UNITED STATES
POSTAL SERVICE

October 4, 2022

Mr. Ivan D. Butts
President
National Association of Postal Supervisors
1727 King St., STE 400
Alexandria, VA 22314-2753

Certified Mail Tracking Number:
7020 3160 0002 0327 1028

Dear Ivan:

The Postal Service is testing the use of Active Package Tracking (APT) through the use of a mobile device and a Bluetooth Low-Energy (BLE) Beacon device to track Parcel Return Service containers.

The tracking beacon is anticipated to provide real-time visibility of the Parcel Return Service containers on the supplied mobile device and gateway detectors. The beacon will be in a small plastic bag along with the dispatch placard and will be attached to the outside of the Parcel Return Service container. The tracking of the beacon is intended to provide visibility from the time the container is placed in the staging area until the time the container is loaded onto a truck for dispatch in the mail processing facility.

Testing is scheduled to begin October 10 and end on November 5 at the Southern Maryland Processing and Distribution Center.

Enclosed are the following for your review:

- Beacon Pilot – Parcel Return Service Stand Up Talk
- Standard Work Instruction - Active Package Tracking (APT) Activation & Association of Beacon Technology for P&DC Priority Return Service (PRS) Employees
- Standard Work Instruction - Active Package Tracking (APT) Activation & Association of Beacon Technology for P&DC Dock Agents

Please contact Dion Mealy at 202-507-0193 if you have any questions concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

Shannon Richardson
Director
Contract Administration (APWU)

Enclosures

(CA2022-181)

# Beacon Pilot – Parcel Return Service Talk
September 29, 2022

Active Package Tracking Pilot

The Postal Service will pilot test Bluetooth Low-Energy (BLE) Beacon tracking devices on October 10 through November 5 at Southern Maryland Processing and Distribution Center. The purpose of the pilot is to evaluate the location sensing capabilities of mobile detection using BLE Beacon Technology in order to assess the feasibility of enterprise-wide beacon solutions.

Parcel Return Service (PRS) containers will be tracked within the facility using bluetooth beacons attached to the container placards. Tracking will start container set-up in the staging area and will end when the container is loaded onto a truck for dispatch.

To provide greater real time visibility, this pilot will utilize Bluetooth Low-Energy (BLE) Beacons and gateways from the USPS partner company: BLE Beacon tags will be placed in plastic bags to be attached to Parcel Return Service container placards and detected by physical beacon detectors & generic mobile devices.

BLE Beacons   **Gateways**   **Android Device**
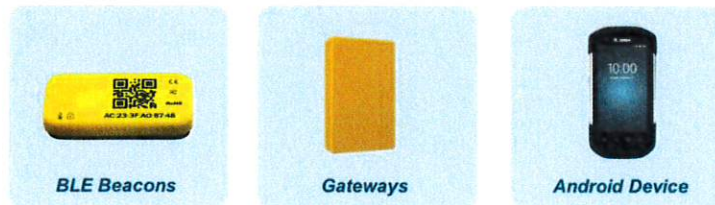
Pilot Scope:

- ✓ Pilot will only track Parcel Return Service containers
- ✓ Pilot will track the containers within the P&DC only

For detailed information, please see the attached Standard Work Instructions.

If you have any questions, please contact the Beacon Pilot Team at APTPilot@usps.gov

Thank you again for your continued support and ensuring a "world class" customer experience.

--Innovative Business Technology Team

Standard Work Instructions:	Active Package Tracking (APT) Activation & Association of Beacon Technology for P&DC Priority Return Service (PRS) Employees	
Purpose:	The purpose of this SWI is to capture the modified protocol for the PRS process for the APT pilot site location. These steps are focused on the activation and association for Bluetooth Low-Energy (BLE) Beacons.	
Updated on:	9/29/22	Version 1.0

	Steps	Key Points
  11x17" Clear Plastic Bag — This is a representative image of the BLE Beacon	• At the beginning of the pilot PRS employees will receive a box of Beacon Kits with all necessary materials for the duration of the pilot. Each Beacon Kit has 400 label barcode on the outside and a beacon inside the bag.	• The Beacon hardware is pre-activated and placed into plastic bags before being dropped off at the pilot site location so that PRS employees will not have to configure any technology to support the pilot. • The Beacons will only be used Monday – Friday for the duration of the pilot. One Beacon Kit will be sent with each partner mailer each day.
  Sample Beacon Kit	• The PRS employee will place the placard for a gaylord into the plastic bag with the beacon. They will tape the bag with the placard inside to the gaylord.	• Each Beacon Kit will be labeled with the actual calendar date and the associated partner mailer for easy identification.
	• During sorting, immediately before the employee scans the container "closed," the employee will scan the 400 label on the Beacon Kit adhered to the gaylord. Scanning the 400 label will automatically associate the beacon to that container.	• The 400 label on the plastic bag will be used to associate the beacon with the gaylord/container. • Beacons are passively detected with the Zebra TC-77 mobile device provided by the Beacon Pilot Team. • The only change to current processes will be scanning the 400 label on the plastic bag during sorting as if it were one of the packages being sorted to that container. It is important that the 400 label is scanned immediately before the container is closed and moved to the staging area.

	• Mailing partners should retrieve gaylords from the staging area in the same manner. Dock agent will collect Beacon Kit.	• Once gaylords are in the staging area, PRS employees no longer need to worry about the beacons. • The beacons will be passively detected by TC-77 devices. PRS employees and supervisors will not be required to interact with this device in any non-typical manner.

Standard Work Instructions:	Active Package Tracking (APT) Activation & Association of Beacon Technology for P&DC Dock Agents.	
Purpose:	The purpose of this SWI is to capture the modified protocol for the Priority Return Service process for the APT pilot site location. These steps are focused on the removal of the beacons from the placards.	
Updated on:	9/29/22	Version 1.0

	Steps	Key Points
Sample kit	• During PRS sorting, placards are placed inside clear plastic bags with beacons. Placards should be scanned normally with the 42 "Tender to Agent" scan after the gaylord has been loaded onto the partner mailer's truck.	• PRS team was instructed to place placard in plastic bag (along with beacon) and tape it to the gaylord. • Placards within the plastic bags should be scanned 42 "Tender to Agent" after the gaylord has been loaded onto the partner mailer's truck. • Dock agent should not scan the 400 label on the plastic bag.
	• After all placards are scanned, do not remove the contents from the bag. Place plastic bag in the designated beacon collection box in the supervisor in Transit's office.	• Dock agent should not throw away plastic bag, beacon, or placard. • Dock agent should place plastic bag and all contents in box labeled "PRS Pilot" in the supervisor in Transit's office. • Dock agent should not remove contents from bag as we do not want the beacons getting separated from the placards or getting damaged or misplaced. • The beacons will be passively detected by TC-77 devices. Dock agents and supervisors will not be required to interact with this device in any non-typical manner.
	• A representative from HQ will retrieve the box with the beacons at the end of the pilot.	• Neither the dock agent nor the supervisor in Transit are responsible for de-activating or returning the Beacon Kits.