this period, certain timekeeping and pay rules apply. Timekeepers, including postmasters, supervisors, and other employees responsible for rural carrier time and attendance recording, should become familiar with Article 9.2.K., Christmas Allowances and Procedures, of the 2010-2015 USPS/National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA) Agreement.

This article describes the types of compensation to which rural carriers are entitled during the Christmas period. It also describes related timekeeping procedures and regulations for the Christmas period, as well as special rules which begin with the start of the Rural Guarantee Year (October 20, 2012) and continue through the end of the Christmas period.

The National Office has received numerous concerns from the field pertaining to directives from USPS management as it relates to the Christmas over-time period. These directives in part are instructing local managers to do the following:

1. Carriers cannot work over their daily evaluation (for any reason).
2. No over-time or auxiliary assistance because letter and flat volume is down.
3. If carriers work over their evaluation require them to carry DPS mail to the street.
4. Change reporting times (schedules) on a daily basis with expectation of low volume or to give auxiliary assistance.
5. Threatening to adjust carrier routes if they work over the daily evaluation.

The National Board is alarmed by some of these directives as they are in violation of handbooks, manuals and the contract. Therefore, we are compelled to place all rural carriers on notification of their rights and instructions on how to handle these issues.

First and foremost we are instructing all rural carriers that they are to work safely and should not be pressured to work in a manner that places their well-being or life at risk.

Attached with this memo you will find a Postal Service Form *PS Form 1767*, Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice, along with instructions on preparing this form and a copy of the language from the contract **Article 14 Section 1. and Section 2.A.** that addresses management's responsibility to provide a safe working condition for all employees and the employees' rights.

If any rural carrier feels that they are being pressured or forced to work in a manner that places them in an unsafe situation, just to comply with these unrealistic directives, you may request a *PS Form 1767*, fill out the form and return it to your immediate supervisor. Discuss the issue with your immediate supervisor and, if unresolved, immediately file a grievance and contact the assigned Assistant District Representative or District Representative for your area.

Article 8 Section 2. Addresses schedules and the fact that the carrier's work day may vary above or below the daily evaluation of the route, as mail volume fluctuates and road conditions and weather conditions change. As we all know there are parts of the country where there is already inclement weather that can affect the carrier's work day. In addition, there is an increase in large parcels that will not fit in the mail box and must be carried to the door (up to ½ mile) off the carrier's line of travel that affects the daily work hours.

Management may take the "knee jerk" reaction and require carriers to carry DPS mail to the street. This should only be done when carriers are consistently working over their weekly evaluation and should be monitored all year not just as a reaction in trying to make the numbers. This issue was clearly addressed and defined in the April 26, 1999

minutes of the National Joint Steering Committee for the QWL/EI process. In addition, this issue was addressed by William Galligan, Vice President of Delivery and Retail for the USPS in a letter dated November 26, 2003, and again by Phil Knolls (same position) in 2004. (See attachments).

The letter in part states, "The carrier may be required to take DPS mail directly to the street if it is anticipated that they will be unable to meet the overall evaluation of the route for the week. The decision to carry DPS directly to the street should be made on a case-by-case basis and *may not minimize total actual work hours* if the carrier normally carries the DPS mail and will not perform efficiently on the street".

Scheduling is addressed in Article 30.G. of the contract. It states, in part, "Schedules should be realistic, based upon the receipt and availability of mail and other related service conditions. ***The rural carrier will receive reasonable advanced notice when the schedule is to be changed.***"

While management has the right to give auxiliary assistance to control over-time hours during the Christmas Period, it is the position of the NRLCA National Board that reporting times should not be changed on a daily or weekly basis.

For those of you having issues with starting times being changed, in some cases as late as noon, please be advised we currently have a case pending National Arbitration on this issue JOOR-4J- C09082619. Additional grievances are not required but **may be filed at the local offices and held in abeyance at step 2.** While all offices are covered by the pending Arbitration case, the purpose of filing is to be sure and documents the cases currently transpiring in case there is a future monetary remedy.

If any rural carrier has any questions or concerns, please contact the assigned Assistant District Representative or District Representative for your area.

Respectfully,

Your National Board

REPORT OF HAZARD, UNSAFE CONDITION OR PRACTICE

I. Employee's Action

<i>Area (Specify Work Location)</i>		
Describe Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice. Recommended Corrective Action.		
Employee	Signature	Date and Tour

II. Supervisor's Action

Recommend or Describe Specific Action Taken to Eliminate the Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice. (If Corrective Action Has Been Taken, Indicate the Date of Abatement.)		
Supervisor	Signature	Date

III. Approving Official's Action

(Check One and Complete)

	The Following Corrective Action was Taken to Eliminate the Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice <i>(Indicate Date of Abatement):</i>		
	A Work Order Has Been Submitted to the Manager, Plant Maintenance, to Effect the Following Change:		
	There Are No Reasonable Grounds to Determine Such a Hazard Exists. This Decision is Based Upon:		
Approving Official	Signature	Date	Date Employee Notified

IV. Maintenance Action *(Complete if Necessary)*

Maintenance Supervisor	Signature	Date	Date Hazard Abated
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INSTRUCTIONS

I. EMPLOYEE

- a. Complete section I. and file it with your immediate supervisor.
- b. If you desire anonymity, complete section I. (including your name) and file the report with the Safety Office. Safety personnel will immediately return the form to your supervisor for necessary action, and will delete your name from the form to ensure your anonymity.

II. SUPERVISOR

- a. Investigate the alleged hazard during the same tour of duty in which the report was received.
- b. Abate the hazard if it is within the scope of your authority to do so.
- c. Record the action taken to eliminate the hazard or record recommendation for corrective action in section II. and sign your name.
- d. Forward the original and yellow copy to your immediate supervisor (approving official); send the pink copy to the Safety Office; and give the employee the remaining blue copy as a receipt. It is your responsibility to monitor the status of the report, at all times, until the hazard is abated.

III. APPROVING OFFICIAL

- a. Initiate action to eliminate or minimize the hazard. If this results in the submission of a work order, attach the original of this form, and forward through channels, to the manager, Plant Maintenance.
- b. If you determine that there are no reasonable grounds to believe a hazard exists, notify the employee in writing within 15 calendar days. Safety personnel will assist you in this determination when requested.
- c. If the hazard was abated by the first line supervisor or when it has been abated through your actions, notify the employee in writing, and send the original of this form to the Safety Office.

IV. MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR

When the work order has been completed, sign, date, and return the original of this form to the approving official who will then forward it to the Safety Office.

824.6 Investigating Employee Reports of Hazard, Unsafe Condition, or Practice

824.61 Purpose of PS Form 1767, Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice

PS Form 1767 is designed to encourage employee participation in the Postal Service Safety and Health Program and to provide prompt action when employees report a hazard. This form provides a channel of communication between employees and management that promotes a prompt analysis and response with corrective action to reports of alleged hazards, unsafe conditions, or unsafe practices.

824.62 Availability of Form

Supervisors must maintain a supply of PS Forms 1767 in the workplace in a manner that provides employees with both easy and (if desired) anonymous access.

824.63 Procedures and Responsibilities

824.631 Employee

Any employee, or the representative of any employee, who believes that an unsafe or unhealthful condition exists in the workplace may do any or all of the following:

- a. File a report of the condition on PS Form 1767 with the immediate supervisor and request an inspection of the alleged condition.
- b. If the employee desires anonymity, file PS Form 1767 directly with the installation's safety personnel, who will immediately give the report to the employee's supervisor for necessary action. (In such cases, safety personnel must not disclose the name of the individual making the report.)
- c. Report alleged unsafe conditions to a steward, if one is available, who may then discuss the condition with the employee's supervisor.

Discrimination against an employee for reporting a safety and health hazard is unlawful.

824.632 Supervisor

The immediate supervisor must promptly (within the tour of duty):

- a. Investigate the alleged condition.
- b. Initiate immediate corrective action or make appropriate recommendations.
- c. Record actions or recommendations on PS Form 1767.
- d. Forward the original PS Form 1767 and one copy to the next appropriate level of management (approving official).
- e. Give the employee a copy signed by the supervisor as a receipt.
- f. Immediately forward the third copy to the safety office.

It is the supervisor's responsibility to monitor the status of the report at all times until the hazard is abated. If the hazard remains unabated longer than 7 calendar days, the supervisor must verbally inform the employee as to abatement status at the end of each 7-day interval.

824.633 Approving Official

The approving official (the responsible manager) must initiate action to eliminate or minimize the hazard. If this results in the submission of a work order, attach the original PS Form 1767 and forward it, through channels, to the manager of Maintenance. If the approving official determines that there are no reasonable grounds to believe such a hazard exists, the employee must be notified in writing within 15 calendar days. (Safety personnel must assist in this determination when requested.) If the hazard was abated through actions of the approving official, the employee must be notified in writing, and the original PS Form 1767, with a statement of actions taken, must be forwarded to the safety office.

824.634 Safety Personnel and Collateral Duty Facility Safety Coordinators

Safety personnel assigned to plants and FSCs must log and sequentially number all hazard reports received on PS Form 1773, *Report of Hazard Log*, or if the FSC has computer access, enter the reports into the Hazard Log Module of the Safety Toolkit. Safety personnel and FSCs must also review all PS Forms 1767 for accuracy, completeness, and follow-up, as necessary. They must routinely provide status reports of PS Form 1773 logs and Safety Toolkit reports at executive and joint Labor-Management Safety and Health Committee meetings (or regular staff meetings in facilities with fewer than 50 employees).

824.635 Maintenance

Maintenance must notify the approving official when any PS Form 1767 maintenance-related work order has been completed.

824.636 Installation Head

Installation heads/managers are responsible for responding promptly to hazard reports and ensuring that line supervisors are diligent in correcting hazards. If a hazard report indicates that imminent or serious danger exists, the installation head must take immediate corrective action.

effort to insure that employees with job-related illnesses or injuries are returned to duty subject to their medical restrictions.

Section 3. No Light Duty Assignments

In the rural carrier craft, at any local installation, regular rural routes shall not be considered for any light duty assignment.

**ARTICLE 14
SAFETY AND HEALTH**

Section 1. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of management to provide safe working conditions in all present and future installations and to develop a safe working force. The Union will cooperate with and assist management to live up to this responsibility.

Section 2. Cooperation

A. Safety Administration

The Employer and the Union insist on the observance of safe rules and safe procedures by employees and insist on correction of unsafe conditions. Mechanization, vehicles and vehicle equipment, and the work place must be maintained in a safe and sanitary condition, including adequate occupational health and environmental conditions. The Employer shall make available at each installation forms to be used by employees in reporting unsafe and unhealthful conditions. If an employee believes he is being required to work under unsafe conditions, he may: a) notify the supervisor who will immediately investigate the condition and take corrective action, if necessary; b) file a grievance if no corrective action is taken during the tour; and/or c) make a written report to the installation head.

B. Health Services

The Employer will make health service available for the treatment of job-related injury or illness where it determines they are needed. The health service will be available from

Article 14.2

any of the following sources: U.S. Public Health Service; other government or public medical sources within the area; independent or private medical facilities or services that can be contracted for; or in the event funds, spaces, and personnel are available for such purposes, they may be staffed at the installation. The Employer will promulgate appropriate regulations which comply with applicable regulations of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, including employee choice of health services.

C. Occupational Safety and Health Act

The Employer will comply with Section 19 of the Williams-Steiger Occupational Safety and Health Act.

Section 3. Local Safety Meeting

As provided in Article 31, safety and health may be a subject of discussion in labor-management meetings. In such discussions, the participants shall review the progress in accident prevention, including the correction of correctable road and health hazards at the installation; determine program areas which should have increased emphasis; and they may investigate major accidents which result in disabling injuries.

The participants may make recommendations for actions on matters concerning safety and health to the installation head. The installation head shall, within a reasonable period of time, advise them that the recommended action has been taken or the reasons for not accepting the recommendations.

**ARTICLE 15
GRIEVANCE AND ARBITRATION PROCEDURE**

Section 1. General Policy

Grievances which are filed pursuant to this Article are to be processed and adjudicated based on the principle of resolving such grievances at the lowest possible level in an expeditious manner, insuring that all facts and issues are identified and considered by both parties. In the event that a grievance is processed beyond Step 1, both parties are responsible to insure

Article 8

ARTICLE 8 HOURS OF WORK

Section 1. Work Week

The basic work week for regular rural carrier employees shall be six (6) days, except as relief days are provided for certain carriers and for carriers serving triweekly routes. Regular rural carriers may not work on Sunday.

Section 2. Work Schedules

Daily schedules shall be established to coincide with the daily evaluation of the route and adjusted periodically as required. The carrier's work day may vary above or below the daily evaluation of the route as mail volume fluctuates and road and weather conditions change.

Section 3. Hourly Basis

When a rural carrier is being compensated on an hourly basis, the hourly rate is computed as follows:

A. Straight Time Rate

1. Regular rural carrier –The annual salary for a 40-hour evaluated route divided by 2,080.
2. Part-time flexible rural carriers, substitute and auxiliary carriers –The annual salary for a 40-hour evaluated route divided by 2,000.
3. Rural carrier associates and rural carrier relief employees on the rolls prior to August 24, 1991 – See RCA/RCR Schedules on page 76.
4. Rural carrier associates hired beginning August 24, 1991 – See RCA/RCR Schedules on page 76.

B. Overtime Rate

When a rural carrier craft employee is being compensated on an hourly basis, overtime pay is to be paid at the rate of 150% of the basic hourly straight time rate for regular carriers except in those instances when FLSA overtime is applicable.

Section 4. Guarantees

Any employee scheduled to work and who does report for work shall be guaranteed two (2) hours work or pay.

Section 5. Relief Day Worked

A. The relief day work list at each delivery unit shall be

established twice during each guarantee period. Each time the new relief day work list is established it shall supersede the previous list. All regular carriers, regardless of route classification, desiring to work their relief days shall place their names on the relief day work list.

The first opportunity to sign the relief day work list will be two weeks prior to the beginning of the new guarantee period. The second opportunity to sign the relief day work list will be two weeks prior to the beginning of the first full pay period in May. When a regular rural carrier is needed to work a relief day, due to the unavailability of a leave replacement, the Employer will:

1. Select carriers on the list, in order of seniority on a rotating basis, to work on the relief day.
2. If the need still exists, the Employer will accept volunteers from regular carriers not on the list before requiring regular carriers not on the list to work the relief day. Such requirement will be by juniority.

B. On the day the regular carrier works the relief day, the assigned leave replacement may be required to work any route in the delivery unit consistent with the provisions of this Agreement. Administrative errors in the assignment of work to regular carriers on relief days will not result in monetary remedies.

C. The Employer is not required to work any regular carrier on a relief day if it would cause the carrier to exceed the hours of the annual guarantee or fifty-six (56) actual hours within one (1) week.

Section 6. Wash-up Time

Additional wash-up time for those rural carriers who perform dirty work or work with toxic materials on a daily or weekly basis may be claimed under "Other Suitable Allowances" at the time of a mail count, provided the carrier is subject to allergic reaction from such dirty work or toxic materials. The amount of wash-up time granted each employee shall be subject to the grievance procedure.

Section 7. Changes in Number of Delivery Days

If, pursuant to present or future law, changes are made in the number of delivery days, the effects of the change on employees will be negotiated by the parties and all provisions of this Agreement inconsistent with the change will be amended to conform with the change.

"Park it Right" that the SAJSC referred to in the minutes. Any initiatives that can increase safety awareness and potentially reduce our accident rate should be shared with as many districts as possible.

DELIVERY POINT SEQUENCING

More and more carriers are being requested to take DPS to the street and not case this mail. The NJSC still supports the carrier's right to case DPS mail in accordance with Part 150 of Handbook PO-603. The carrier may leave late, but not so significantly as to cause delays in the customer anticipated delivery window. In addition, carriers who cannot return to the office as scheduled or cannot, on a consistent basis, meet the overall evaluation of the route may be required to take their DPS directly to the street without casing.

PROFICIENCY INDEX

Another meeting was held with Selection, Evaluation and Recognition regarding the rural proficiency index. Meetings with two focus groups of carriers, two focus groups of managers, and two focus groups of customers have been proposed as the target audience from which to gather data. A group of subject matter experts and representatives of the NRLCA will review the final package. If funding is provided, this project could be underway before the end of April.

MISCELLANEOUS

SAJSC Co-Chairs Meeting - The committee reviewed what we intended to cover in our meeting with the SAJSC and its co-chairs on Thursday.

Management Participation - The NJSC discussed the recent departure of a management facilitator after being pressured by management to "give up" QWL/EI, as it holds little importance to this particular POOM. The committee is very concerned that the process is being cut as we are asked to tighten our budgets. On March 22, Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President Clarence E. Lewis, Jr. issued a letter to the Area Vice Presidents reminding them of the importance of continuing the QWL/EI process. His letter advises the Vice Presidents that curtailment of process participation under the guise of budgetary constraints is unacceptable. In addition, he fully expects active participation in the process from district personnel. Hopefully, this showing of support by Mr. Lewis will shortcut any plans to "make budget" by discontinuing the process.

Mobile Data Collection Device (MDCD) Study - A meeting has been set for April 7 with the data collectors and headquarters and NRLCA representatives to debrief the participants involved in the study. Study results will be developed and analyzed following the debriefing.

Invitations - The NJSC received a request from the Portland, Oregon DJSC to attend an event planned for April 14, 1999. The NJSC will be unable to attend as it conflicts with our scheduled monthly meeting.

Safety - Steve Smith, Bob West and Cathy Perron are members of the newly formed Rural Carrier Accident Reduction Subcommittee working at the headquarters level with safety and transportation. Bob and Cathy represent delivery and labor relations, respectively, on this subcommittee. This subcommittee is looking into ways of reducing the risk of serious accidents on rural routes. Additionally, Steve is securing information from the National Safety Council that may help in realizing potential solutions.



November 26, 2003

VICE PRESIDENTS, AREA OPERATIONS
MANAGER, CAPITAL METRO OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: Rural Carrier Christmas Overtime Period

The Christmas period for rural carriers begins on Saturday, December 6 and continues through December 26, 2003. During this time rural carriers are entitled to certain compensation exclusive to the Christmas period and paid in accordance with the provisions of Article 9.2.K. of the 2000 – 2004 National Agreement between the USPS and the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA).

It is important that all managers responsible for rural delivery review this provision along with the timekeeping procedures outlined in Postal Bulletin 22114 (10-30-03). The unique compensation provisions do not create an avenue for excessive use of work hours or payment of overtime and managers must ensure that rural carrier work hours are closely monitored during this period, as well as throughout the year.

During Fiscal Year 2003, the average overtime work hours for rural carriers during the 12 accounting periods (AP), excluding AP 4 (the Christmas period) were approximately 262,000 hours per AP. During AP 4, the number of overtime work hours paid to rural carriers increased 165 percent to more than 894,000 hours. This increase in paid overtime hours highlights the need to monitor rural carrier work hour performance during the Christmas period.

During the Christmas period, regular rural carriers receive overtime compensation when the actual work hours for the week exceed the evaluated hours of the route. In addition, regular rural carriers who provide assistance on the scheduled relief day on his or her route will receive overtime compensation for these work hours. Leave replacements receive overtime for all hours worked in excess of 40 in the work week and any leave replacement serving an auxiliary route is paid actual work hours for the route as opposed to the evaluated hours during the Christmas period.

As discussed during the rural telecon with area representatives held on November 12, district and area analysts must work with the local post offices to establish tracking mechanisms to monitor work hours and control overtime paid during this period. Daily reporting may be established through the use of a control center to receive daily call-ins, email reporting, etc., and provide guidance to local offices for managing the Christmas period.

One area of consideration when managing rural workload against the work hours should include decisions regarding the handling of Delivery Point Sequence (DPS) mail by rural carriers. Rural carriers may case DPS mail for the route provided they can meet the overall evaluation of the route on a consistent basis and that a late departure for the street is not so significant as to cause delays in the customer's anticipated delivery window. The carrier may be required to take DPS directly to the street if it is anticipated that they will be unable to meet the overall evaluation of the route for the week; and during the Christmas period this would place the carrier in an overtime situation. **The decision to carry DPS directly to the street should be made on a case-by-case basis and may not minimize total actual work hours if the carrier normally cases the DPS mail and will not perform efficiently on the street.**

Additional areas to be monitored and reviewed to ensure rural carrier work hours during this period directly correlate to workload include:

- Awareness of changes in mail mix – Standard mail versus Parcel Post.
- Use of auxiliary assistance to handle increased parcel volumes versus potential overtime for regular carriers to serve the route.
- Daily monitoring of work hours – management review of Form 4240, *Rural Carrier Trip Report*. Although Christmas overtime is paid based on the regular carrier's weekly work hours; daily monitoring may indicate that a problem will be evident at week's end.
- Limit use of regular rural carriers as Christmas assistance.
- Unusual weather conditions.
- Maintaining schedules including starting times.
- While there is no prohibition against scheduling QWL/EI work team meetings during the Christmas period, work hours spent in these meetings will accrue in the weekly work hours and may cause a carrier to exceed the route evaluation for the week.

Questions concerning rural carrier work hour performance during the Christmas period may be directed to Robert West at () or Cathy Perron at ().


William P. Galligan
Acting Vice President
Delivery and Retail

cc: Mr. Rapp
Mr. Vegliante
Managers, Operations Support
Managers, Delivery Programs Support



November 15, 2004

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

SUBJECT: Rural Carrier Christmas Overtime Period

As stated in previous correspondence, the Christmas overtime period for rural carriers begins on Saturday, December 4 and continues through Friday, December 24, 2004. During this period, rural carriers are entitled to certain compensation not provided during the remainder of the year. Because of these unique compensation provisions, it is important that managers focus on rural delivery management and effective use of work hours to match workload. This type of rural delivery management should occur throughout the year, not solely during the Christmas period.

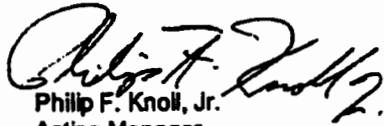
In order to assist with effective management during the Christmas period, it is recommended that area and district analysts work with local post offices to establish tracking mechanisms to monitor work hours and control overtime paid. Guidance may be provided by establishing control centers, distributing electronic tracking sheets, further educating management on overtime calculation, requiring daily call-ins or email reporting, etc. Several areas have developed electronic tracking sheets which have been used successfully to assist with monitoring rural carrier work hours and overtime during the Christmas period. A copy of two of these programs will be forwarded to the area rural operations specialist, to be used if desired. These are provided only as examples and it is not a requirement to use either of these programs, particularly if something developed locally has worked well in the past. A copy of a Control Center checklist, which proved successful in the Northeast area in managing the workload and work hours during the Christmas period, is attached and will also be sent electronically to the areas. Please remind all offices that tracking sheets are used to monitor work hours and Christmas overtime and should not be used as the source document for time certificate completion. Instructions for proper time certificate completion can be found in the Postal Bulletin dated 11-11-04.

One area of consideration when managing rural workload against the work hours during the Christmas period should include decisions regarding the handling of Delivery Point Sequence (DPS) mail by rural carriers. Rural carriers may case DPS mail for the route provided they can meet the overall evaluation of the route on a consistent basis and that a late departure for the street is not so significant as to cause delays in the customer's anticipated delivery window. The carrier may be required to take DPS directly to the street if it is anticipated that they will be unable to meet the overall evaluation of the route for the week. During the Christmas period, working over the evaluation of the route will generate overtime for the regular carrier. However, the decision to carry DPS directly to the street should be made on a case-by-case basis. In some instances, if the carrier normally cases the DPS mail, he or she may not be able to perform as proficiently as expected when DPS is taken directly to the street.

Additional areas to be monitored and reviewed to ensure that rural carrier work hours directly correlate to workload during this period and there is adequate management of overtime include:

- Awareness of changes in mail mix – Standard mail versus Parcel Post.
- Use of auxiliary assistance to handle increased parcel volumes versus potential overtime for regular carriers to serve the route.
- Daily monitoring of work hours – management review of PS Form 4240, *Rural Carrier Trip Report*. Although Christmas overtime is paid based on the regular carrier's weekly work hours; daily monitoring may indicate that a problem will be evident at week's end.
- Regular carriers' requests to work on scheduled relief day or designated Christmas holiday.
- Limit use of regular rural carriers as Christmas assistance.
- Unusual weather conditions.
- Maintaining schedules including starting times.
- While there is no prohibition against scheduling QWL/EI work team meetings during the Christmas period, work hours spent in these meetings will accrue in the weekly work hours and may cause a carrier to exceed the route evaluation for the week.

Questions concerning rural carrier work hour performance during the Christmas period may be directed to Robert West at () or Cathy Perron at ()


Philip F. Knoll, Jr.
Acting Manager
Delivery Support

Attachment

cc: Mr. Galligan
Managers, Operations Support (Area)

Article 30.1.B

ditions consistent with the capacity of the facility shall be provided each rural carrier to prepare mail for delivery.

C. Non-Conforming Boxes

A rural carrier may not be required to serve a box which does not conform to the Employer's delivery standards.

D. Roads and Approaches

Rural carriers shall be required to provide service to all customers on their assigned routes. The Employer shall be kept informed of road conditions on rural routes and shall endeavor to obtain cooperation from highway officials and customers in keeping roads passable and in good repair and approaches to boxes opened.

E. Route Remeasurement

Rural routes shall be remeasured upon request of the rural carrier or when the Employer determines it necessary. The rural carrier assigned to the route has the right to be present in a non-duty status at the remeasurement.

F. Lunch Break

1. Rural carrier craft employees may stop for not more than thirty (30) minutes for lunch. If carriers stop for lunch, the exact time used must be recorded.
2. Lunch may be taken in segments of less than thirty (30) minutes, at the carrier's option, provided the time taken does not exceed thirty (30) minutes. Segments may be taken in the office or on the route, provided the normal schedule is maintained to the extent possible. The parties agree that the lunch time taken by the carrier is not compensable.
3. Rural carrier craft employees may be permitted to travel a reasonable distance off their prescribed line of travel to and from an authorized lunch stop.

G. Scheduling

Scheduling is the responsibility of the Employer. Schedules shall be realistic, based upon the receipt and availability of the mail, the route evaluation, and other related service considerations. The rural carrier will receive reasonable advance notice when the schedule is to be changed. When the Employer changes the relief day of the regular carrier in accordance with Article 9.2.C.5.d.(2) and 9.2.C.5.e., the carrier will receive notice of the change no later than the Saturday of the service week preceding the

effective week of the change.

H. Acts of God

When Acts of God prevent an employee from performing the employee's duty, the Employer may authorize administrative leave. Equipment Maintenance Allowance will be paid for each service day a rural carrier reports to the post office and is scheduled to perform delivery. If the carrier fails to serve all or any portion of the route due to lack of proper endeavor or any failure for which the carrier is responsible, appropriate deductions from salary and Equipment Maintenance Allowance will be made based on miles omitted.

I. Turning in Mail and Funds

Rural carriers will turn in all mail and funds upon their return from the route. Normally, the Employer will arrange for hand-to-hand transfer of accountability. However, the Employer may provide other suitable methods for relieving the carrier of accountability. In either event, the rural carrier's liability shall be determined as specified in Article 28, Employer Claims.

J. Carrier's Rights in Route Adjustments

The regular rural carrier assigned to the route shall be notified in advance of any route adjustments and afforded the opportunity to submit comments in writing. The comments will be considered as a factor when such adjustments are under consideration and before any decision is made. Substantial route adjustments must be approved at a level higher than the installation and, if requested in writing, will be reviewed at the district level, except for adjustments to avoid actual work hours in excess of 2,080 during the guarantee period.

K. Affixing Stamps

During the month of December, the rural carrier shall not be required to affix stamps to letter mail and greeting cards placed in a rural box for collection. During the remainder of the year, every effort should be made to urge rural customers to affix stamps to letter mail. The rural carrier shall not be required to affix stamps to more than a reasonable number of pieces of letter-size mail from a box.

L. Roster of Customers

When the rural carrier is required to maintain a roster of customers, this roster shall be maintained, at the carrier's