



May 22, 1998

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

SUBJECT: Bundle Study

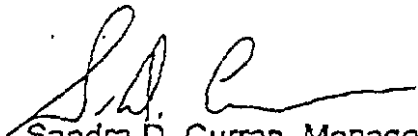
In response to the "Fourth Bundle" award dated June 9, 1997, the Postal Service and the NALC agreed to conduct a study to determine the relative efficiency of the composite bundle and vertical flat casing work methods for handling residual mail, with and without unaddressed flats. The parties anticipated completion of the study by April 30, 1998 and a final resolution soon after on the most efficient way(s) to handle unaddressed flats in a DPS environment. As of this date, the parties have not agreed on a study methodology, nor a start date for this study. However, efforts continue to get this endeavor underway.

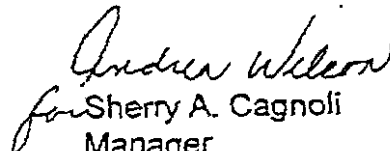
In the interim, as a result of the memorandum sent September 26, 1997, local parties were to agree on a work method accommodation, or if no agreement could be reached the letter carrier was to select an option. A key point in this memorandum was that the carrier needed to maintain the efficiency of their selection and that management would continue to monitor this choice. Additionally, delay of the joint study should cause no unilateral change in the locally agreed upon interim accommodation until further notice from the national level on this matter.

Also, recently, we have heard from various field managers who have either not conducted the comparative analysis outlined in the September 26, 1997 memorandum, or have conducted the analysis and not implemented warranted changes. In lieu of opting to wait for a final decision from the national level, our guidance to these managers is to conduct the comparison if it has not been done, and make changes if warranted.

Be reminded that managers still cannot require carriers on a park-and-loop or foot route in a DPS environment to carry what Arbitrator Snow considered a fourth bundle. Also, if managers require letter carriers to case letter mail in with vertically cased flats after a comparison reflects a loss of efficiency as the accommodation on unaddressed flat days, this method may not be unilaterally required for all other days.

If you have any questions, please call Phil Knoll at (202) 268-5277, or Charles Baker at (202) 268-3832.


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