

Statistical Programs Management Guide

Handbook F-95

Updated through SP#1, FY2021

August-September 2014-2019

Transmittal Letter

- A. Explanation.** Handbook F-95 is an introduction to the programs that comprise the statistical testing and operations of the Postal Service. Designed for personnel with the position of "Manager Financial Programs Compliance" (MFPC), this handbook covers the policies and programs in the data collection system. It also serves as a reference to promote successful unit management in accordance with current policies and procedures. The changes in policies and procedures are part of the Postal Service's continual effort to improve service and productivity.

This edition of Handbook F-95 contains revisions that Statistical Programs has made since the handbook's previous publication in ~~April-August 2018~~, including revisions to management policies and procedures, and revisions issued in Statistical Programs Letter #1 FY21 (dated September 3, 2020), including revisions to management policies and procedures and revisions issued in the following Statistical Programs letters:

- ~~* Statistical Programs Letter #6 FY18 (dated June 6, 2018).~~
- ~~* Statistical Programs Letter #1 FY19 (dated August 30, 2018).~~
- ~~* Statistical Programs Letter #3 FY19 (dated March 1, 2019).~~
- ~~* Statistical Programs Letter #4 FY19 (dated June 1, 2019).~~

- B. Availability.** Copies are available for Postal Service employees on the Postal Service PolicyNet Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov>. In the left-hand column under "Essential Links," click on *PolicyNet*, and then in the column on the right, click on *Handbooks*.
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- E. Effective Date.** This publication is effective August-September 2014-2020.

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1 Introduction

The Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) of 2006 mandates that the Postal Service report its annual costs, revenues, volumes, and quality of service to the Postal Regulatory Commission. Under the PAEA, market-dominant products (e.g., First-Class Mail service) cannot subsidize competitive products (e.g., Priority Mail Express service), and each competitive product must cover the costs attributed to it. As part of the effort to achieve this legal requirement, the Postal Service continually collects information about the cost, revenue, volume, and weight of the mail.

This Handbook F-95 is an introduction to the programs that comprise the statistical testing and operations of the Postal Service. Designed for personnel with the position of “Manager Financial Programs Compliance” (MFPCs), this handbook covers the policies and programs in the data collection system, and it also serves as a reference to promote successful unit management in accordance with current policies and procedures.

This handbook does the following:

- a. Describes the individual data collection systems:
 - (1) Origin Destination Information System — Revenue, Pieces, and Weight (ODIS-RPW).
 - (2) City Carrier Cost System (CCCS).
 - (3) Rural Carrier Cost System (RCCS).
 - (4) Transportation Cost Systems (TRACS).
 - (5) In-Office Cost System (IOCS).
 - (6) System for International Revenue and Volume Outbound — International Origin Destination Information System (SIRVO-IODIS).
 - (7) System for International Revenue and Volume Inbound (SIRVI).
- b. Offers an overview of data collection:
 - (1) Purpose.
 - (2) Structure.
- c. Discusses the roles and responsibilities of the following personnel:
 - (1) District managers.
 - (2) MFPCs.
 - (3) Supervisors of Statistical Programs (SSPs).
 - (4) Data collectors. (The official title and bid position for a data collector is “data collection technician” or “DCT,” but this handbook uses the term “data collector.” Some data collectors can be cadre employees or ad hoc employees.)

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2 Statistical Programs Systems and Personnel

2-1 Overview

Statistical Programs data are the foundation of Postal Service statistical research and are vital to the future and smooth functioning of this organization. The data collected by the Statistical Programs systems are used to perform the following tasks:

- a. Develop new postal prices.
- b. Assist in the preparation of budgets.
- c. Conduct management studies.
- d. Support transportation and operations management decisions regarding mail flow and transit time.
- e. Measure Postal Service workload and productivity.
- f. Develop negotiated service agreements.

2-2 Data Collection Systems

2-2.1 Overview

Statistical Programs is a group of data collection systems for domestic and international mail.

Domestic mail has four systems:

- a. Origin Destination Information System — Revenue, Pieces, and Weight (ODIS-RPW).
- b. Carrier Cost Systems, which include the City Carrier Cost System (CCCS) and the Rural Carrier Cost System (RCCS).
- c. Transportation Cost Systems (TRACS) for surface and air.
- d. In-Office Cost System (IOCS).

International mail has two systems:

- a. System for International Revenue and Volume Outbound — International Origin Destination Information System (SIRVO-IODIS).
- b. System for International Revenue and Volume Inbound (SIRVI).

2-2.2 **Origin Destination Information System — Revenue, Pieces, and Weight**

The Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) requires that the Postal Service provide data on revenue, pieces, and weight for domestic mail by class, subclass, and extra service. Postal Service accounting systems do not specify this information for all mail categories. Therefore, the Postal Service uses Statistical Programs data for product- and service-specific information.

ODIS-RPW is a continuous probability sample of all mail exiting the postal system. The sampling unit is all mail exiting the postal system on a specific date through a specific Mail Exit Point (MEP — pronounced as a one-syllable word). For an on-site MEP test, a data collector visits the test site and randomly selects a subset of the test-day mail and records weight, revenue, and additional characteristics. For a digital MEP test, letter mail processing machines select mailpieces for sampling and forward the images electronically to the Statistical Programs Virtual Image Enterprise Warehouse (SPVIEW) for remote data collection.

The ODIS-RPW program schedules approximately 127,000 on-site and digital tests per year. From this sample data, USPS Headquarters statisticians develop estimates each quarter with specific levels of statistical accuracy for major mail classes.

To prepare the RPW report — the official summary of postal revenue, volume, and weight — USPS Headquarters uses ODIS-RPW sample data as well as data from the Accounting Office and various functional areas. The RPW report allows price analysis, forecasts of postal volumes, and measurement of productivity and workload. The Postal Service makes use of ODIS-RPW sample data in many other applications when using mail characteristics to address business needs, such as calculating Postage in the Hands of the Public (PIHOP). Finally, the Postal Service uses ODIS-RPW sample data to verify mailings submitted under the Electronic Verification System (e-VS) and to detect fraudulent meter use and shortpaid mail.

2-2.3 **Carrier Cost Systems**

USPS Headquarters uses the CCS data to allocate costs for delivering and collecting various mail products and accounts for extra services. There are separate systems to collect data for carrier costs because the compensation methodology is different for city carriers and rural carriers. The two systems — City Carrier Cost System (CCCS) and the Rural Carrier Cost System (RCCS) — count mail volumes by rate category for individual delivery points; however, neither system sets work standards or measures carrier performance. The Postal Service uses the data gathered from these two systems to estimate the distribution of more than \$6 billion per year in city carrier delivery time, rural carrier payroll, and indirect costs to mail products.

In CCCS, a data collector conducts a test by recording mail by product, class, and other characteristics on randomly selected city carrier routes throughout the Postal Service. CCCS tests approximately 8,500 samples annually, with an additional 1,000 tests on city carrier Special Purpose

Routes, which do not include routes classified as firm holdouts or other unusual firm delivery routes.

In RCCS, a data collector conducts a test by recording mail by product, class, and other characteristics, along with compensation on randomly selected rural carrier routes throughout the Postal Service. RCCS tests approximately 6,500 samples annually.

USPS Headquarters uses data from both systems to produce estimates for the cost of delivering mail by product, class, and other characteristics. These estimates help determine postal rates.

2-2.4 **Transportation Cost Systems**

TRACS is a statistical sampling and data collection system that provides information for estimating costs by mail product for the major purchased transportation cost accounts. The Postal Service distributes approximately \$6 billion each year for transportation purchases. Because the characteristics of transportation purchases vary significantly by transportation contract type (mode), TRACS uses separate sampling systems to collect surface and air data — TRACS Surface for surface transportation, and TRACS Air for air transportation. More than 19,000 truck and airline trips are sampled each year to allocate these costs to the categories of mail.

A TRACS Surface test samples mail traveling on a specific highway vehicle and arriving at the test facility on the test day. All mail unloaded from the vehicle at the test facility is eligible for sampling. For calculating the miles traveled, the data collector notes the facility location where the mail is unloaded. In addition, the data collector records the weight and volume data by rate category for the contents of the sampled vehicle. The Postal Service uses this information to develop cubic-foot-mile estimates, which are based on the percentage of vehicle floor space that each container type occupies.

A TRACS Air test samples mail prepared for dispatch during a 2-hour time segment on the test day in a selected facility. For the selected air mode (e.g., commercial, FedEx, or UPS), the data collector selects a maximum of 10 mail items (e.g., sacks, parcels, or trays) during the selected 2-hour segment, based on a primary mail class code listed on the Dispatch and Routing (D&R) tag.

The D&R tag is a barcoded label attached to a mail item when the originating facility prepares the mail item for dispatch. The data collector records volume and routing information, which is merged with the records from the D&R tag to develop the distribution keys for the commercial and network air cost accounts.

2-2.5 **In-Office Cost System**

IOCS is the primary probability sampling system used to allocate the labor costs of clerks, mail handlers, city carriers, and supervisors to the mail handling and related activities they perform. The IOCS takes approximately 600,000 samples annually. The Postal Services uses the data collected from this system to distribute about \$21 billion per year in volume-variable costs to mail products.

An IOCS reading consists of observing and recording the activity that a selected employee performs at a designated time during a specific workday. In addition, the data collector records the characteristics (e.g., indicia, special services, weight, etc.) of any mail or mail transportation equipment that the sampled employee is handling. Whenever a data collector observes a sample employee handling a mailpiece, approximately \$200,000 in costs is attributed to that mail product (e.g., First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, etc.). Therefore, it is important that the data collector identify and record the mailpiece characteristics correctly.

2-2.6 **System for International Revenue and Volume Outbound — International Origin Destination Information System**

SIRVO-IODIS is a probability sample of mail destined for foreign countries. A sampling unit is defined as a 24-hour period of mail dispatched to a specific international location. SIRVO-IODIS uses the Global Business System-Dispatch (GBS-Dispatch) to capture revenue, piece, and weight data, known as “mail characteristics” (e.g., indicia, special services, weight, etc.), for U.S.-origin Letter Post and Parcel Post mail sent to foreign countries and to measure transit time for U.S.-origin outbound international air letters and cards (LC). Data collectors conduct approximately 12,000 SIRVO-IODIS tests each year at international exchange offices and other installations that finalize international mail.

As the loading dock expeditor enters the data for the outgoing mail, GBS-Dispatch selects the sample receptacle for data recording and notifies the data collector that a sample receptacle is available. The data collector records the characteristics of the mail in the selected receptacle, attaches the GBS-Dispatch label, and returns the receptacle to Operations for dispatching.

The sample data provides estimates of total revenue, pieces, and weight for the categories of mail, and transit time from 3-digit ZIP Codes of origin to “dispatch ready” condition at an international exchange office. The data supports regulatory requirements for revenue, pieces, and weight reporting, as well as costing and pricing analysis. Terminal dues are payments exchanged between postal administrations for the delivery of mail from and to international sites. SIRVO-IODIS also provides country-specific data to support payments exchanged between postal administrations for delivering international mail.

2-2.7 **System for International Revenue and Volume Inbound**

SIRVI captures revenue, piece, and weight data for foreign-origin mail entering the United States. The Postal Service conducts SIRVI tests at international exchange offices that receive foreign-origin international mail. There are approximately 2,300 SIRVI tests taken per year.

The SIRVI test uses a day-sample approach that selects a fairly uniform number of receptacles per day at a given exchange office. This selection

process is based on workload constraints, with tests allocated in proportion to the flows received at the exchange office.

SIRVI uses the Global Business System-Receipt (GBS-Receipt) to receive inbound international mail. As the loading dock expeditor enters the data for the incoming mail, GBS-Receipt selects the sample receptacle for data recording and notifies the data collector that a sample receptacle is available. The data collector records the characteristics of the mail in the selected receptacle, attaches the GBS-Receipt label, and returns it to Operations for processing.

The Postal Service uses the sample data gathered by this system to produce statistical estimates of country-specific items per kilogram (IPK) with known measures of precision. The Postal Service uses these estimates to determine country-specific terminal dues paid to the Postal Service for delivery of foreign-origin incoming mail. The data also support regulatory requirements for revenue, piece, and weight reporting and cost analysis.

2-3 District Statistical Programs Personnel — Roles and Responsibilities

2-3.1 Overview

Statistical Programs managers, full-time data collectors, and other cadre and ad hoc employees conduct statistical tests nationwide. District Statistical Programs managers manage day-to-day operations and schedule data collection training and assignments. Managers ensure quality data collection by conducting process reviews of data collectors. (See Chapter [7](#) for more guidance on Process Review.)

2-3.2 Manager Financial Programs Compliance

2-3.2.1 Overview

The person with the position of “Manager Financial Programs Compliance” (MFPC) oversees a Statistical Programs unit responsible for the collection of data used by the Postal Service Headquarters to make corporate decisions at all levels.

2-3.2.2 Duties and Responsibilities

The following is a partial list of the MFPC’s responsibilities:

- a. Allocate resources to conduct Statistical Programs tests in accordance with current policies and procedures.
- b. Manage a staff of executive and administrative schedule (EAS) and craft employees.
- c. Analyze data and information, conduct training, and process reviews.
- d. Perform related duties.

Additional information about the duties and responsibilities of this position is also available in other Postal Service handbooks, manuals, and communications.

2-3.2.3 **Major Activities**

The following is a partial list of activities performed by the MFPC:

- a. Manage districtwide Statistical Programs by coordinating, administering, and supervising the collection of statistical data for nationwide statistical sampling systems.
- b. Implement all test-performance guidelines for districtwide Statistical Programs in accordance with current policies and procedures issued by USPS Headquarters.
- c. Manage the districtwide monitoring and training programs for proper sampling and reporting techniques:
 - (1) Conduct process reviews to ensure data integrity and proper data collection and to identify training opportunities.
 - (2) Schedule districtwide training programs for data collection employees, including quarterly training and Process Activated Training System (PATs) sessions.
- d. Manage the district Mail Exit Point System (MEPS) sampling frame to ensure that all mail is sampled in an efficient and cost-effective manner using specific guidelines to design and maintain the district MEPS.
- e. Use national systems to conduct tests and analyze various reports.
- f. Implement a quality assurance system to ensure consistent and accurate collection and timely transmission of data to the Computerized On-site Data Entry System (CODES) Web Base Unit (WBU), and review sampling reports to verify that the tests are conducted and transmitted.
- g. Provide technical guidance, direction, and assistance to other managers, postmasters, and employees in the district on statistical data collection:
 - (1) Continually look for and take advantage of opportunities to discuss with staff the need for accurate data collection to promote proper test preparation and data integrity.
 - (2) Educate all staff on their individual roles in the data collection process and the importance of their contribution to data integrity.
- h. Prepare and monitor annual workhour requirements and Statistical Programs expenditures. Note the following:
 - (1) The district finance manager may require the MFPC to track and tally workhours by function. The MFPC's administration of leave policy and management of resources directly affect unit budget and performance.
 - (2) The district finance manager may require the MFPC to monitor the expenses of the unit in line with the annual budget.

- i. Manage a staff of employees performing statistical sampling and systems-related activities, and follow policies for the preparation and posting of staff assignments and activity schedules.

2-3.2.4 **Skills for Being an Effective MFPC**

The following skills and attributes are suggestions and guidelines for the professional development of an MFPC:

- a. Technical competency, including understanding of and ability to use the CODES WBU and CODES laptop and related applications.
The MFPC must be able to troubleshoot computer-related questions and error messages, even though these activities may be delegated to other Statistical Programs employees.
- b. Postal Service experience, including familiarity with Postal Service operations and procedures.
The MFPC must understand mail classification, processing, and delivery processes. The MFPC also must understand data collection from the perspective of the data collector. Use of a CODES laptop allows the MFPC to coordinate unit activities and support unit staff.
- c. Analytical skills, including data reporting and interpretation.
The MFPC could be asked to provide many useful reports for the district managers. An MFPC must educate and assist district managers in understanding and analyzing the data in their unit in a way that translates data into useful information. Exchanges between an MFPC and other district managers set the stage for cooperation and feedback, which lead to the contribution of better data and smoother postal operations.
- d. Communication and management skills.
The MFPC must be an effective communicator and possess the ability to manage time and people.

2-3.3 **Supervisor of Statistical Programs**

The role of the Supervisor of Statistical Programs (SSP) is to assist the MFPC in the coordination and management of training, process review requirements, and the administration of the unit's data collection.

The SSP reviews districtwide Statistical Programs data collection operations for compliance with national policies, guidelines, and procedures. The SSP also provides technical guidance, training, and supervision to data collectors to ensure data quality.

The following is a partial list of duties and responsibilities of an SSP:

- a. Assist in the preparation of schedules and assignments.
- b. Maintain control reports to verify that tests have been conducted.
- c. Review data collector activities to provide consistency, accuracy, and compliance with instructions.
- d. Analyze quality measurement and control reports on data collection.
- e. Review and update sampling frame lists to confirm that all mail has an opportunity to be sampled efficiently and cost effectively.

- f. Contact postmasters and other Postal Service managers to discuss data collection issues.
- g. Become a subject matter expert (SME) in all Statistical Programs systems, train new employees, and provide remedial training to reduce errors in sampling and reporting.
- h. Assist the MFPC in conducting process reviews to ensure the use of proper data collection procedures.
- i. Provide data collectors with technical advice and guidance on proper sampling and reporting techniques.
- j. This position involves frequent and extensive travel within the district and frequent schedule changes.

2-3.4 **Data Collectors, Including Cadre and Ad Hoc Employees**

In a district, the data collector is an employee whose bid position is as a data collection technician (DCT) in Statistical Programs. A cadre or ad hoc employee has a bid position in another functional area but assists Statistical Programs by collecting data when needed. The data collectors — including data collection technicians and cadre and ad hoc employees — gather, record, and analyze a variety of statistical data on selected operating and financial activities.

The following is a partial list of duties and responsibilities of a data collector:

- a. Plan and execute work activities without direct supervision.
- b. Sample mail and collect data at randomly selected points in the postal system.
- c. Use computer systems at a level sufficient to operate keyboard devices, input data, and transmit to the CODES WBU.
- d. Protect the integrity of Statistical Programs sample selections and data.
- e. Read, understand, and comply with procedures in handbooks, manuals, charts, directives, checklists, and other written material.
- f. Refer to supervisory personnel any matters that are not covered by instructions or that require clarification or resolution.
- g. Communicate both orally and in writing at a level sufficient to interpret and exchange information, answer questions, and give directions.
- h. Work positively and effectively with others.

3 General Management Responsibilities

3-1 Overview

The primary function of the MFPC is to manage a district Statistical Programs unit. This unit is responsible for collecting usable, unbiased statistical data (referred to as “data integrity”).

The MFPC must manage numerous resources, including data collection employees, equipment, and informational tools, while ensuring data integrity at all levels of unit activity.

3-2 Equipment Security and Responsibility

3-2.1 Overview

The MFPC and staff are responsible for the physical security of all CODES equipment and supplies. This security includes restricting the use of CODES equipment to Statistical Programs employees who have received authorization from the MFPC. All staff must follow national and district policies for security at all times.

Each district unit possesses a variety of CODES equipment, such as laptops, printers, scales, scanners, carrying cases, etc. The amount of equipment varies from office to office and depends on the specific needs of the district. Issues such as the number of data collectors, programs, and tests affect the amount of CODES equipment an office may have. The MFPC is ultimately responsible for all of this equipment.

3-2.2 Securing CODES Equipment

CODES equipment is exclusively for the use of approved Statistical Programs applications. CODES laptop computers are valuable, full-function computers and can be targets for theft, and staff must keep them stored in a locked area when not in use. Because the CODES ACE laptop accesses CODES applications, the data collector must preserve the integrity of test data by putting the laptop into “sleep” mode or locking the keyboard when the laptop is unattended. When leaving a work area, the user must always take precautions to physically secure the laptop computer. The MFPC may issue keys or combinations to a storage unit, but only to authorized

Statistical Programs employees. All equipment must be stored in a secure place regardless of where that equipment is assigned.

If an issue arises regarding the security of equipment, the Statistical Programs Service Center (service center) is available for support, guidance, and direction. Moreover, the MFPC may also submit a request in writing to the service center for an exception to this security policy, including a description of the steps that are currently being taken to secure CODES equipment. The MFPC is ultimately responsible for all CODES equipment and must take reasonable care to safeguard the equipment, the data, etc. The presence or use of unauthorized programs on any and all CODES equipment is prohibited. The MFPC must ensure that no unauthorized programs or applications run on any CODES equipment in the office and must remove any such programs or applications.

3-2.3 **Equipment Tracking**

The CODES Equipment Log (see [Exhibit 3-2.3](#)) tracks the CODES equipment within an office (i.e., a district office or cadre office). Employees must use the log to sign in and sign out all portable computers and scales.

The log serves two purposes:

- a. It provides written accountability for all equipment.
- b. It serves as a record of any hardware or software problems that are encountered during a test.

The MFPC and SSP are responsible for maintaining the logs and for bringing any problems to the attention of the service center.

There are multiple ways to use this log sheet:

- a. Record all of the computers on one sheet.
- b. Use a separate sheet for each piece of equipment.
- c. Document the assignment of a particular laptop to a data collector.

For information about the retention policies for the equipment log sheet, see [Exhibit 3-7.4](#). For detailed information about use, maintenance, and policies regarding CODES equipment, see [3-6](#) and [8-5.1](#).

CODES Equipment Log

[illegible]

3-3 Providing Contingency Equipment

In order to avoid disruption in unit operations, it is essential that contingency equipment, employees, and space are available to conduct the tests. If the Statistical Programs unit does not have these resources available or functioning to operational standards, the unit manager must take immediate steps to remedy the situation. The finance manager can also help determine the necessary course of action and clarify local policy. However, a MFPC must justify in writing any request for additional resources.

3-4 Authorization and Passwords

3-4.1 Overview

Passwords help maintain system and data security when working on the CODES WBU or the district local area network (LAN). The MFPC ensures that each employee uses his or her assigned ACE ID and password. Each employee authorized to work on the CODES WBU is responsible for maintaining the confidentiality and security of his or her assigned ACE ID and password.

Moreover, as the local functional system coordinator (FSC) for CODES software, the MFPC controls access to the CODES laptops and applications. Data collectors are required to request access to CODES software through eAccess.

3-4.2 Authorized Use of CODES Laptops and Software

CODES equipment is exclusively for the use of Postal Service activities. Team members must store CODES ACE laptops, along with all other test equipment, in a locked area when not in use. Additionally, since the CODES ACE laptop accesses CODES applications, the data collector must preserve the integrity of test data by putting the laptop into “sleep” mode or locking the keyboard when the laptop is unattended.

As the local FSC, the MFPC is responsible for granting access to CODES applications for each data collector.

3-4.3 CODES Web Base Unit Passwords

Request CODES WBU access through eAccess at https://eaccess.usps.gov/pls/eaccessnp/sso_std.sso_welcome.

After logging in to eAccess:

- a. Click the *Request Access* tab.
- b. Go to *Enter application name*, and then type “CODES” in the search field.
- c. Click *Search*.

- d. From the Search Results, click *CODES Web Base Unit*.
- e. Use the input fields to specify system account settings and permissions.

USPS personnel access the data and software by logging in with their ACE User ID and 15-digit ACE password. For password assistance, contact 800-USPS-HELP (800-877-7435).

Note: The MFPC account has a higher level of access than either the SSP or data collector accounts. This higher-level access enables the MFPC to control access to various CODES WBU applications.

The MFPC is responsible for updating user access in the CODES WBU. Updating includes disabling those users who are no longer active in Statistical Programs, and updating others whose access levels have changed.

3-5 Data Collection and Security

3-5.1 Overview

To collect data accurately and consistently, the MFPC and the SSP must safeguard the security of both the data collected and the equipment that contains the data.

3-5.2 Data Security and Integrity

3-5.2.1 Overview

Data integrity is the accurate collecting, recording, and processing of Statistical Programs information. The MFPC protects the security and integrity of data by working with the data collectors to ensure they are familiar with the data collection policies and procedures. Policies and procedures are in place to prevent sampling error, bias, and non-sampling errors. In addition to data accuracy, Statistical Programs employees are responsible for safeguarding the data from any kind of tampering. The following sections outline and explain specific rules and policies for securing data.

3-5.2.2 Prohibition Against the Release of National or Subnational Test Data

Employees are prohibited from distributing the following information outside the Postal Service without the written authorization of Statistical Programs at USPS Headquarters:

- a. Data containing information about any Postal Service employee.
- b. National or subnational data.
- c. Data printouts containing actual volumes or actual service achievement information.

This information is proprietary and must remain protected at all times.

Both the In-Office Cost System (IOCS) Readings Schedule Report (RSR) and samples loaded in the CODES laptop contain sensitive information. Data collectors must keep the RSR and CODES samples secure from unauthorized use. When no longer needed, shred all IOCS master lists and any sheets with scheduled reading times, because of the sensitive data they contain.

3-5.2.3 Use of Proper Equipment in Testing

MFPCs must ensure that data collectors record all data directly on the CODES laptop with a functioning scale attached. As mentioned earlier, *data collectors may not use manual worksheets to record test or reading data*. Data collectors may temporarily record administrative data, such as employee location, pay status, and tour of duty, on the IOCS Readings Schedule Report.

Exception: Recording directly into the laptop might prove difficult when measuring vehicle use, collecting pallet information, or recording container contents for Transportation Cost Systems (TRACS) tests. In these situations, or in cases of laptop failure, the data collector must take notes for the information collected and then enter the data into the CODES laptop before counting the mail. Data collectors must record TRACS mailpiece and weight data directly on the CODES laptop computer.

3-5.2.4 Prohibition Against Duplicate Recording of Mailpieces

The MFPC is responsible for ensuring that data collectors are not producing duplicate recordings of mailpieces. Data collectors *must* enter mailpiece data immediately into the CODES laptop. After entering mailpiece data into the CODES laptop, the data collector must immediately return the sampled pieces to the unit from which they were taken, and correctly replace those mailpieces to avoid delivery delay. When the data collector is uncertain how to return the mailpieces, the data collector must give the mail to a supervisor or to a knowledgeable employee. Only a trained data collector, or a respondent under direction of a trained data collector, is permitted to examine the reading pieces, except for the employees listed in [3-5.2.5](#).

Note: Recording mailpiece information on a separate worksheet or log is prohibited.

3-5.2.5 Prohibition Against Over-the-Shoulder Monitoring

Over-the-shoulder monitoring of a test is limited to the following personnel and groups:

- a. MFPCs.
- b. SSPs.
- c. Statistical Programs Service Center (service center).
- d. USPS Headquarters and USPS Headquarters-authorized personnel.
- e. Postal Inspection Service.
- f. Postal Service independent auditors.
- g. Office of Inspector General.

Over-the-shoulder monitoring of tests by any other individuals is considered a serious compromise of the integrity within the system and is prohibited. The MFPC, however, may still partner with authorized management improvement teams to identify mail processing problems.

3-5.2.6 **Prohibition Against Other Employees Hindering a Data Collector From Conducting a Test or a Reading**

Unauthorized personnel outside Statistical Programs are prohibited from hindering the data collector from observing and collecting relevant information from a sampled employee, or sampling the mail to be tested. Anyone creating direct or indirect interference in the data collection process compromises the independence and integrity of the systems.

Note: This prohibition against hindering a data collector from conducting a test does not mean that other personnel, such as local management, may not communicate with the data collector. Data collectors and local management and supervisors are expected to maintain good working relationships.

3-5.2.7 **Data Collection Employees Required**

To maintain the integrity of the data collecting process, MFPCs must ensure that only a trained data collector, under the direction of Statistical Programs, is conducting a test. All other employees are strictly prohibited.

3-5.2.8 **Management Involvement in Statistical Programs Tests**

Trained non-craft employees may conduct Statistical Programs tests under the following circumstances:

- a. No trained craft employees are within a 3-hour roundtrip to the test site.
- b. Trained cadre and ad hoc data collectors are not available because they are already assigned to Statistical Programs work, such as testing, training, or monitoring.

Note: The trained non-craft employee must be available at the test site or within a 3-hour roundtrip to the test site.

3-5.2.9 **Compromised Test**

The MFPC must complete the Anomaly Log whenever a test has potentially been compromised, which might result in a loss of volume due to improper test procedures. (See [9-9.1.3](#) for more information on the Anomaly Log.) The following are some causes of compromised tests:

- a. Communication failures between functional areas.
- b. Inadequate staffing on the test day.

3-6 Support for CODES Equipment and Software

3-6.1 Overview

The MFPC is responsible for tracking and maintaining the equipment and software used by Statistical Programs employees.

3-6.2 Inventory System on the CODES Web Base Unit

The inventory listing on the CODES WBU must include all CODES equipment. (Access to the inventory system is through the Tools menu of the CODES WBU.) The MFPC is responsible for updating the inventory system whenever equipment is received, transferred from one office to another, sent for repair, excessed, or taken out of service (as well as for any other change not listed here).

All Statistical Programs staff must check the inventory in the unit at least twice a year.

3-6.3 Getting Help With CODES Equipment and Software

Contact the CODES Computer Support Center (CCSC) for hardware and software problems. The CCSC provides support for all equipment failures and software problems. For any software problems, such as program malfunctions, unexplained error messages, and computer lockups, contact the CCSC Help Desk by calling 866-877-CODE (866-877-2633) or by emailing computersupportcenter.codes@usps.gov. The CCSC Help Desk is available from 0700 hours to 1700 hours Eastern Time (ET) Monday through Friday.

If any problems occur, gather as much information about the problem as possible. Write down error messages as they occur in the screen. Have the CODES laptop or CODES WBU accessible when making the call. Two factors especially affect the time required to fix CODES equipment or software problems: severity of the problem; and the amount of information provided to the CCSC support employees. The requestor's ability to provide the information needed by the CCSC support employee to resolve the issue has a great impact on the speed with which the equipment becomes functional again.

Note: Statistical Programs staff must not seek help for CODES equipment from Information Technology (IT) unless directed to do so by the service center or the CCSC. Solutions by staff other than the CCSC could result in unrecoverable data problems or damaged equipment.

3-6.4 CODES Computer Support Center

Contact the CCSC for help with any of the following issues:

- a. Resolving software problems with the CODES WBU:
 - (1) Report any problems with accessing the CODES WBU to the CCSC.

- (2) Contact the CCSC for initial problem resolution. If the CCSC cannot resolve the problem, it will contact the application programmer for guidance or escalation. The CCSC directs all Statistical Programs policy issues back to the service center. The following list defines Statistical Programs policy issues:
 - ⌘ CODES data entry questions.
 - ⌘ Alterations of any data except for the test identification and test date information.
 - ⌘ Canceling tests.
 - ⌘ Deletions of tests or rekeying after deletions.
- b. Resolving field user hardware problems, as outlined in [Exhibit 3-6.4](#).

Exhibit 3-6.4

Resolving Field User Hardware Problems

| Issue | CCSC Resolution |
|----------|-----------------------|
| Scales | Repair authorizations |
| Scanners | Problem resolution |
| Laptops | Problem resolution |

The CCSC maintains a supply of scanner replacement components to send to field users. The CCSC also repairs or authorizes repair for bad components.

If the CCSC determines that a laptop component needs repair, the CCSC directs the field user to contact local IT support for replacement.

Note: Complete the anomaly test log for any data lost during computer data recovery

3-7 Information Management

3-7.1 Overview

This section helps the MFPC understand the principles of records retention. The MFPC must know and comply with the Statistical Programs data retention policies.

The CODES WBU programs have their own protocols for updating their system files and deleting old data. This records retention system helps control paperwork and hardcopy files for test data and district activities.

3-7.2 Filing Systems

MFPCs may implement any filing system that they feel works best for their district. See [Exhibit 3-7.4](#) for the duration periods required for keeping such records.

The following list offers suggested guidelines for filing systems:

- a. Have a file for each data collector in the unit grouped by site location.
- b. Label the folder tabs clearly.
- c. Keep a copy of any official document required by the Postal Service.

- d. Document and file any granted exception to policy or procedure.
- e. Document events and file paperwork regarding personnel issues that involve employment conditions, status, and performance, in case of union involvement concerning grievances or performance issues.
- f. Document and file all forms that involve workers' compensation.
- g. Maintain records of any special assignment from the district Finance manager.

3-7.3 **Keeping Records and Documenting Activities**

Not all activities within a district need to be documented and filed. The Postal Service is committed to recycling, so avoid needless use of paper and printing activities. Access to computers allows electronic document sharing, which helps limit printing and use of paper.

Nevertheless, forms and paperwork are required. Forms and various CODES WBU-generated reports all require some level of analysis and action from the MFPC. In order to manage the status of all programs, the MFPC may consider implementing a guideline for regular status checks — by checking all programs daily, the MFPC might spot problems and inconsistencies more easily, and by accessing each of the programs before daily transmission, the MFPC can verify that all statistical tests occurred as scheduled. If the MFPC delegates the status-monitoring to the SSP or one of the data collectors, the MFPC can have that person leave the program status printouts for the MFPC's review each morning.

The *Administrative Support Manual* (ASM) governs all matters related to form retention. Refer to the ASM with any questions. By considering the following two guidelines, the MFPC can expedite and decrease paperwork processing:

- a. Handle paperwork once.
- b. Use the computer program Adobe Form Client to manage, complete, and file Postal Service forms.

3-7.4 **Records Retention Policy**

[Exhibit 3-7.4](#) outlines expected retention periods for records and forms.

Exhibit 3-7.4

Records Retention Policy

| Records | Retention Period |
|---|--|
| CODES Disks and Logs | |
| CODES Equipment Log Sheets (see Exhibit 3-2.3) | If signed out daily: current and two previous quarters. If assigned to data collector: until equipment is returned. |
| PS Forms | |
| Forms in the series of PS Form 1444, <i>USPS Statistical Programs Process Review</i> , including PS Forms 1444-B, -E, -H, -I, -N, -P, -Q, -R, and -S. | Past and present fiscal year (FY). |
| PS Form 2432, <i>Individual Training Progress Report</i> | Until the employee retires. If the employee transfers out of the unit, forward records to the new supervisor. |
| PS Form 2846, <i>City Carrier Route Mail Acceptance Data</i> | Until second quarter of the following FY. |
| PS Form 2848, <i>Rural Carrier Route Mail Acceptance Data</i> | Until second quarter of the following FY. |
| PS Form 8216, <i>Statistical Programs Planning Calendar for Monitoring Data Collectors</i> | Current and previous quarter. |
| Statistical Publications | |
| Statistical Programs Letters | Until incorporated into new handbooks. |
| Statistical Programs Guidelines | Until incorporated into new handbooks. |
| Status Reports | Current and previous quarter. |
| Training Materials | |
| Training Records | Until the employee retires. If the employee transfers out of the unit, forward records to the new supervisor. |
| Training Sign-in Sheets | Current and previous year. |
| Miscellaneous | |
| DCT Schedules | Current and previous quarter. |
| Test Printouts | Current and previous quarter. |
| Sample Selections | Current and previous quarter. |
| Annotated ODIS-RPW Header Reports from the Scheduler System | 1 year. |
| Annotated ODIS-RPW Summary Reports from the CODESWBU | 1 year. |
| Safety Talks | 3 years. |

3-8 Timekeeping

The MFPC is responsible and accountable for recording the time and attendance of each employee. The MFPC must ensure compliance with the guidelines found in Handbook F-21, *Time and Attendance*. The MFPC uses the Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS) to ensure that the time recorded for each employee is accurate and that each employee is paid properly.

3-9 Safety Policies and Service Talks

3-9.1 Overview

Safety and service talks are governed by national or local agreements or by district policy. The MFPC is responsible for implementing safety guidelines for the staff. The MFPC is responsible for complying with national and local agreements and for documenting the safety and service talks held. These talks offer the MFPC a chance to provide all staff with a better understanding of Postal Service goals and safety issues.

3-9.2 Safety Policies and Safety Talks

All staff must follow all proper safety practices when performing Statistical Programs work. As the unit manager, the MFPC is responsible for ensuring that all safety policies are followed, and for taking preventive measures to ensure compliance with all national and local policies. See Handbook EL-912, *Agreement between United States Postal Service and American Postal Workers Union AFL-CIO*, which is available at <http://blue.usps.gov/cpim/ftp/hand/el912.pdf>.

The MFPC must document and gather as much information as possible about the circumstances that contribute to accidents, the effect of the accident, and possible solutions to prevent an accident from happening again. The MFPC must check with the local safety office to become knowledgeable about the policies and procedures within the district, and maintain a separate file for every accident and safety issue that occurs in the unit.

Effective safety talks focus on Postal Service safety issues. Both the MFPC and SSP are responsible for educating and communicating safety to the unit staff. For guidance on preparing safety talks and recommended material, see Publication 129, *Safety Talks*, which is available at <http://blue.usps.gov/cpim/ftp/pubs/pub129.pdf>.

Handbook EL-814, *Postal Employee's Guide to Safety*, provides succinct information about safety and is available at <http://blue.usps.gov/cpim/ftp/hand/el814.pdf>.

The local safety office is another good source for presentation material.

3-9.3 Service Talks

Service talks keep employees informed and up-to-date on local and national events affecting their position. For guidance on current fiscal year requirements, the MFPC must check with the local Human Resources department.

Listed below are several kinds of service talks — varying and combining the following types of service talks help keep the data collectors up-to-date:

- a. *Informational service talks* provide new information about the Postal Service or data collection–related issues.
- b. *Teambuilding service talks* offer positive stories about teamwork and provide suggestions for the unit to become a more effective team.

These discussions include field stories from the local unit that help solidify the unit as a team.

- c. *Instructional service talks* discuss and illustrate data collection policies, techniques, or other issues.
- d. *Service-oriented service talks* discuss ways that data collectors can provide better service and improve productivity in the context of their job. These talks also provide ways to improve the data collector's daily interactions with the public and other Postal Service employees.

Bargaining unit employees are required to receive 4 hours of Workforce Environment Improvement (WEI) training each year. Further information about WEI training is available on the Postal Service intranet at <https://blue.usps.gov/hr/jobs-workforce/work-environment/workplace-environment-threat-assessment.htm>.

Regardless of the mode of delivery, a service talk can reinforce positive principles, work ownership, employee importance to the company, and the many benefits of being a part of the Postal Service. Pride in having good data collection skills makes a unit more confident and effective.

3-9.4 **Best Practices in Effective Safety and Service Talks**

Scheduled safety talks are intended to promote safety awareness. MFPCs are required to conduct safety and service talks with their employees. Involve them in developing topics and provide an opportunity for discussion and demonstration when applicable. Publication 129, *Safety Talks*, is a recommended resource.

Your talks can be an effective method of maintaining interest in safety. Review these keys to making a safety talk interesting:

- a. Prepare your talk carefully.
- b. Try to confine each talk to one major subject; avoid rambling.
- c. Choose a general or specific safety policy or subject, and keep the talk targeted.
- d. Use visual aids or demonstrations.
- e. Prepare a binder with all of the safety and service talks, and place a binder at each major work site.
- f. Mail weekly safety and service talks to light-duty and other data collection staff.
- g. Circulate the weekly safety and service talk during training days.
- h. Follow up on topics and issues discussed on training days.
- i. Make use of official Postal Service publications available from the Postal Service PolicyNet site at <http://blue.usps.gov/cpim/pubid.htm>. These often suggest appropriate and fitting service talks.
- j. Communicate to data collectors the importance of safety and service talks.

You must keep a record of all safety talks on file for 3 years, including the following information:

- a. The date, time, and unit where the safety talk was given.
- b. The name of the person giving the talk.
- c. The subject of the talk.
- d. The names of employees attending the safety talk along with their signatures. An annotated unit roster or other automated attendance document is acceptable.

3-9.5 Documenting Safety and Service Talks

The MFPC must document safety and service talks to verify the participation of each member of the staff. The MFPC decides the most effective method of communication for the unit and how to raise awareness on important issues.

The MFPC must save the documentation verifying data collector participation in the unit files according to standard records retention policy (see [Exhibit 3-7.4](#)). There are many other ways to approach safety talks — the important thing is to conduct them and document them as required.

3-10 Statistical Programs Unit Vehicles

Districts may allocate vehicles for data collector use, and the MFPC must coordinate the use of these vehicles. Whenever the vehicles require maintenance, the MFPC must contact Vehicle Maintenance (which usually maintains departmental vehicles) to ensure that the vehicles are running well and safely.

The MFPC must implement guidelines for vehicle-related issues, such as accidents, and detail what the data collectors must do. The MFPC must investigate and document any accidents, contact the appropriate groups for repair, and obtain and document as much information about any accident as possible according to local, area, and national policies and guidelines.

The key chain with the keys for a Statistical Programs vehicle usually has a small computer chip that activates the Postal Service gas pumps for refueling the vehicles. Occasionally, data collectors need to refuel at commercial gas stations. The MFPC must follow district policies and procedures in handling these issues.

3-11 Budgets

3-11.1 Overview

Every fiscal year, each district receives a budget of workhours with which the MFPC conducts, coordinates, and performs Statistical Programs tests. The MFPC is responsible for this workhour budget, which covers full-time, part-time, and cadre or ad hoc employees.

The data collector for a district can be an employee whose bid position is in Statistical Programs (data collector), or whose bid position is in another functional area and who assists in Statistical Programs when needed (cadre or ad hoc).

3-11.2 **Full-Time and Part-Time Data Collectors**

Full-time and part-time data collectors who are assigned to a district have their workhours tracked automatically to Labor Distribution Code (LDC) 57. Keep this number in mind when tracking overall workhour budgets.

The LDC is a string of numbers specific to a function. In LDC 57, the number “5” represents the Finance function, and “7” represents the Statistical Programs unit.

When a non-Statistical Programs employee performs an ODIS-RPW test, for example, that clerk uses an operation number specific to LDC 57. Because all of the people working in the unit use LDC 57, the code is a quick and easy way for the MFPC to verify workhours performed, and compare workhours against the fiscal year budget. By regularly checking these hours against the TACS workhour report, the MFPC can increase the effective management of the unit.

Examples: The MFPC would have reason to investigate the following entries:

- a. The MFPC discovers 15 hours charged to LDC 57 within the district budget for a test that should have taken only 4 hours.
- b. The MFPC discovers that a Post Office used 124 hours of workhours in a previous year but that, in only the first half of the current year, twice the workhours are charged even though the test load is lighter. The MFPC can investigate this issue through the local budget office using the Loan Transfer and Training System (LTATS) Weekly Loan, Transfer, and Training Hours report.

3-11.3 **Cadre and Ad Hoc Data Collectors**

Managing the Statistical Programs unit usually includes areas where non-Statistical Programs employees conduct various tests on a part-time basis — these employees are cadre and ad hoc data collectors. Their workhours are charged to LDC 57 within their district finance number.

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4 Scheduling Policies

4-1 Overview

The MFPC manages the SSP and data collection staff, the scheduling and completion of tests, and the application of Postal Service policies as it applies to Statistical Programs. The MFPC assigns data collectors to tests based on the sample selection files downloaded each pay period and quarter. The MFPC can delegate responsibilities to the SSP to assist in managing the unit.

4-2 Scheduling

4-2.1 Data Collector Schedules

One of the primary duties of the MFPC is to ensure that the unit conducts Statistical Programs tests in a timely and appropriate manner, consistent with Postal Service policies and guidelines, while minimizing any disturbance to on-time mail delivery performance. This duty must be in compliance with any local and national guidelines and policies.

The MFPC must also develop schedules, in compliance with Handbook EL-912, *Agreement between United States Postal Service and American Postal Workers Union AFL-CIO*, which is available on the Postal Service intranet at <http://blue.usps.gov/cpim/ftp/hand/el912.pdf>. The MFPC must also consider any Local Memorandum of Understanding when preparing schedules. Every Statistical Programs unit must have the latest copy of Handbook EL-912 and any Local Memorandum of Understanding, if

applicable, for the district. Managers must refer to these resources for proper scheduling of policies and procedures.

For each data collector, the MFPC schedules duty assignments for an entire week. This schedule consists of information related to all scheduled tests, reporting times, and any applicable office/administrative duties. The CODES WBU software contains the DCT Scheduler application, which allows the MFPC to easily assign tests and other duties to the data collectors.

4-2.2 Scheduling Training Activities

Within the final month of each quarter, every district must conduct at least 1 day of Statistical Programs training for each person involved in data collection. To conduct this training, districts have the option of rescheduling

or canceling nondigital Statistical Programs tests for this 1 day each quarter. The MFPC has the ability to select the unit's training date on the CODES WBU. When deciding to reschedule or cancel Statistical Programs tests for a day to conduct comprehensive training, the MFPC must adhere strictly to the following guidelines:

- a. The selected quarterly training day must be during the last month of the quarter.
- b. Each quarter the *Test Status Statistics Report (TSSR) Non-Training Dates* displays the days that are blocked out as "test-sensitive days" (i.e., days that are statistically important for tests and that therefore are not available as quarterly training days). On the *Training Date Selection* interface, these blocked out dates are not available for training.
- c. Training dates are reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. Any date that is not blocked out is available for training.
- d. To avoid underrepresentation for any particular day, no two districts in an area may share the same training date. On the *Training Date Selection* interface, a date that another district in the area has already selected for training is shown as not available for training.
- e. Each district may only have one training date exempt from TSSR processing. This includes districts with more than one base site.
- f. A training date supersedes an APO/FPO test, so if both a training date and an APO/FPO test are scheduled on the same day, the MFPC must reschedule the APO/FPO test.

4-2.3 **Scheduling Process Review Activities**

To ensure that all data collectors are following proper test procedures, the MFPC or SSP must schedule observations on live tests in all programs for which the data collector participates.

The MFPC or SSP must schedule process review activities equally throughout the entire fiscal year. For each system, a quarter of the total required annual process reviews must be fulfilled each quarter in order to evenly distribute process reviews throughout the fiscal year.

For additional in-depth information about scheduling process reviews, see [7-2](#).

4-2.4 **Test Schedules**

The MFPC plays an important role in the scheduling process. Each statistical program has a schedule of tests that are divided and assigned to each district. The following informational sources provide the raw data for these tests, and staff must complete these tests each quarter with the exception of IOCS, which is biweekly:

- a. *ODIS-RPW* test schedules are generated from the Mail Exit Point System (MEPS) that the MFPC establishes for the district.

- b. *Carrier Cost Systems* test schedules are produced from the following two sources:
 - (1) *City Carrier Cost System (CCCS)*: The sampling frame is a list of city carrier letter routes from the Postal Service Address Management System (AMS). The frame of city routes excludes city carrier routes classified as unique (firm holdouts) and other unusual firm delivery routes. The frame for the Special Purpose Route system is created using clock rings from recent TACS records.
 - (2) *Rural Carrier Cost System (RCCS)*: The rural route schedules are generated from the Rural Route Payroll File, which is maintained at the Eagan Accounting Service Center.
- c. *TRACS* test schedules are generated from the contract transportation files.
- d. *IOCS* test schedules are produced from the following two sources:
 - (1) *IOCS Noncluster*: The readings are based on a list of employees provided by Payroll, in which a subset of employees from a panel of offices is selected for sampling each pay period.
 - (2) *IOCS-Cluster*: The tests of delivery zones (5-digit ZIP Codes) are based on information from Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS) and AMS.
- e. *SIRVO-IODIS* test schedules are generated from GBS-Dispatch.
- f. *SIRVI* tests are conducted daily, and test receptacles are selected by the GBS-Receipt.

The appropriate program area generates the test schedules, and then these schedules are available on the CODES WBU for each district.

4-2.5 **Scheduling Priority**

The MFPC resolves resource scheduling conflicts on particular days by using this order of priority, but not to eliminate entire Statistical Programs tests on an ongoing basis.

The order of priority when scheduling resources is as follows:

1. SIRVO-IODIS.
2. SIRVI.
3. TRACS.
4. CCCS.
5. RCCS.
6. IOCS-Cluster.
7. IOCS Noncluster — Clerk/Mailhandler/Supervisor.
8. IOCS Noncluster — Carrier.
9. ODIS-RPW.

4-3 SIRVO-IODIS Test Policies

4-3.1 Overview

This section provides guidelines to the MFPC for administering SIRVO-IODIS tests. It covers policies for scheduling, rescheduling, canceling, and Zero Volume SIRVO-IODIS tests. This section also provides guidance on manually selecting receptacles when the Global Business System (GBS) is not working correctly to pull samples for SIRVO-IODIS.

SIRVO-IODIS is a probability sample of mail destined for foreign countries. A sampling unit is defined as a 24-hour day of mail for sortation or combination of sortations going to a specific international destination. For a selected sampling unit, the data collector must test the mail immediately before the receptacles or bulk containers are closed for dispatch. The data collector records mail characteristics of the mail within the receptacles or a subsample of bulk containers. From the sample data, Statistical Programs develops estimates of total revenue, pieces, weight, and travel time for the categories of mail.

SIRVO-IODIS interfaces with GBS. As the expeditor pulls down and prepares mail for dispatch, GBS selects the sample receptacle for data recording. The data collector receives a notification via printer notice that a sample receptacle is available for recording the characteristics of the mail within that receptacle. After sampling the receptacle, the data collector closes the receptacle, attaches the final GBS-dispatch label (replacing the original HOLD FOR SAMPLING label), and returns the receptacle for dispatch (returning it digitally in GBS and physically to operations).

The MFPC must ensure that SIRVO-IODIS tests are conducted as scheduled on the sample selection file. Although Statistical Programs makes every effort to design the sample selection to reduce scheduling conflicts, the MFPC might have to reschedule or cancel a SIRVO-IODIS test — but only as a last resort and in accordance with the procedures published in this section. The MFPC must not use rescheduling or canceling tests as a means of managing resources. The MFPC must always keep a detailed list of canceled and rescheduled tests and record any relevant information regarding the schedule changes made.

Note: For assistance with proper receptacle selection, refer to the Global Business Systems International Dispatch User Guide, which is available on the Statistical Programs Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/other-references.htm>.

4-3.2 Scheduling Tests

The MFPC accesses the SIRVO-IODIS sample file in the CODES WBU. The sample file contains the test schedule information. The MFPC assigns data collectors to conduct the tests on a weekly basis, and the MFPC downloads the samples to the laptops quarterly.

The MFPC must review the status of SIRVO-IODIS tests in the CODES WBU. This includes rescheduling, canceling, entering Zero Volume status, and coding the reason for rescheduling and canceling. The MFPC must account for each test in the CODES WBU.

4-3.3 Rescheduling Tests

4-3.3.1 Overview

The MFPC is responsible for ensuring that all SIRVO-IODIS tests are conducted as originally scheduled, because revenue, volume, and performance measurement systems test data are critical to Postal Service operations and the rate setting process. The MFPC must never use rescheduling as a means of managing resources. Rather, if scheduling problems arise, such as routine lack of trained data collectors, the MFPC must reevaluate staffing requirements and employee work schedules. (One of the MFPC's responsibilities is to keep a cadre of trained data collectors.) The MFPC must then make the necessary changes that will correct any test scheduling problems. If help is needed in any of the above areas, contact the service center.

4-3.3.2 Reasons That Could Lead to Rescheduling Tests

The MFPC must review all tests on a regular basis before approving completed tests in the CODES WBU, and must take special care to identify any test record containing incorrect data or any other evidence that requires a test to be rescheduled.

Statistical Programs accepts only the situations listed below as reasons that may lead to rescheduling a test. Use the following guidelines to determine the appropriate course of action:

- a. The test was incomplete due to missing a complete dispatch of mail.
- b. The test was conducted on the wrong sample unit.
- c. There was an equipment failure (e.g., the CODES laptop failed during a test and a backup laptop was not available, or GBS was dispatching and failed to select samples).
- d. No data collector was available to conduct the test.
- e. The test was exempted from computation for the TSSR because it was the quarterly training date.

Note: Employee illness or a statement that a test was overlooked is not a justification for missing a test. Trained backup employees must be ready in case of unexpected absences.

4-3.3.3 Rescheduling Procedures

SIRVO-IODIS tests are critical to transit time analysis, performance measurement systems, terminal dues calculations, and the rate-setting process. Statistical Programs staff must make every attempt to conduct tests as originally scheduled. The following guidelines have been developed so that the MFPC can maximize the number of tests conducted.

The MFPC must reschedule a test to the same day of the week before or after the original scheduled test date — however, when rescheduling an

original test to the last week of the quarter, the MFPC may reschedule it to any weekday. If GBS is dispatching receptacles, but failing to select samples; and if the resulting rescheduling will create a workload issue, the MFPC must contact the service center for guidance on which tests to reschedule, cancel, or modify.

Analyses of historical revenue, volume, and performance measurement systems data show that mail class volumes by day of the week are significantly different. An MFPC may reschedule only as a last resort; not as a matter of convenience.

Note: For further information, refer to the Global Business Systems International Dispatch User Guide, which is available on the Statistical Programs Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/other-references.htm>.

The exceptions in [Exhibit 4-3.3.3](#) apply to the procedures described in this section.

Exhibit 4-3.3.3

Exceptions for SIRVO-IODIS Rescheduling Procedures

| If the following situation occurs... | Then follow these guidelines... |
|---|---|
| The test is not conducted as originally scheduled... | Conduct the rescheduled test 1 week later than the originally scheduled test date, on the same day of the week. |
| The test is rescheduled for the last 7 days of the quarter... | Reschedule the test to any day within the last 7 days of the quarter. |

4-3.4 Canceling Tests

The MFPC must avoid canceling a SIRVO-IODIS test whenever possible, but if cancellation is necessary, the MFPC must use the following guidelines to justify those actions:

- The MFPC must cancel a scheduled SIRVO-IODIS test when the sample unit no longer exists. If a sample unit is changed after the sample selection was generated for the quarter, contact the service center for an updated sample and appropriate actions to take.
- The MFPC must cancel a SIRVO-IODIS test on a training day if rescheduling is not possible.
- The MFPC must cancel a SIRVO-IODIS test if instructed to do so by Statistical Programs as a result of a GBS failure to select samples.

Note: For further information, refer to the Global Business Systems International Dispatch User Guide, which is available on the Statistical Programs Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/other-references.htm>.

4-3.5 Delinquent Tests

The MFPC must account for every test and must contact the service center if any uncertainty arises about how to treat a test.

4-3.6 **Zero Volume Tests**

A Zero Volume test is one in which no mail is processed for the test country on the day of the test. The MFPC must report a Zero Volume test in the CODESWBU.

4-3.7 **Manually Selected Tests**

There are two types of Manually Selected Tests:

- a. *Bulk container tests:* Many of SIRVO-IODIS bulk container tests are selected manually due to operational time constraints. The sample is selected per guidance in the CODES software and in Handbook F-85, *International Revenue, Volume, and Performance Measurement Systems*.
- b. *GBS selection failure:* In the event GBS is still dispatching (i.e., it is not a Zero Volume day) but fails to select samples, the MFPC immediately contacts GBS support to report the problem and notifies the service center for instructions on rescheduling, canceling, or modifying the test schedule. If GBS sample selection does not begin within 2 days, the MFPC then instructs the data collectors to perform manual sample selection by seeking replacement receptacles meeting the requirements noted in Handbook F-85.

4-3.8 **Extraordinary Weather or Environmental Conditions**

To protect the validity of the systems, the data collector must conduct a test as scheduled even when extraordinary weather or environmental conditions exist. The general rule is that the data collector must conduct the test if the unit scheduled to be tested has mail available for delivery. If the data collector cannot get to the test location, the MFPC must reschedule the test in the CODES WBU. If the MFPC cannot reschedule the test, the MFPC must then cancel the test.

When the MFPC is uncertain about the application of these guidelines, the MFPC must contact the service center.

4-3.9 **Bypassed Receptacle Procedures**

During a GBS-Dispatch test, a bypassed receptacle is defined as a receptacle that is selected too close to the time of dispatch. The amount of time deemed too close to dispatch varies by receptacle type (currently within 2 hours for letter trays, 1.5 hours for flats trays, and 1 hour for bags). The GBS-Dispatch system automatically finds a replacement receptacle, which is the next receptacle available to be selected using the weight skip interval. GBS-Dispatch may select the replacement receptacle as early as the same day of the test, and as late as the start of a new test with the same defining characteristics or the end of the test month.

When it selects a bypassed receptacle, GBS-Dispatch sends a printer notice to Statistical Programs indicating the selection of the bypassed receptacle. When it selects a replacement receptacle, GBS-Dispatch sends a second printer notice to Statistical Programs indicating the selection of a

replacement receptacle. The data collector then suspends the test, maintaining a log with the original printer notice, until one of the following events occurs:

- a. GBS-Dispatch selects a replacement receptacle and the receptacle is sampled.
- b. A new test of the same stream begins.
- c. The test month has ended.

When one of these events occurs, the data collector then completes the test.

4-4 SIRVI Test Policies

4-4.1 Overview

SIRVI tests use probability sampling of mail that originates in other countries for delivery in the United States. Various international exchange offices (air and surface) that serve as original entry points of the mail into the United States sample this mail. USPS Headquarters prepares test schedules and provides them to participating districts. The schedule identifies the test ID and test date, as well as the target receptacles for each test. Target receptacles are defined by the following four characteristics:

- a. Country.
- b. Label class.
- c. Transportation mode.
- d. Receptacle type.

The test must sample all incoming international mail received at the facility for the scheduled test country during the 24-hour test day. This data serves as the basis for computing the average weight and number of items of mail from each of the countries covered by the agreements exchanging mail with the Postal Service.

The SIRVI test selects a fairly uniform number of receptacles per day or month (depending upon whether the test type is daily or monthly) at a given exchange office based on workload constraints, and with tests allocated in proportion to the total flows received at the exchange office. Whenever possible, SIRVI uses the automated Global Business System (GBS). As the expeditor is entering data related to the incoming mail, GBS selects the sample receptacle for data recording. The data collector receives a notification via printer that a sample receptacle is available for recording the mail characteristics of the mail within the selected receptacle. The data collector then samples the receptacle, closes it, enters it back into GBS, and returns it for processing.

Note: For monthly tests, if a GBS-selected receptacle is selected on a Sunday or holiday, and data collectors are either not available on the selection day or on the next day within a few hours of the selection time, the MFPC must establish local procedures to address this problem and inform the service center. For example, the GBS operator could be directed to delete SIRVI receptacles selected on Sundays or holidays

before a certain time.

When foreign postal agencies dispatch mail to the United States, they pay the Postal Service a portion of the costs to sort, transport, and deliver that mail to its final U.S. address. These payments are called “terminal dues.”

In general, the destination country determines the measurement of weight and volume passing from one postal administration to another. The Postal Service collects census weight information from postal documents and estimates the number of items per kilogram (IPK) via SIRVI.

The Postal Service must accurately estimate the volume of mail dispatched to the United States because these estimates serve as the basis to charge terminal dues to the originating country. The accuracy that data collectors maintain in measuring inbound foreign mail helps ensure that the Postal Service collects all the revenue that is due from foreign postal agencies.

4-4.2 **Scheduling Tests**

The MFPC accesses the SIRVI sample file in the CODES WBU. The sample file contains the test schedule information. The MFPC assigns data collectors to conduct the tests on a weekly basis, and the MFPC downloads the samples to the laptops quarterly.

The MFPC must review the status of SIRVI tests in the CODES WBU. This includes rescheduling, canceling, entering Zero Volume status, and coding the reason for rescheduling and canceling. The MFPC must account for each test in the CODES WBU.

4-4.3 **Rescheduling Tests**

Rescheduling tests is not applicable to SIRVI because SIRVI tests are a day sample.

An MFPC must never reschedule a SIRVI test. When scheduling problems arise, such as routine lack of trained data collectors, the MFPC must reevaluate staffing requirements and employee work schedules.

4-4.4 **Canceling Tests**

The MFPC must avoid canceling a SIRVI test whenever possible, but if cancellation is necessary, the MFPC must use the following guidelines to justify those actions:

- a. An insufficient number of data collection employees are available to conduct the test throughout the whole 24-hour test period.
- b. The facility is closed.
- c. The date is reserved for quarterly training.

Note: For further information on canceling SIRVI tests, refer to the Global Business Systems International Receipt User Guide, which is available on the Statistical Programs Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/other-references.htm>.

4-4.5 **Delinquent Tests**

The MFPC must account for every test and must contact the service center if any uncertainty arises about how to treat a test.

4-4.6 **Zero Volume Tests**

A Zero Volume test is one in which no mail volume is available on the day of the test. The MFPC must report a Zero Volume test in the CODES WBU. The MFPC must review the reason for the Zero Volume test to determine if a change in procedure is warranted.

Note: Report Letter-post Monthly and Weigh-Only test IDs as Zero Volume at the end of each month.

4-4.7 **Manually Selected Tests**

A Manually Selected Test occurs if GBS fails to select samples for the site. Because the SIRVI sampling process does not allow for rescheduling, the MFPC instructs data collectors to begin manual selection as soon as a GBS failure occurs. Data collectors then conduct manual selection according to Handbook F-85.

4-4.8 **Extraordinary Weather or Environmental Conditions**

To protect the validity of the systems and avoid introducing bias, the data collector must conduct a test as scheduled even when extraordinary weather or environmental conditions exist. The general rule is that the data collector must conduct the test if the unit scheduled to be tested has mail available for delivery. If the data collector cannot get to the test location, the MFPC must administratively cancel the test in the CODES WBU. If the unit to be tested has no mail available on the day of the test, then the MFPC submits a Zero Volume test.

When the MFPC is uncertain about the application of these guidelines to a specific situation, the MFPC must contact the service center.

4-5 **Transportation Cost System Test Policies**

4-5.1 **Overview**

TRACS is a statistical sampling and data collection system that provides information to estimate costs by subclass for the major purchased transportation cost accounts. The Postal Service distributes approximately \$6 billion each year for the purchased transportation of mail on commercial airlines, network air, and trucking routes. Since the characteristics of purchased transportation vary significantly by mode, TRACS uses separate sampling systems to collect data — one for surface transportation, and one for air transportation.

The Postal Service samples more than 19,000 truck and airline trips each year to distribute these costs to the categories of mail.

This section provides guidelines to the MFPC for administering TRACS tests. This section also covers policies for scheduling, rescheduling, canceling, and conducting Zero Volume TRACS tests.

4-5.2 Scheduling Tests

4-5.2.1 Overview

The MFPC accesses the TRACS sample file in the CODES WBU. The sample file contains the test information and scheduled test dates. The MFPC assigns data collectors to conduct the tests, and the MFPC downloads the samples to the laptops.

The MFPC must also review the status of TRACS tests in the CODES WBU. This includes rescheduling, canceling, entering Zero Volume status, and coding the reason for rescheduling and canceling. The MFPC must account for each test in the CODES WBU.

4-5.2.2 Telephone Tests

On some occasions, a data collector may conduct a TRACS Surface test by telephone, if all of the following requirements are met:

- a. The MFPC must contact the service center at least 2 days before the original test date for permission to conduct a low-volume Surface test by telephone. The MFPC must provide the following information:
 - (1) Volume history from the Transportation Information Management Evaluation System (TIMES).
 - (2) Amount of travel time and/or overtime that would be needed to conduct the test at the scheduled facility site.
- b. The telephone respondent must be a knowledgeable facility staff person who knows the container type, item type, mail classification, vehicle utilization information, and how to set aside the test mail.
- c. The data collector must conduct the following steps when initiating the test:
 - (1) Press <F5> on the keyboard.
 - (2) Click <Notes> in the *Header* screen in CODES.
 - (3) Record the name and telephone number of the person conducting the test at the office. For example, enter "Telephone test contact: John Doe, telephone (000) 123-4567."

The data collector is responsible for ensuring that the sample data collected by telephone is accurate and complete.

4-5.2.3 Replacement Tests

The data collector may conduct a TRACS replacement test only for a TRACS Surface (highway) test when a permanent route change occurs, and only if the original test was not conducted in a normal manner. The data collector may conduct the replacement test on the same day.

Replacement tests are not an option for TRACS Air tests.

Rules on when to conduct a replacement test and how to select the replacement test appear in the TRACS reference guides available on the Statistical Programs Web site: go to <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/reference-guides.htm>, and then click on the links for *TRACS Air Reference Guide* and *TRACS Surface Reference Guide*. The TRACS frame report, which provides information for replacement TRACS Surface tests, is available in the CODES WBU — under the *Reports* menu, click on *Mainframe Reports*.

4-5.2.4 **Rescheduling Tests**

4-5.2.4.1 **Reasons for Rescheduling**

The MFPC must reschedule a test when any of the following situations occurs:

- a. The data collector cannot conduct a TRACS test as originally scheduled or when conducting a replacement test is not appropriate.
- b. The data collector does not arrive in time to observe the mail being unloaded.
- c. The mail does not arrive due to a permanent change in route, and a replacement vehicle is not available.
- d. A temporary change in route causes the mail to be delivered by a vehicle other than the scheduled test vehicle, and either of the following conditions exist:
 - (1) The vehicle does not have the same contract type as the test vehicle.
 - (2) The vehicle has the same contract type as the test vehicle, but was not originally scheduled to stop on the test day.
- e. A permanent route change does not allow enough time to replace the test vehicle on the day of the test. If it is possible to replace the vehicle by the same day of the following week, then it might be best for the MFPC to reschedule the test to the same weekday the following week.

4-5.2.4.2 **Rescheduling Procedures**

Regardless of the following rescheduling rules, the MFPC must make every effort to complete all TRACS tests in the quarter for which the tests were originally scheduled. The following list explains TRACS rescheduling rules:

- a. Conduct the rescheduled test 1 week later than the originally scheduled test date, on the same day of the week.

Example: For a highway test that was scheduled on a particular contract route on the Saturday of the first week of the second quarter, reschedule it on the same contract route on the Saturday of the second week of the second quarter.
- b. Reschedule a missed test in the last week of the quarter to be within that same week.

If a TRACS test that was rescheduled from a previous week must be rescheduled for a second time, follow the same procedure used for the original rescheduling. Follow the rescheduling procedure until the test is completed. However, during the last 7 days of the quarter, the MFPC may reschedule the test to any day that week. Cancel a test on the last day of the quarter when the test cannot be taken.

The exceptions in [Exhibit 4-5.2.4.2](#) apply to the procedures described in this section.

Exhibit 4-5.2.4.2

Exceptions for TRACS Rescheduling Procedures

| If the following situation occurs... | Then follow these guidelines... |
|--|---|
| The test is not conducted on the originally scheduled test day ... | Rescheduled the test 1 week later, on the same day as originally scheduled. |
| The test is rescheduled for the last 7 days of the quarter... | Reschedule the test to any day within the last 7 days of the quarter. |
| The test is not conducted on the last day of the quarter... | Cancel missed tests on the last day of the quarter. |

4-5.3 Canceling Tests

Sometimes a TRACS test cannot be performed as originally scheduled, nor can the test be replaced or rescheduled. These situations are not covered by the TRACS decision trees and flow charts. [Exhibit 4-5.3](#) describes situations that are appropriate for canceling TRACS tests. Cancel a test scheduled for the last day of the quarter when the test cannot be taken.

Exhibit 4-5.3

Cancellation Code Table

| Cancellation Code | Subsystem | CODES WBU Reason | Situation |
|-------------------|----------------|---|--|
| 1 | Surface | Test facility permanently closed. | The test facility no longer exists. |
| 2 | Air | No test mail worked in 2-hour window. | MFPC confirms in EDW that no D&R tags of the appropriate mail class were scanned during the time period. Note: It could take up to 24 hours for scan data to appear in EDW. |
| 3 | Air | Test mail no longer processed at facility. | Test mail is no longer processed at the facility. |
| 4 | Surface | Routing change, no facility stop, no replacement. | Routing change. The trip no longer stops at facility and no replacement is available. |
| 5 | Surface | Trip did not run test day, no replacement. | The trip does not run on the test day and no replacement is available. |
| 6 | VSD, DRO | Trip did not arrive in 2-hour window. | No eligible truck arrived during the 2-hour window. |
| 7 | Surface | Facility closed for truck arrival/safety issue. | The test facility is closed when the truck is scheduled to arrive and the data collector has a safety concern about collecting the data when the facility is closed. Note: The test may be canceled only as a last resort. The MFPC must contact the service center before the scheduled date of the test to avoid canceling the test. |
| 8 | All subsystems | Quarterly training date. | The test is canceled to provide time for quarterly training. |
| 9 | All subsystems | Unable to conduct before quarter end. | Unable to conduct or reschedule before end of quarter. |

For further information on TRACS Surface and Air subsystem reschedule, replacement, and Zero Volume tests, refer to the TRACS reference guides available on the Statistical Programs Web site: go to <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/reference-guides.htm>, and then click on the links for *TRACS Air Reference Guide* and *TRACS Surface Reference Guide*.

For exceptional situations not described in this section or in [Exhibit 4-5.2.4.2](#), or not covered by the TRACS decision trees and flow charts in the TRACS reference guides available on the Statistical Programs Web site, the MFPC must contact the service center immediately and provide the Test ID, a brief description of the situation, and a contact telephone number in case additional information is needed.

4-5.4 **Delinquent Tests**

Every test must be accounted for. If an MFPC is unsure how to treat a test, the MFPC must contact the service center.

4-5.5 **Recording a Zero Volume Test**

A data collector may occasionally record a Zero Volume test. Rules for when to record a Zero Volume test are available in Handbook F-65. Unlike for other Statistical Programs tests, the data collector records TRACS Surface Zero Volume tests in the data collection software rather than in the CODES WBU.

Note: Zero Volume tests do not apply to Air tests.

4-5.6 **Extraordinary Situations**

Most situations can be addressed using the guidelines in Handbook F-65. The rules in the TRACS reference guides available on the Statistical Programs Web site also help in resolving extraordinary situations. For situations not covered in those documents, contact the service center.

4-6 **Carrier Cost Systems Test Policies**

4-6.1 **Overview**

The Postal Service uses Carrier Cost Systems to direct the distribution of carrier costs for delivering various mail products. The test to collect data for city carriers is different from the test for rural carriers because the wage payment (compensation) methodology differs for city carriers and rural carriers. Both tests involve counting mail volumes by rate category for individual delivery points. The Postal Service does not use these tests to set work standards or to measure carrier performance; instead, it uses the data to direct the distribution of over \$6 billion in city carrier delivery (street) time and rural payroll, plus indirect costs to mail products.

Statistical Programs uses the City Carrier Cost System (CCCS) test to record mail information for a random sample of the city delivery letter routes throughout the Postal Service. It conducts approximately 8,500 CCCS tests per year by random sampling of city carrier letter routes. The city letter route

frame (sampling design) excludes city carrier routes classified as unique (e.g., firm holdouts) and other unusual firm delivery routes. It conducts another 1,000 tests on city carrier Special Purpose Routes.

Statistical Programs uses the Rural Carrier Cost System (RCCS) test to record mail information for a random sample of the rural delivery routes throughout the Postal Service. It conducts approximately 6,400 RCCS tests per year by random sampling of rural carrier routes.

For both carrier tests, the data collector samples mailpieces for delivery on the sampled route and identifies the sampled mailpieces by product. On the RCCS test, the data collector also identifies sampled mailpieces by compensation category. For delivered mail volume, the test enables Statistical Programs to produce estimates for all categories of mail. The test also obtains a count of all mail collected by the carrier on the sampled route. From collected mail, Statistical Programs is then able to produce estimates for letters, flats, and parcels by rate category, as well as Certified Mail and Registered Mail.

If the Carrier Cost System test cannot be conducted at the scheduled time or if the data is corrupt, the MFPC must reschedule the test. The MFPC must also refer any other special situations to the service center.

4-6.2 Policies

Managers and data collectors must observe the following policies when conducting Carrier Cost Systems tests:

- a. CCCS and RCCS tests must be completed as scheduled.
- b. If a test cannot be completed as scheduled, the MFPC must refer to the reschedule policy.
- c. The MFPC must enter the collection mail data on PS Form 2846, *City Carrier Route Mail Acceptance Data*, and PS Form 2848, *Rural Carrier Route Mail Acceptance Data*, into the CODES WBU within 4 days after the test. If the form is not received within 4 days, the MFPC is required to contact the station manager for the status.
- d. The MFPC is required to review all tests on a regular basis before approving data in the CODES WBU.
- e. The MFPC must take special care to identify any test record that contains incorrect data or other evidence that requires a test to be rescheduled.
- f. If the Carrier Cost System test cannot be conducted at the scheduled time, the MFPC must reschedule the test.
- g. If a route no longer exists or the facility is closed, the MFPC must contact the service center.
- g-h. If there is no mail for delivery on the test route within the test window on the test day, the MFPC must report a Zero Volume test in the CODES WBU.

4-6.3 City Carrier Cost System

4-6.3.1 Overview

Statistical Programs conducts the CCCS test to record mail information for a random sample of the city delivery letter routes. The data collector samples the mail before casing by using a mailpiece skip interval and a randomly generated start number, and identifies the sampled mailpieces by class, subclass, and shape category. For each city carrier route that is sampled, the data collector counts and records the collected letters, flats, and parcels.

4-6.3.2 Scheduling Tests

The MFPC accesses the CCCS sample file on a weekly basis from the CODES WBU. The sample file contains the sample route information and scheduled test dates. The MFPC assigns data collectors to conduct the tests and to upload the sampled test data to the CODES WBU.

The MFPC must review the status of CCCS tests in the CODES WBU. This includes rescheduling, canceling, deleting, entering Zero Volume status, and keying the reason for canceling a test.

4-6.3.3 Rescheduling Tests

4-6.3.3.1 Overview

The MFPC must review all tests on a regular basis before approving completed tests on the CODES WBU, and must take special care to identify any test record containing incorrect data or any other evidence that requires a test to be rescheduled.

The situations listed below might be reasons for rescheduling CCCS tests:

- a. A carrier familiar enough to identify deviation parcels on the route is unavailable.
- b. Severe weather prevents mail delivery on the route.
- c. A route inspection is scheduled for the same day.
- d. The data is corrupt.
- e. The test is scheduled on a training day.
- f. The data collector's vehicle breaks down.

The MFPC must refer any other special situations to the service center.

4-6.3.3.2 Rescheduling Procedures

The MFPC must make every effort to complete all CCCS tests as originally scheduled. Reschedule a test on the same day of the week, usually 1 week after the original test date. If no knowledgeable mail carrier is available on the new date, reschedule the test to the same day of the week as close to the original date as possible.

An MFPC must make every effort to complete all CCCS tests in the quarter for which they were originally scheduled even if a test appears on the TSSR report under the *Test Not Received* category during the month.

If the original test is scheduled for the last week of the quarter, then reschedule the test to any day of the last week. If this is not possible, do not cancel the test. It remains delinquent.

The exceptions in [Exhibit 4-6.3.3.2](#) apply to the procedures described in this section.

Exhibit 4-6.3.3.2

Exceptions for CCCS Rescheduling Procedures

| If the following situation occurs... | Then follow these guidelines... |
|---|--|
| The test is scheduled for the last 7 days of the quarter... | Reschedule the test to any day within the last 7 days of the quarter. If this is not possible, do not cancel a missed test. It remains delinquent. |
| A route no longer exists... | Contact the service center. |

4-6.3.4 Canceling Tests

It is extremely rare that a situation will warrant canceling a CCCS test. Before canceling a test, the MFPC must contact the service center with a reason for requesting the cancellation and receive permission to cancel the test.

4-6.3.5 Delinquent Tests

A “delinquent test” is a test that has not been received at the mainframe according to the transmission schedule in [Exhibit 8-2.2.4.1](#). An MFPC must review the reasons for delinquent tests and correct the causes.

~~4-6.3.6 Recording a Zero Volume Test~~

~~The option to record a Zero Volume test is available only for CCCS tests on Special Purpose Routes. For examples of Zero Volume Special Purpose Route tests, refer to the current CCCS Reference Guide, which is available on the Statistical Programs Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/reference-guides.htm>; click on CCCS Reference Guide.~~

4-6.3.76 Extraordinary Weather or Environmental Conditions

If severe weather or environmental conditions prevent mail delivery on the test route, the MFPC must reschedule the test.

4-6.4 Rural Carrier Cost System

4-6.4.1 Overview

Statistical Programs conducts the RCCS test to record mail information for a random sample of the rural delivery routes. The data collector samples the mail before casing by using a mailpiece skip interval and a randomly generated start number, and identifies the sampled mailpieces by class, subclass, shape, and rural route compensation category. For each rural carrier route that is sampled, the data collector counts and records the collected letters, flats, parcels, Certified Mail items, and Registered Mail items. Do not count collection mail from collection boxes and neighborhood delivery and collection box units (NDCBU).

4-6.4.2 Scheduling Tests

The MFPC accesses the RCCS sample file on a weekly basis from the CODES WBU. The sample file contains the sample route information and scheduled test dates. The MFPC assigns data collectors to conduct the tests, and to upload the sampled test data to the CODES WBU.

The MFPC must review the status of RCCS tests in the CODES WBU in the space provided. This includes rescheduling, canceling, deleting and keying the reason for canceling a test.

4-6.4.3 Rescheduling Tests

4-6.4.3.1 Overview

The MFPC must review all tests on a regular basis before approving completed tests in the CODES WBU. The MFPC must also take special care to identify any test record containing incorrect data or any other evidence that requires a test to be rescheduled.

The situations listed below might be reasons for rescheduling RCCS tests:

- a. Severe weather prevents mail delivery on the route.
- b. A National Rural Mail Count is scheduled for the same day.
- c. The data is corrupt.
- d. The test is scheduled on a training day.
- e. The data collector's vehicle breaks down.

The MFPC must refer any other special situations to the service center.

4-6.4.3.2 Rescheduling Procedures

The MFPC must make every effort to complete all RCCS tests as originally scheduled and to complete all tests in the quarter for which they are originally scheduled, even if a test appears on the TSSR report under the category *Test Not Received* category during the month.

The MFPC must reschedule a test on the same day of the week, usually 1 week after the original test date. If this is not an option, then the MFPC reschedules the test as close to the original date as possible. If the test is scheduled for the last week of the quarter, then reschedule it to any day of the last week. If this is not possible, do not cancel the test — it remains delinquent.

The exceptions in [Exhibit 4-6.4.3.2](#) apply to the procedures described in this section.

Exhibit 4-6.4.3.2

Exceptions for RCCS Rescheduling Procedures

| If the following situation occurs... | Then follow these guidelines... |
|--|---|
| The test is scheduled for the last 7 days of the quarter, AND the test cannot be rescheduled earlier in the quarter on the same day of the week... | Reschedule the test to any day within the last 7 days of the quarter. If this is not possible, do not cancel the missed test; instead, it remains delinquent. |
| A route no longer exists... | Contact the service center. |

4-6.4.4 Canceling Tests

It is extremely rare that a situation will warrant canceling an RCCS test. Before canceling a test, the MFPC must contact the service center with a reason for requesting the cancellation and receive permission to cancel the test.

4-6.4.5 Delinquent Tests

A delinquent test is a test that has not been received at the mainframe according to the transmission schedule in [Exhibit 8-2.2.4.1](#). The MFPC must review the reasons for delinquent tests and correct the causes.

4-6.4.6 Extraordinary Weather or Environmental Conditions

If severe weather or environmental conditions prevent mail delivery on the test route, the MFPC must reschedule the test.

4-7 In-Office Cost System Test Policies

4-7.1 Overview

The In-Office Cost System (IOCS) is the primary probability sampling system that the Postal Service uses to distribute the labor costs of clerks, mail handlers, city carriers, and supervisors to the activities carried out by those employees, particularly activities related to the handling of mail of all classes and rate categories, and to the provision of special services. The data serve as the basis for distribution of over \$20 billion in volume-variable costs to classes and subclasses of mail. Statistical Programs conducts approximately 550,000 IOCS samples each year.

Statistical Programs conducts sampling independently for each employee group:

- a. Clerks.
- b. Mail handlers.
- c. City carriers.
- d. Supervisors.

The data collector observes a selected employee at a designated time within the employee's workday. The data collector records the activity being performed by the employee at the time, and the characteristics of any mail or mail transportation equipment that the employee handles at the time of the observation.

The CODES WBU software automatically receives the new IOCS sample files every 2 weeks. Data collectors conduct IOCS readings and transmit completed readings to the CODES WBU on a daily basis.

4-7.2 Scheduling Readings

The MFPC is responsible for accessing the IOCS Readings Schedule Report in the CODES WBU. This file contains information about the sampled employees and provides starting and ending times for all employees.

After the file is available in the CODES WBU, the MFPC must verify the starting and ending times for the sampled employees, because the employee schedule might have changed since the sample selection was performed. Also, the Readings Schedule Report might not have the starting and ending times for all sampled employees.

The MFPC may print the *Unscheduled IOCS Report* from the CODES WBU to verify the starting and ending times for the employees. This report is available in Excel, text, or PDF format. To print the *Unscheduled IOCS Report*, the MFPC selects *IOCS* as the *Test Type* in the *Sample Viewer* toolbar, sets the date parameters to the date of the pay period, and then presses the *GO* button. A drop-down menu displays the number of readings that the MFPC must schedule as “Schedule XX Samples,” for the dates selected in the *Sample Viewer* toolbar.

To verify or obtain the starting and ending times for the sampled employee, the MFPC consults the Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS) or locally maintained office roster, or calls the office of the sampled employee.

After having obtained and verified the starting and ending times, the MFPC can schedule the readings in the CODES WBU. When scheduling the readings, the MFPC must update starting and ending times as appropriate. For an explanation of computing the scheduled reading time, see Handbook F-45, *Data Collection User's Guide for In-Office Cost System*.

After scheduling the readings, the MFPC assigns data collectors to conduct the readings. The MFPC then loads sample data onto the CODES laptop via telecommunications link.

4-7.3 Rescheduling Tests

4-7.3.1 Overview

The MFPC must ensure that all IOCS readings are conducted at the appropriate times. Rescheduling readings is not a preferred action, and the MFPC must never use rescheduling as a means of managing data collection resources. Rather, if scheduling problems arise, such as routine lack of trained data collectors, the MFPC must reevaluate staffing requirements and employee work schedules. The MFPC must then make the necessary changes that will correct any scheduling problems. If help is needed in any of the above areas, contact the service center.

Note: Employee illness is not justification for missing a reading. Trained backup employees must be available in case of unexpected absences. (One of the MFPC's responsibilities is to keep a cadre of trained data collectors.)

4-7.3.2 Rescheduling IOCS Readings in the CODES Web Base Unit

The MFPC reschedules readings in the CODES WBU, including the code for the appropriate reason.

4-7.3.3 Reasons That Could Lead to Rescheduling Readings

If an IOCS reading is not conducted at the scheduled time, the MFPC must reschedule the reading. Situations that can lead to rescheduling a test include the following:

- a. The reading was missed, forgotten, overlooked, or misplaced.
- b. The sampled employee had a schedule or tour change.
- c. No qualified employee was available to conduct the reading.
- d. The data collector was unable to locate the employee.
- e. The data collector was unable to complete the reading within 30 minutes.
- f. The reading was unusable (incorrect information).
- g. There was a problem with reaching the employee by telephone.
- h. The reason falls into the “Other” category (which include circumstantial reasons).
- i. There were hazardous conditions (e.g., weather, bomb scare, etc.).
- j. Laptop failure occurred and no backup laptop was available.
- k. Data was corrupt (i.e., the test is not recoverable by CODES).
- l. The reading was scheduled for a quarterly training date and exempted from the TSSR.

Example: A reading was scheduled for 0710 hours, but the data collector was not able to get to the reading until 0745 hours. Reschedule the reading because this is a violation of the 30-minute rule.

4-7.3.4 Rescheduling Procedures

Statistical Programs staff must make every effort to complete all IOCS readings within the calendar quarter (January–March, April–June, July–September, or October–December) for which they were originally scheduled. The MFPC may not reschedule an IOCS reading into a different quarter, but instead must reschedule a reading according to the following guidelines:

- a. If a reading must be rescheduled, then the MFPC must first reschedule it 1 week later than the original date on the same day of the week as it was originally scheduled. However, if the rescheduled date would fall on the quarterly training date, the MFPC must reschedule it to the following week (i.e., 2 weeks from the original date).
- b. The MFPC must not reschedule a reading to occur on the same date and at the same reading code (1, 2, 3, or L) as another reading on the same employee because two readings cannot occur during the same reading code. If such a rescheduling does occur, then the MFPC must reschedule the reading again.
- c. If a reading rescheduled from a previous week must be rescheduled again, the MFPC must follow the same procedures. The MFPC must repeat the rescheduling procedures until the reading is completed.

- d. If a Monday–Saturday reading cannot be rescheduled to the same day of the week for any of the following weeks of the quarter, the MFPC may reschedule it to any of the last 7 days of the quarter of the original reading date except Sunday. If a Sunday reading must be rescheduled, the MFPC must reschedule it to a Sunday.
- e. The MFPC may not reschedule a missed reading that was to occur on the last day of the quarter.
- f. The MFPC must recalculate the scheduled reading time for rescheduled readings. The reading code (1, 2, 3, or L) remains the same as the originally scheduled reading, and all readings on any given day have the same random time. The MFPC must use the random time for the day on which the reading is rescheduled to calculate the rescheduled reading time.

Example: A last (L) reading is originally scheduled for Monday, January 20 at 1259 hours. The employee reported at 0600 hours, and was supposed to work overtime until 1530 hours, so the last reading time was recalculated to 1459 hours. However, because the employee was sent home at the regular ending time of 1430 hours, the last reading could not be conducted at 1459 hours, so no last reading was done on January 20. According to IOCS procedures, the last reading must be rescheduled for Monday, January 27. The random time for January 27 is 0012 hours. Because this is a last reading and the employee is scheduled to work until 1530 hours, the rescheduled reading time is 1412 hours.

The exceptions in [Exhibit 4-7.3.4](#) apply to the procedures described in this section.

Exhibit 4-7.3.4

Exceptions for IOCS Rescheduling Procedures

| If the following situation occurs... | Then follow these guidelines... |
|---|---|
| A Monday–Saturday test is scheduled for the last 7 days of the quarter... | Reschedule the test to any Monday–Saturday within the last 7 days of the quarter. If this is not possible, cancel the reading in the CODES WBU. |
| A Sunday test is scheduled for the last 7 days of the quarter... | If it is not possible to take or reschedule a reading within the rescheduling guidelines, cancel the reading in the CODES WBU. |

4-7.4 Canceling Readings

The MFPC must avoid canceling an IOCS reading whenever possible, but if cancellation is necessary, the MFPC must use one of the two types of test cancellations available in the CODES WBU software:

- a. *Quarterly training date:* Use this canceling option when the reading is scheduled on the Quarterly Training date.
- b. *Unable to conduct or reschedule before quarter end:* Use this canceling option when it is not possible to take or reschedule a reading within the rescheduling guidelines outlined in [4-7.3.4](#).

4-7.5 **Delinquent Readings**

A delinquent reading is a reading that has not been received at the mainframe computer. The MFPC must review the reasons for delinquent readings and correct the causes.

4-7.6 **Extraordinary Weather or Environmental Conditions**

To protect the validity of the data, the data collector must conduct a reading as scheduled even when extraordinary weather or environmental conditions exist. The general rule is that the data collector must conduct the reading if the Post Office is in operation at a scheduled reading time.

4-7.7 **Respondents for Telephone Readings**

The MFPC must work with all facilities where IOCS telephone readings are conducted to ensure adequate support for telephone readings.

When conducting a telephone reading, the data collector calls the work location of the sampled employee and asks to speak with the supervisor. If that supervisor is not available, the data collector must ask for another supervisor or someone else who can assist with the reading. The data collector must then read the IOCS questions and instructions to the respondent over the telephone to complete the reading. As with on-site readings, the snapshot occurs consistently when all of the following criteria are met:

- a. The respondent is in sufficiently close proximity to identify the employee as the correct sampled employee.
- b. The respondent is able to readily and safely isolate any mail or empty equipment that the employee is handling.
- c. The data collector must follow any software instructions and the step-by-step instructions for conducting telephone readings provided in Handbook F-45, *Data Collection User's Guide for In-Office Cost System*.

A data collector may conduct a telephone reading only when the total time needed to conduct an on-site reading exceeds 60 minutes (which includes the time needed for the data collector to travel to the employee's facility, locate the employee at the facility, take the reading, and return to the data collector's normal duty site). When a data collector is unable to reach the sampled employee at the work location at the scheduled time of the reading, a telephone reading is acceptable (e.g., if hazardous weather conditions could prevent the data collector from going to a station, branch, or associate office, or if the data collector has two readings scheduled at the same time).

4-8 ODIS-RPW Test Policies

4-8.1 Overview

ODIS-RPW is a continuous probability sample of all mail exiting the postal system. During an ODIS-RPW test, a data collector records weight, revenue, and additional characteristics from a portion of the mail. From this data, Statistical Programs at USPS Headquarters develops estimates for each quarter with specific levels of statistical accuracy for major mail classes. The ODIS-RPW program schedules approximately 128,000 on-site and digital tests per year. This section provides guidelines for the MFPC administering ODIS-RPW tests.

4-8.2 Scheduling Tests

The MFPC accesses the ODIS-RPW sample file on the CODES WBU and uses the DCT Scheduler application to assign data collectors to conduct the tests. The MFPC must ensure that all CODES laptops have current sample files, which contain the sampled MEP information and scheduled test dates. Data collectors must conduct on-site tests at the appropriate delivery unit or destination mail processing facility. The data collector must conduct digital tests either in the Statistical Programs district office or the data collector's domiciled work location within 2 weeks of the original test date or by the end of the scheduled month (whichever comes first).

It is the responsibility of the MFPC to maintain the status of ODIS-RPW tests on the CODES WBU. This includes rescheduling and canceling on-site tests. The MFPC must enter the appropriate reason code when rescheduling and canceling on-site tests. The MFPC must account for each on-site and digital test in the CODES WBU.

4-8.3 Rescheduling On-site Tests

4-8.3.1 Overview

It is the responsibility of the MFPC to ensure that all ODIS-RPW tests are conducted as originally scheduled. The MFPC is required to keep a pool of trained data collectors and must not use rescheduling as a means of managing data collection resources. If scheduling problems arise, the MFPC must reevaluate staffing requirements, employee work schedules, and MEP designs to make changes to correct any scheduling problems. If it is not possible to avoid rescheduling or canceling an on-site test, the MFPC must follow the procedures in [4-8.3.3](#) and [4-8.4](#).

Note: These options apply only to on-site tests. Do not reschedule digital tests.

Note: An adequate number of trained backup personnel must be ready in case of unexpected absences. Employee illness is not a justification for missing an ODIS-RPW test.

4-8.3.2 Reasons That Could Lead to Rescheduling Tests

Reschedule an on-site ODIS-RPW test in the following situations:

- a. The test was not conducted due to the quarterly training date (exempted from TSSR).
- b. The MFPC failed to schedule the test (e.g., the MFPC forgot about the test).
- c. No trained data collector was available to conduct the test.
- d. Extraordinary weather or environmental conditions prevented the data collector from conducting the test (see [4-8.6](#)).

If resources are not available to reschedule the test, contact the service center.

4-8.3.3 Rescheduling Procedures

If an on-site test needs to be rescheduled, the MFPC must reschedule it using the following options in the order listed:

Option 1: Reschedule the test for the same day of the week and within the same month in which the test was originally scheduled. If a test is scheduled for the last week of the month, reschedule it to the same day of the week in the first week of the next month.

Option 2: If the test was originally scheduled for a Tuesday or Wednesday, reschedule it to any Tuesday or Wednesday, if possible, within the same month. If the test was originally scheduled for a Thursday, Friday, or Saturday, reschedule it to any Thursday, Friday, or Saturday, if possible, within the same month. (Reschedule Sunday or Monday tests only to the same day of the week as originally scheduled.)

Option 3: Reschedule the test to avoid an administrative cancellation. If a test is scheduled during the last 7 days of the quarter, reschedule it to any day within the last 7 days of the quarter.

The MFPC must also consider the following guidelines:

- a. *Do not* reschedule a test to a day that would result in another test being rescheduled.
- b. *Do not* reschedule a test to the quarterly training date.
- c. *Do not* reschedule a test outside the originally scheduled quarter.
- d. *Do not* reschedule or cancel a test scheduled on the day after a holiday.
- e. *Unless absolutely necessary, do not* reschedule a test that was originally scheduled within 5 days of a holiday (either before or after).
- f. *Unless absolutely necessary, do not* reschedule a test outside the originally scheduled month.

4-8.4 Canceling On-site Tests

The CODES WBU provides two types of test cancellations for on-site tests: *Unit No Longer Exists* and *Administrative*. Select the correct option as follows:

- a. *Unit No Longer Exists*: Use this option whenever a MEP no longer exists. A MEP no longer exists when all mail within a MEP no longer exists (e.g., a firm with a unique ZIP Code closes down) or when all mail in the MEP is susceptible to double counting (e.g., the mail exists within another MEP). When the MFPC cancels a test for the reason “Unit No Longer Exists,” the MFPC must delete the MEP.
- b. *Administrative*: Use this option whenever a data collector cannot conduct the test, or if the MFPC cannot reschedule it within the rescheduling guidelines. A data collector cannot conduct the test if the data collector cannot isolate all mail within the MEP for testing as designed (e.g., mail that used to be tested in separate MEPs now arrives commingled and cannot be separated for testing). When “Administrative” is the reason for a test cancellation, the MFPC must redesign the MEP.

Note: These options apply only to on-site tests. Do not administratively cancel digital tests unless instructed by the service center.

4-8.5 Delinquent Tests

An on-site test is considered delinquent if the test date has passed and the test has not been conducted, rescheduled, or canceled. Digital test mail is permanently deleted in the Statistical Programs Virtual Image Enterprise Warehouse (SP VIEW) after 30 days. A digital test is considered delinquent when it is not conducted within 2 weeks of the original test date or by the end of the scheduled month (whichever comes first). No test may remain delinquent at the end of the quarter — the MFPC must either conduct or cancel each test by the end of the quarter. When uncertain how to treat the test, the MFPC must contact the service center.

4-8.6 Extraordinary Weather or Environmental Conditions

Data collectors must conduct on-site tests as scheduled, even under extraordinary weather or environmental conditions. The general rule is that the data collector must conduct the test if the unit scheduled to be tested has mail available for delivery. Follow these guidelines:

- a. If the data collector cannot get to the test location, reschedule the test.
- b. If the unit has no mail available for delivery on the day of the test, submit a Zero Volume test.
- c. If a unit is tested after the occurrence of an extraordinary weather or environmental event, include all mail received within the cutoff times (all of the test-day mail).

Example: On June 9, severe weather causes much flooding in your city. The following scenarios are examples of what might occur for this day and the following days:

- a. On June 9, MEP Unit A is scheduled to be tested, but the unit has no mail available for delivery because of the flooding. In this case, complete the test by submitting a Zero Volume test.
- b. On June 10, MEP Unit B is scheduled to be tested, but operations have not yet resumed because of the flooding from the previous day. Again, in this case, submit a Zero Volume test.
- c. On June 11, MEP Unit C is scheduled to be tested, and operations have resumed. In this case, test all eligible mail received since the beginning cutoff time on June 10 through the ending cutoff time on June 11. The volume for this test will be large since it includes mail held upstream.

4-8.7 Tests Requiring a Different Testing Location

4-8.7.1 Overview

For a scheduled test for which the data collector can no longer isolate all of the mail at the test facility (as indicated on the Header Report) due to a change in mail flow, the MFPC may authorize a data collector to conduct the test at another location between the destination processing facility and the final delivery unit. No other circumstance (e.g., travel time, data collector availability, overtime) is an acceptable reason to test a MEP at a different test facility.

4-8.7.2 Different Testing Location Criteria

Before conducting an ODIS-RPW test at a different test facility, the appropriate personnel must complete the following tasks:

- a. The MFPC must notify the manager of the new test facility 1 week before the test date.
- b. The MFPC must submit an entry to the anomaly log with justification for a location change 1 week before the test date.
- c. The data collector must isolate every mailpiece for testing in the MEP at the new test facility.

4-9 Test Notification Policy

4-9.1 Overview

The MFPC must always notify the facility to be tested before any on-site testing. Advance notification helps the facility prepare for the arrival of the data collector. The following sections specify the appropriate notification that the MFPC provides for each statistical program.

4-9.2 **SIRVO-IODIS Tests**

For SIRVO-IODIS tests, the MFPC contacts the facility manager 24 hours before the test is scheduled to begin. See Handbook F-85 for detailed information regarding test notification procedures for SIRVO-IODIS tests.

For the SIRVO-IODIS non-GBS/Bulk Container test, the sample unit is a 24-hour sample unit, with the beginning cutoff time typically occurring at midnight of the test day and the ending cutoff time occurring 24 hours later.

4-9.3 **SIRVI Tests**

For SIRVI tests, the MFPC contacts the facility manager 24 hours before the test is scheduled to begin. See Handbook F-85 for detailed information regarding test notification procedures for SIRVI tests.

4-9.4 **TRACS Tests**

For TRACS tests, the district Statistical Programs office may make the following two calls:

- a. An optional call to the test site to prepare for scheduling the TRACS surface or air test, including verification of the test site, route, and mail availability or arrival time.

Note: The district Statistical Programs office may make this optional call any time after receiving the test schedule for the quarter.

- b. A required call, at least 2 days before the test date, to inform or remind the test site of the pending test and to explain the test procedures. For specific required information, see Handbook F-65.

4-9.5 **Carrier Cost Tests**

4-9.5.1 **Overview**

Before conducting a statistical program test, the MFPC must notify the facility to be tested in three different ways. The following sections identify the ways for notifying a facility when conducting a CCCS test and a RCCS test.

4-9.5.2 **City Carrier Cost Systems Tests**

For CCCS tests, the district Statistical Programs office must make the following three contacts:

- a. At the beginning of the quarter, notify the postmaster by email or letter of the date that a test will be conducted in that office. An example of a letter used to inform a postmaster about the pending CCCS test is available in [Appendix A](#), and the district Statistical Programs office may modify it as appropriate for the specific situation.
- b. Contact the postmaster by telephone, email, or letter about an upcoming test 1 week in advance. This notice allows the MFPC to confirm that the route exists and enables the postmaster to ensure that a carrier who knows the route is scheduled for the test day. It also allows the MFPC to learn if a CCCS test is being conducted on a Vertical Improved Mail (VIM) route.

- c. Call the test facility 24 hours in advance of the test to gather additional information for the test and to determine when to arrive at the test site.

4-9.5.3 Rural Carrier Cost Systems Tests

For RCCS tests, the district Statistical Programs office must make the following three contacts:

- a. At the beginning of the quarter, notify the postmaster by email or letter of the date that a test will be conducted in that office. An example of a letter used to inform a postmaster about the pending RCCS test is available in [Appendix B](#), and the district Statistical Programs office may modify it as appropriate for the specific situation.
- b. Contact the postmaster by telephone, email, or letter about an upcoming test 1 week in advance. This notice allows the MFPC to confirm that the route exists and enables the postmaster to ensure that a carrier who knows the route is scheduled for the test day.
- c. Contact the supervisor and carrier by telephone 24 hours before the test to obtain the information needed to properly complete the test. Be sure to contact the carrier before the last pull-down. (To “pull-down” mail refers to the process of removing mail from the case in preparation for delivery. A carrier might pull-down mail more than once a day. The final pull-down is the last time a carrier pulls down mail before leaving for delivery on a given day.)

Example: An RCCS test is scheduled for Wednesday. The pull-down time is set at 1100 hours on Tuesday. The district Statistical Programs office must notify the supervisor and carrier for this test no later than 1100 hours on Monday.

Note: The MFPC must call the Post Office associated with the rural route for testing the day before the test and before the carrier begins the final pull-down of mail.

4-9.6 ODIS-RPW Tests

For ODIS-RPW tests, the MFPC or data collector must notify the test facility at least 1 hour before the beginning cutoff time (start) of the test. The MFPC is ultimately responsible for ensuring that notifications occur according to policy to allow adequate time for the facility to isolate mail for testing and to ensure that all mail received during the test period is included.

Example: An ODIS-RPW test is scheduled for Tuesday. The cutoff time is set at 1100 hours on Monday. The minimum notification required for this test is by 1000 hours on Monday.

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5 Mail Exit Points

5-1 Overview

The mail exit point (MEP — pronounced as a one-syllable word) is the foundation of the Origin–Destination Information System–Revenue, Pieces, and Weight (ODIS-RPW) program, which is a continuous probability sample of all mail exiting the postal system. ODIS-RPW samples yield specific levels of statistical accuracy for major products on a quarterly basis. (For an ODIS-RPW test, a data collector visits a specific test site, selects a subset of the test-day mail, and records weight, revenue, and other characteristics.)

The MFPC is responsible for the design and maintenance of the MEPs within the district. This chapter provides information and policies for the MFPC to create and maintain those MEPs.

The MFPC must design each MEP to meet the following characteristics:

- a. Allow the data collector to associate each mailpiece with only one MEP.
- b. Allow the data collector to easily isolate each mailpiece for testing at one test facility.
- c. Remain relatively stable over time.
- d. Maximize the cost-effectiveness of testing.

For additional information regarding how to create and edit MEPs within the MEP System, see the MEP System User Guide available at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/training-employee-development/mep.htm>.

5-2 Definitions of Terms

The following terms and definitions are applicable to MEPs:

- a. *Main Office*: A primary Postal Service facility that services subordinate stations or branches. It provides complete postal services to a specified geographic area and may have multiple destination facilities.
- b. *Destination Facility*: The last location that mail passes through before leaving the postal system. A destination facility could be a plant, main office, station or branch, or associate office.
- c. *Mailstream*: A mail flow composed of one prevailing mail shape. Each destination facility includes at least three mailstreams: one for letters, one for flats, and one for parcels.

- d. *Testing Facility*: The physical location where a data collector isolates, counts, and records all mailpieces for a MEP. The testing facility may be the same as the destination facility, or it may be located as far upstream as the destination plant. In the case of Delivery Unit Optimization (DUO) offices, the testing facility may be located at the new centralized location or at the final destination facility.
- e. *Mail Exit Point*: The test location, mailstreams, and cutoff times that define a particular ODIS-RPW test. A MEP might be described as follows: “SPRINGFIELD PO 55551/55552 LTR MAILSTREAM ENTIRE OFFICE 1000–1000.” At the MEP in this example, the data collector must be able to isolate, count, and record information about all letter stream mailpieces within these ZIP Codes and cutoff times.
- f. *Frame Unit*: A MEP. Since mail processing is an around-the-clock operation, every MEP is associated with a specified timeframe (normally 1 day, but sometimes a specific part of a day). The Postal Service divides the universe of mail into frame units by associating every MEP with a specified timeframe and using cutoff times to define when the test begins and ends.
- g. *Sampling Frame*: A list of units from which a sample is drawn. In ODIS-RPW, the sampling frame is the list of all frame units (MEPs) multiplied by the number of delivery days in the quarter.
- h. *Sampling Unit*: A MEP day. By associating every MEP with a specified time frame and using *cutoff times* to define when the test begins and when the test ends, the Postal Service divides the universe of mail into *sampling units* from the sampling frame. By testing sampling units drawn at random, the Postal Service can estimate characteristics about the population of all the mail and can calculate statistical confidence intervals around those estimates.
- i. *MEP System*: The electronic system in which MEPs are created, stored, and maintained. The MEP System is housed within the CODES WBU. The MEP System is sometimes referred to as the “MEP Template” or the “New MEP System” because it replaced an older MEP database.

5-3 Organizing Mail Into Mailstreams

5-3.1 Overview

Within each MEP, one or more mailstreams indicate the mailpieces that are eligible for testing. Each destination facility must contain at least three mailstreams: one for letters, one for flats, and one for parcels. The MFPC creates additional mailstreams in the *Add/Edit Mailstreams* page in the MEP System when needed.

5-3.2 General Guidelines

5-3.2.1 Overview

Every mailpiece must be associated with only one mailstream. Biased estimates occur when a mailpiece is excluded from all mailstreams or is included in more than one mailstream. To avoid bias, the MFPC must consider both of the following situations:

- a. If every mailstream is tested on the same day, could any mailpiece be counted in more than one test?
- b. If every mailstream is tested on the same day, could any mail be missed?

5-3.2.2 Mailstreams Defined by Mail Shape

A shape-based mailstream is composed of one prevailing mail shape: either letters, or flats, or parcels. A mailstream may actually contain more than one shape. For instance, a letter might appear in a tray of flats, or parcels might be on a truck that is considered part of the letter mailstream (because a majority of its DPS mail is letters). However, each mailstream primarily has only one mail shape. Each destination facility must have at least one letter, one flat, and one parcel mailstream.

5-3.2.3 Priority Mail Open and Distribute Mailstreams

One mailstream is defined by characteristics other than mail shape: Priority Mail Open and Distribute (PMOD). PMOD is an alternative to drop shipment for customers who expedite their mailings to destination facilities using Priority Mail service. The Postal Service defines a PMOD mailstream depending on the facility that opens the PMOD containers — either the destination plant or the destination Post Office. The data collector records and handles PMOD containers differently when conducting a test at a plant and at a Post Office, as follows:

- a. At a plant, the data collector only records the PMOD containers but does not open each PMOD container to record its contents.
- b. At a Post Office, the data collector records the PMOD containers and also opens each PMOD container to record all of its contents.

5-3.3 Type of Mail Within a Mailstream

5-3.3.1 Overview

The MFPC must further characterize each shape-based mailstream by the type of mail it contains, as noted in the following sections.

5-3.3.2 Digital Letter Mailstreams

The data collector may test digital letter mailstreams by viewing images on a computer instead of conducting a test on-site at the test facility. A digital letter mailstream includes mail that is for one ZIP Code and that is finalized in delivery point sequence on Delivery Barcode Sorter (DBCS) machines. Statistical Programs at USPS Headquarters creates and maintains all digital letter mailstream MEPS.

5-3.3.3 **Nondigital Letter Mailstreams**

Any letter mailstream that a data collector tests on-site by sampling the physical mail is considered a nondigital letter mailstream. A nondigital letter mailstream may consist of the residual letter mail from a digital mailstream, or it may consist of all letter mail if that ZIP Code does not have a corresponding digital mailstream.

For every digital letter mailstream, the MFPC must create and maintain mailstreams for the residual nondigital letter mail as follows:

- a. Every digital letter mailstream must have a corresponding nondigital letter mailstream that captures the residual mail for that ZIP Code.
- b. The residual portion of a digital letter mailstream includes the manual mail that the machine rejects and any accountable mail not processed on the DBCS. The data collector must test residual letter mail on-site at the test facility.
- c. If it is not possible to isolate the residual mail at the test facility, contact the service center.
- d. Some ZIP Codes are excluded from digital testing. If the MEP System does not include a digital letter mailstream for a ZIP Code, the entire letter mailstream is nondigital.

For nondigital letter mailstreams, the MFPC must identify one or more of the following mail types:

- a. *Delivery Point Sequence (DPS)*: Mail that was sorted on the Delivery Barcode Sorter (DBCS) and that entered the facility in delivery point sequence. If a ZIP Code does not receive DPS mail, select this mail type in a letter mailstream in case the facility receives it in the future. If digitally testing the DPS mail for a ZIP Code, do not select this mail type in the corresponding residual letter mailstream.
- b. *Non-DPS*: Mail that was not finalized in delivery point sequence on the DBCS and that requires additional sorting at the destination facility.
- c. *Accountable Mail*: Mail that is incoming to the Postage Due Unit or Accountable Mail Unit. Accountable mail is normally postage due mail, Business Reply Mail (BRM), or other extra service mail such as Merchandise Return Service, Certified Mail, and Registered Mail.
- d. *Drop Shipment*: Mail that is deposited at the destination facility by the mailer, bypassing USPS processing and transportation.
- e. *PM Mail*: Mail that arrives at the destination facility in the afternoon to be delivered the following day or staged for delivery on a subsequent day. If a destination facility does not receive PM letter mail, select this mail type in one or more letter mailstreams in case the facility receives it in the future.
- f. *Army Post Office/Fleet Post Office (APO/FPO) Mail*: Mail that is addressed to a military unit outside the United States. APO/FPO mailstreams are defined at a plant or an international service center.

5-3.3.4 **Flats Mailstreams**

For flats mailstreams, the MFPC must identify one or more of the following mail types:

- a. *FSS*: Mail that was sorted on the Flats Sequencing System (FSS) and that entered the facility in delivery point sequence. If a ZIP Code does not receive FSS mail, select this mail type in a flats mailstream in case the facility receives it in the future.
- b. *Non-FSS*: Mail that was not processed on the FSS and that requires additional sorting at the destination facility.
- c. *Accountable Mail*: Mail that is incoming to the Postage Due Unit or Accountable Mail Unit. Accountable mail is normally postage due mail, Business Reply Mail (BRM), or other extra service mail such as Merchandise Return Service, Certified Mail, and Registered Mail.
- d. *Drop Shipment*: Mail that is deposited at the destination facility by the mailer, bypassing USPS processing and transportation. If a destination facility does not receive drop shipment flats mail, select this mail type in one or more flats mailstreams in case the facility receives it in the future.
- e. *PM Mail*: Mail that arrives at the destination facility in the afternoon to be delivered the following day or staged for delivery on a subsequent day. If a destination facility does not receive PM flats mail, select this mail type in one or more flats mailstreams in case the facility receives it in the future.
- f. *Army Post Office/Fleet Post Office (APO/FPO) Mail*: Mail that is addressed to a military unit outside the United States. APO/FPO mailstreams are defined at a plant or an international service center.

5-3.3.5 Parcel Mailstreams

For parcel mailstreams, the MFPC must identify one or more of the following mail types:

- a. *Accountable Mail*: Mail that is incoming to the Postage Due Unit or Accountable Mail Unit. Accountable mail is normally postage due mail, Business Reply Mail (BRM), or other extra service mail such as Merchandise Return Service, Certified Mail, and Registered Mail.
- ~~b.~~ *Drop Shipment*: Mail that is deposited at the destination facility by the mailer, bypassing USPS processing and transportation. If a destination facility does not receive drop shipment parcel mail, select this mail type in one or more parcel mailstreams in case the facility receives it in the future.
- ~~b-c.~~ *Non-Drop Shipment: Mail that is deposited at the destination facility by USPS transportation and processed by the Postal Service.*
- ~~c-d.~~ *PM Mail*: Mail that arrives at the destination facility in the afternoon to be delivered the following day or staged for delivery on a subsequent day. If a destination facility does not receive PM parcel mail, select this mail type in one or more parcel mailstreams in case the facility receives it in the future.
- ~~d-e.~~ *Army Post Office/Fleet Post Office (APO/FPO) Mail*: Mail that is addressed to a military unit outside the United States. APO/FPO mailstreams are defined at a plant or an international service center.

5-3.4 ZIP Code Information

Mailstreams may include mail for one or more destination ZIP Codes. The MFPC identifies which ZIP Codes are included in each mailstream.

5-3.5 Stratification Information

The MFPC indicates if any of the following mail types are prevalent in a mailstream. Statistical Programs at Headquarters use this information to stratify the MEPs, which helps to group the MEPs for sampling and to improve the statistical design. The following options are available:

- a. *Not Applicable (N/A)*: Choose this option when no dominant mail type is present.
- b. *Single-Piece First-Class Mail*: Choose this option when the mailstream is approximately 95 percent single-piece First-Class Mail, such as a letter mailstream that has a unique ZIP Code assigned to a payment processing firm.
- c. *Standard Mail and Periodicals*: Choose this option when the mailstream is approximately 90 percent Standard Mail or Periodicals (or a combination of the two), such as a flats mailstream that consistently receives pallets of Periodicals and Standard Mail.
- d. *Package Services, Standard Post, and Parcel Select*: Choose this option when the mailstream is approximately 75 percent Package Services, Standard Post, or Parcel Select (or any combination of the three), such as a drop shipment mailstream for an office.
- e. *Priority Mail*: Choose this option when the mailstream is approximately 75 percent Priority Mail, such as a mailstream in a facility that receives all of its Priority Mail in a single, distinct mailstream.

Note: When a letter, flats, or parcel mailstream is defined as one of the mail types in [5-3.3](#), create a corresponding mailstream for all other mail, for full coverage of the zone. For example, if an office has a parcel mailstream for Priority Mail, create a second parcel mailstream for all other mail classes.

5-3.6 Reference Volumes

Each mailstream must include a reference volume, which is the approximate amount of mail received in a single delivery day. Determine reference volume using one of the following methods:

- a. *Manual*: Determine approximate daily volume by speaking to the facility supervisor and researching existing MEP data. Use this option for all Priority Mail Open and Distribute (PMOD) mailstreams.
- b. *End of Run (EOR)*: EOR is an in-plant system that creates mail volume data for every delivery route. The reference volume source for all digital letter mailstreams is EOR.
- c. *Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS)*: DOIS provides mail volume information from several sources, such as EOR and supervisor input.

- d. *MEP History*: Determine approximate daily volume by averaging historical test data and external data from the MEP System.

5-3.7 Test Facility

5-3.7.1 Overview

Each mailstream must be associated with only one facility for testing. Test the mail at or near its final destination to support estimates of mail transit times.

5-3.7.2 Delivery Operations

A mailstream may be associated with the entire office, the rural or city carriers, the caller and firm holdout area, or the box section.

5-3.7.3 Critical Facility and Travel Times

Determine the following critical times for each test facility:

- a. Mail arrival times (“dispatch times”).
- b. DPS arrival times (“DPS dispatch times”).
- c. Time office opens (when the first clerk arrives).
- d. One-way travel time for the data collector, in half-hour increments. If travel time varies, use the most frequent or the most typical travel time.

5-4 Organizing Mailstreams Into MEPs

5-4.1 Overview

A MEP specifies test locations, mailstreams, and cutoff times that define a particular ODIS-RPW test. A MEP may be composed of one mailstream or multiple mailstreams.

5-4.2 General Guidelines

The MFPC observes the following guidelines when organizing mailstreams into MEPs:

- a. Associate every mailstream with only one MEP. Biased estimates occur whenever a mailpiece has an opportunity to be double-counted or missed. To avoid bias, the MFPC must consider both of the following situations:
 - (1) If every MEP is tested on the same day, could any mailstream be counted in any of the other tests?
 - (2) If every MEP is tested on the same day, could any mailstream be missed?
- b. Isolate and sample every mailstream at the testing facility. Ensure all mailstream characteristics, test facility information, and special instructions are accurate and complete.
- c. Maximize the cost effectiveness of testing for each MEP as follows:

- (1) Define MEPs so that only one data collector is needed to conduct the test.
- (2) Maintain an adequate time window to conduct a test with the available resources.
- (3) Design the MEP to be large enough to ensure reasonably stable mail volume, but small enough to use data collector resources efficiently.
- (4) Consider methods to reduce the travel costs associated with conducting the tests.

5-4.3 Cutoff Times

5-4.3.1 Overview

Cutoff times define the specific times a test begins and ends. The MFPC defines MEPs so that all of the targeted mail is available within the cutoff times. The final cutoff time must be at least 1 hour after the last scheduled dispatch. If mail frequently arrives after the cutoff time, revise the cutoff time to extend it to a later time. Mail that arrives either before the beginning cutoff time or after the ending cutoff time is excluded from the test.

Example: A MEP covers the letter mailstream for all ZIP Codes in an office, and the office receives two dispatches: The first dispatch is at 0450 hours, with manual mail, and the second dispatch is at 0650 hours, with DPS mail. The minimum cutoff time for this MEP is 0750 hours, which is 1 hour after the last scheduled dispatch. However, if the DPS mail consistently arrives late, at 0800 hours, revise the cutoff time to end at 0900 hours or later.

5-4.3.2 24-Hour MEPs

A 24-hour MEP includes all of the mail for the selected mailstreams that arrive at the test facility during a 24-hour period. A 24-hour MEP is the most typical type of MEP.

5-4.3.3 Partial-Day MEPs

5-4.3.3.1 Overview

A partial-day MEP includes all of the mail for the selected mailstreams that arrive at the test facility during a specific time period on 1 day, and the combination of all partial-day MEPs for each mailstream must cover all of the mail for the full 24-hour period. The MFPC may split a mailstream or group of mailstreams into two or more partial-day MEPs, and then must indicate what percentage of each mail volume by shape arrives within each time segment. Facilities that are good candidates for partial-day MEPs include those that dispatch mail around the clock for large-volume firms.

The MFPC creates partial-day MEPs as follows:

- a. Define the cutoff times that make up the MEP. Set each cutoff time for when the facility processes a low volume of mail. The MEP cutoff times do not need to coincide with facility tours.
- b. Ensure that data collectors are available for any tour or any other time for partial-day MEP.

- c. Avoid creating partial-day MEPs that might result in frequent Zero Volume tests.

Example: The MFPC is creating MEPs for a large caller-service firm. The firm typically picks up mail at 1000 hours, 1800 hours, and 0200 hours. The mail can easily be isolated and tested during three time windows — 0100–0900 hours, 0900–1700 hours, and 1700–0100 hours — so the MFPC splits this mailstream into three MEPs, each corresponding to one of these time windows. The MFPC knows that 20 percent of the letter mailstream volume arrives between 0100–0900 hours, 50 percent between 0900–1700 hours, and 30 percent between 1700–0100 hours, so the MFPC indicates these percentages for each partial-day MEP letter volume. However, for flats and parcel volume, the MFPC knows that 80 percent arrives between 0100–0900 hours, 10 percent between 0900–1700 hours, and 10 percent between 1700–0100 hours, so the MFPC indicates these percentages for each partial-day MEP flats and parcel volume.

5-4.3.3.2 Determining When to Start Partial-day MEP Tests

In order to determine which day to start a partial-day MEP, follow the decision tree in [Exhibit 5-4.3.3.2](#).

All of the following examples use the decision tree. In each example, the district has three partial-day MEPs to cover the total 24-hour period from 0630 on one day to 0630 on the following day, with the three segments being 0630–1430, 1430–2230, and 2230–0630.

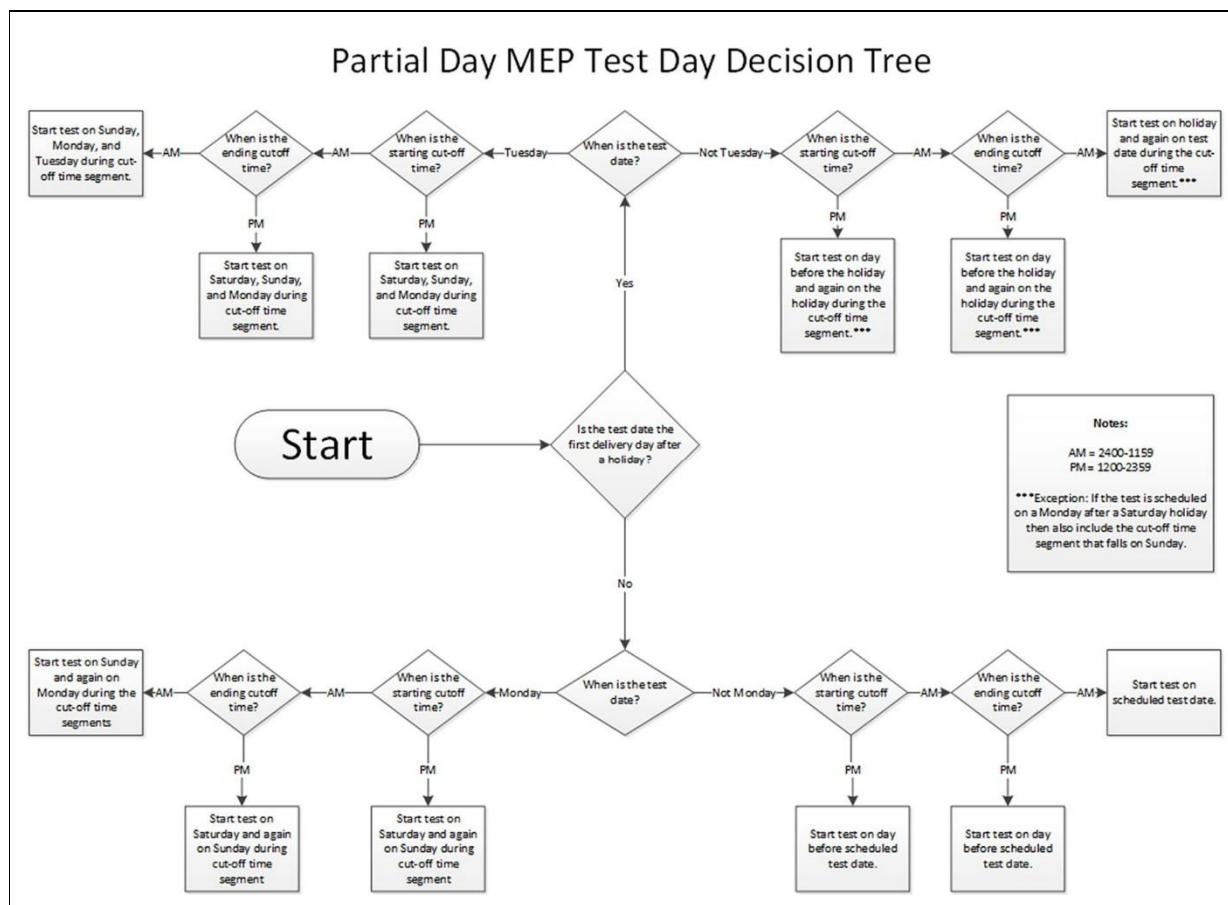
Example 1: On Monday, there is a partial-day MEP test, and the cutoff times are 1430–2230. The test must include mail that arrived on Saturday from 1430–2230 and on Sunday from 1430–2230.

Example 2: On Thursday, there is a partial-day MEP test, and the cutoff times are 2230–0630. The test must include mail that arrived between 2230 on Wednesday and 0630 on Thursday.

Example 3: On Tuesday after a Monday holiday, there is a partial-day MEP test, and the cutoff times are 1430–2230. The test must include mail that arrived on Saturday from 1430–2230, on Sunday from 1430–2230, and on Monday from 1430–2230.

Example 4: On Thursday after a Wednesday holiday, there is a partial-day MEP test, and the cutoff times are 2230–0630. The test must include mail that arrived between 2230 on Tuesday and 0630 on Wednesday, and mail that arrived between 2230 on Wednesday and 0630 on Thursday.

Exhibit 5-4.3.3.2

Partial-day MEP Test Day Decision Tree**5-4.4 Selecting Mailstreams**

After defining the cutoff times, the MFPC creates MEPs within a test facility by identifying at least one mailstream for testing.

Example 1: The MFPC creates three mailstreams for an office: one mailstream for letters, one for flats, and another for parcels. However, the three mailstreams total less than 5,000 mailpieces per day, so the MFPC decides to test all three mailstreams in a single all-mail MEP.

Example 2: The MFPC creates three mailstreams for an office: one mailstream for letters, one for flats, and another for parcels. Based on mailstream volume, the MFPC determines to test the flats and parcel mailstreams in one flats and parcel MEP, and to test the letter mailstream in a letter MEP.

Example 3: Statistical Programs created a digital letter mailstream and MEP for the only ZIP Code in an office. The MFPC creates three mailstreams for an office: one mailstream for nondigital letters, one for flats, and another for parcels. When combining nondigital letters with another MEP, combine the nondigital letters with the flats mailstream whenever possible. Because the MFPC determines that the volume for the nondigital letter mailstream is 1,500 mailpieces per day and can be

grouped with the flats mailstream in the same MEP, the MFPC identifies the nondigital letter and flats mailstreams to create one MEP. The MFPC then creates a separate MEP for the parcel mailstream.

5-4.5 Special Instructions

5-4.5.1 Overview

Special instructions provide additional information about an individual MEP, including where to test mail upstream, how to handle mixed-mail containers, how to locate the test mail within a facility, etc.

5-4.5.2 Upstream Testing

If the test facility is a destination plant, the MFPC must provide upstream testing information. The MFPC identifies whether the MEP at the mail processing facility is/occurs at an automated operation or some other operation. These other operations could include testing mail on the dock before dispatch, at the manual operations, or in the box section. Also, the MFPC provides the MODS number for the corresponding automated or other operation. (See [5-5](#) for more information about upstream letter MEPs.)

5-4.5.3 Mixed-Mail Containers

A mixed mail container is a primary container that holds mail associated with more than one MEP.

Data collectors test all mixed shape and mixed class containers with the MEP that includes the parcels for Package Services (Bound Printed Matter, Media Mail, and Library Mail). Data collectors must separate mail in mixed zone containers for testing.

Treat mixed mail containers consistently to avoid double-counting or missing mail.

5-4.5.4 Definition of Primary Container

A primary container is a container that holds loose pieces of mail to be tested, such as a sack holding parcels, a letter tray holding letters, or an OTR holding parcels. Bundles of flats are also considered primary containers. Before sampling, the data collector must separate any container holding multiple primary containers (such as a hamper holding letter trays and flats trays). Primary containers are the containers that touch the mail.

5-4.5.5 Definition of Mixed Mail Container

A mixed mail container is a primary container that, in its entirety, does not belong to one particular MEP. Mixed mail containers may contain mixed shape mail, mixed class mail, or mail for more than one zone (see [5-4.5.7](#) through [5-4.5.9](#)). The following are *not* considered mixed mail containers:

- a. A letter tray holding primarily letters. This tray is part of the letter stream and must be tested with the letter stream.
- b. A flats tray holding primarily flats. This tray is part of the flats stream and must be tested with the flats stream.

- c. A few loose flats commingled in a hamper of parcels. These flats are part of the parcel stream and must be tested with the parcel stream.
- d. Containers of commingled missent mail.
- e. A hamper holding loose parcels and several flats trays. The flats trays are part of the flats stream and must be tested with the flats stream. The loose parcels left in the hamper are part of the parcel stream and must be tested with the parcel stream.

5-4.5.6 Identification of Contents

Do not rely on the container label to identify containers for testing. Identify mixed mail containers based on the contents.

5-4.5.7 Mixed Shape Container Testing

Mixed shape containers are primary containers holding any combination of loose letters, flats, or parcels from more than one MEP. Test mixed shape containers with the MEP that includes the parcels for Package Services (Bound Printed Matter, Media Mail, and Library Mail). For example, an “All Parcels” MEP includes any mixed shape containers.

5-4.5.8 Mixed Class Container Testing

Mixed class containers are primary containers holding any combination of mail classes from more than one MEP. Test mixed class containers with the MEP that includes the parcels for Package Services (Bound Printed Matter, Media Mail, and Library Mail). For example, a “Non-Dropship Parcels” MEP includes any mixed class containers.

5-4.5.9 Mixed Zone Container Testing

Mixed zone containers are primary containers holding a combination of ZIP Codes for more than one MEP. Ask local operations to help identify any mixed zone containers. Test these containers as follows:

- a. Organize the mail by zone, or allow operations to distribute the mail by zone.
- b. Sample only the zones that are included in the MEP.

5-4.5.10 Additional Location Information

The MFPC can include information about the test location, such as how to find the facility, where to park, where certain operations take place, etc.

Example: The MFPC of a large geographical area has decided that the most economical way to test the letter mailstream is at the large, multi-floor mail processing plant. The Additional Location Information comment could read, “The DBCS machines are on the second floor, near the back elevators.”

5-4.5.11 Additional Test Information

The MFPC can also include any remaining MEP details that are not available elsewhere (e.g., special conditions, unusual circumstances, or helpful tips).

Example 1: The MFPC includes drop shipment mail in a parcel mailstream MEP, but the office receives drop shipment mail only on certain days of the week. The Additional Test Information comment

could read, “Drop shipment mail is expected to arrive at the office on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Be sure to ask about drop shipment mail every time this MEP is tested, regardless of the test day.”

Example 2: The MFPC includes DPS mail in a MEP that includes the letter mailstream, with the DPS mail arriving very close to the time the first carrier leaves. The Additional Test Information comment could read, “Please be advised that the DPS mail arrives close to the time the carriers leave.”

5-4.6 **Special Studies**

Occasionally, ODIS-RPW performs a special study that requires unique MEPs. The service center asks the MFPC to make a unique MEP and identify it as a Special Study MEP.

5-5 Special Rules for Upstream Letter MEPs

5-5.1 **Overview**

A delivery point sequence (DPS) upstream MEP is a special type of MEP located at a mail processing facility. A DPS MEP is composed of machinable letters sorted in delivery sequence on a Delivery Bar Code Sorter (DBCS) or a Delivery Barcode Sorter with Input-Output Sub-System (DIOSS) machine. This section explains how to create upstream DPS letter MEPs.

5-5.2 **Selecting Mailstreams for Upstream Testing**

Mailstreams that are good candidates for upstream testing have the following characteristics:

- a. The amount of mail that undergoes DPS first-pass processing each day is at least 25,000 pieces.
- b. The machinable letters can be isolated and tested during DPS first-pass processing on a single DBCS machine.
- c. The sort plan has remained relatively stable over time, and Operations does not indicate that it will add or remove zones from the sort plan.
- d. The time window needed for DPS first-pass processing is at least 1 hour and is sufficient to allow for a complete and thorough sampling of all mail processed through the machine.
- e. A number of DBCS bins can be isolated and selected so that the data collector can test mail in those bins without causing mail processing delays.

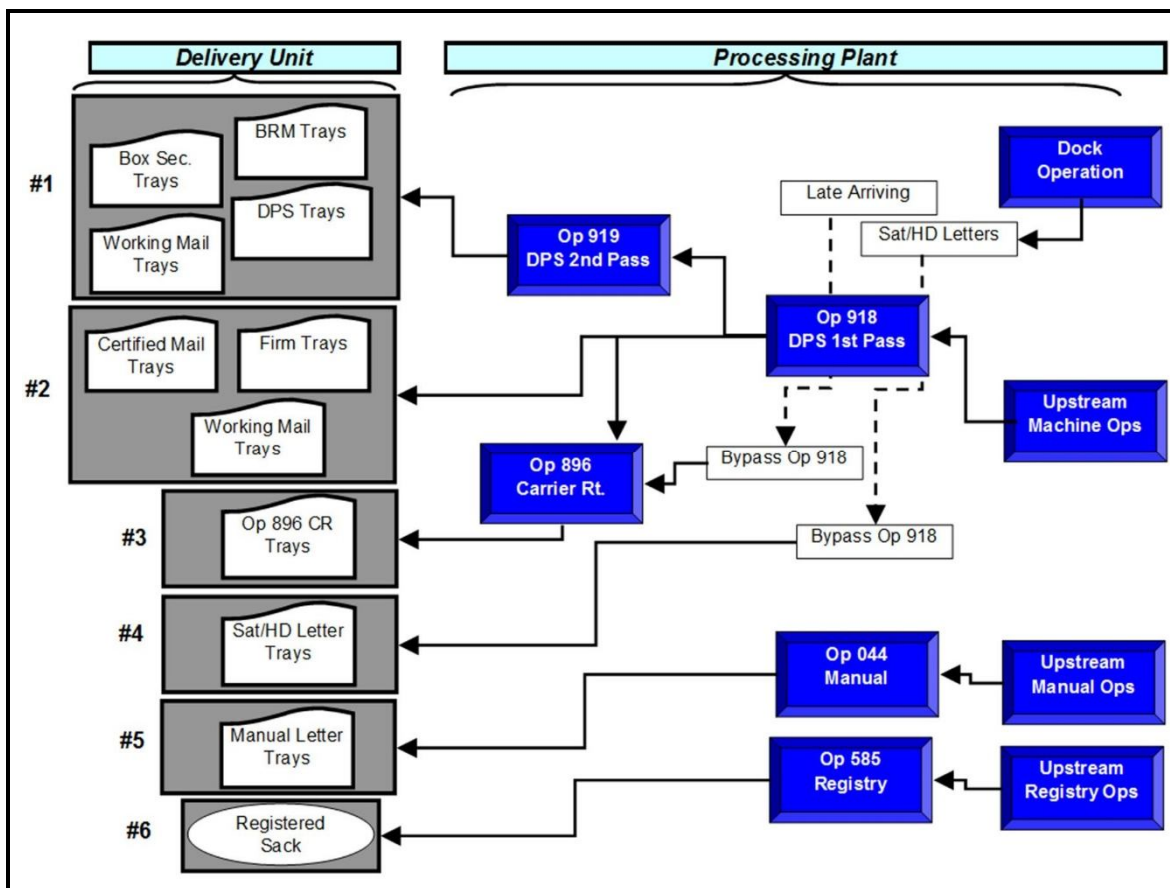
5-5.3 **Mail Flows for Upstream MEPs**

[Exhibit 5-5.3](#) provides an example of the operational flows of letter mail that are good candidate for upstream MEPs. Notice that all of the pieces in boxes one through four on the delivery unit side originate at DPS first-pass operation 918. Testing the mail at operation 918 allows the data collector to capture all of the mail that eventually ends up at the delivery unit in boxes

one through four. Notice that saturation/high-density trays and late-arriving trays arrive at operation 918 but ultimately bypass it without additional processing. The MFPC might need to adjust the MEP to accommodate this type of mail. All of the pieces in box five originate at manual letter operation 044, which itself receives mail only from upstream manual operations. In this example, machine rejects from operations 918, 919, and 896 are not redirected to the manual operation in the plant before dispatch.

Exhibit 5-5.3

Operational Flows of Letter Mail to a Delivery Unit



Numbered boxes on the left represent letter trays arriving at the delivery unit as follows:

1. Trays arriving from DPS second-pass operation 919.
2. Trays arriving from DPS first-pass operation 918.
3. Trays arriving from carrier route operation 896.
4. Saturation and high-density trays that bypassed operation 918.
5. Trays arriving from manual operation 044.
6. Sacks arriving from registry operation 585.

5-5.4 Upstream Letter MEP Design

5-5.4.1 Overview

The MFPC has two options for designing upstream letter MEPs:

- a. Option One: Maintain downstream MEP definition.
- b. Option Two: Redefine the MEP upstream.

The following sections describe these options.

5-5.4.2 Option One: Maintain Downstream MEP Definition

The MFPC designs upstream letter MEPs by maintaining the current (downstream) mailstreams in the MEP definition, but move all testing to the plant as follows:

- a. Test the machinable letters during DPS first-pass processing (operation 918) at a single DBCS machine.
- b. Test the nonmachinable letters at the manual processing operation (operation 044).
- c. Test late-arriving letters at operation 894 or 896.
- d. Test bypass saturation/high-density letters at operation 918 or on the dock.
- e. Test Registered Mail at operation 585.

5-5.4.3 Option Two: Redefine the MEP Upstream

The MFPC may design upstream letter MEPs by redefining the current (downstream) MEP, reassigning mailstreams to other MEPs as needed:

- a. Create a MEP for machinable letters tested during DPS first-pass processing (operation 918) at a single DBCS machine.
- b. Reassign nonmachinable letters to another MEP, such as the following:
 - (1) A downstream MEP that includes flats, parcels, or both flats and parcels.
 - (2) An upstream MEP of all nonmachinable mail for all zones serviced by the plant. Test this MEP at manual letter processing operation 044.
- c. Reassign late-arriving letter mail to its own MEP. Test this mail after it goes through operation 894 or 896, along with any rejects coming from operation 918.
- d. If all saturation/high-density letter trays are brought to the DPS first-pass operation, test this mail prior to bypass as part of the machinable letter MEP. Otherwise, reassign bypass letter trays to another MEP, such as the following:
 - (1) A downstream MEP that includes flats, parcels, or both flats and parcels.
 - (2) An upstream MEP of all saturation/high-density bypass trays for all zones serviced by the plant. Test this MEP at the dock prior to dispatch.

5-5.4.4 Other MEP Designs

The upstream DPS letter MEP policy in this section is intended as a national guideline and best practice for efficient and consistent testing. The service center and local plant management must approve any upstream MEP that differs from this policy before testing.

5-6 MEP Examples

5-6.1 Overview

This section provides examples of MEPs. The MEP System User Guide, which is available at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/training-employee-development/mep.htm>, provides additional information regarding how to create and edit MEPs within the MEP System.

5-6.2 Basic MEP: Three Mailstreams, Three MEPs

An office receives an average of 15,000 letters, 6,000 flats, and 800 parcels per day with no digital mailstream or MEP for this facility. The MFPC starts by organizing this mail into three basic mailstreams: one for nondigital letters, one for flats, and one for parcels.

- a. The nondigital letter mailstream includes DPS letters, non-DPS letters, PM letters, and accountable letters for the entire office.
- b. The flats mailstream includes FSS flats, non-FSS flats, PM flats, dropship flats, and accountable flats for the entire office.
- c. The parcel mailstream includes dropship parcels, non-dropship parcels, PM parcels, and accountable parcels for the entire office.

Having identified all of the mailstreams, the MFPC organizes these mailstreams into MEPs. Each mailstream has enough volume to test on its own, so the MFPC creates three MEPs (one for each mailstream). The MFPC decides this mail can be tested at the destination facility in a 24-hour time segment. The MFPC sets the cutoff times so that the ending cutoff time is at least 1 hour after the last scheduled dispatch time.

5-6.3 Clustered MEP: Multiple Destination Facilities

After a Delivery Unit Optimization (DUO) effort, Office A receives box section mail for ZIP Code 45, carrier mail for ZIP Code 45, and carrier mail for another office with ZIP Code 46. Office B receives its own box section mail for ZIP Code 46. To enable testing at both offices, the MFPC first organizes the mail into mailstreams based on shape and ZIP Code.

The MFPC organizes mail for Office A into three mailstreams: all letters for ZIP Code 45, all flats for ZIP Code 45, and all parcels for ZIP Code 45. Note that Office A is the destination facility *and* the test facility for these mailstreams.

The MFPC organizes mail for Office B into six mailstreams: carrier letters for ZIP Code 46, carrier flats for ZIP Code 46, carrier parcels for ZIP Code 46, box section letters for ZIP Code 46, box section flats for ZIP Code 46, and

box section parcels for ZIP Code 46. Note that Office B is the destination facility for *all* of these mailstreams, but Office A is the testing facility for the carrier mailstreams and Office B is the test facility for the box section mailstreams.

Next, the MFPC organizes these nine mailstreams into four MEPs: one letter MEP, one flats MEP, one parcel MEP tested at Office A, and one MEP for the box section mail tested at Office B. The MEPs are as follows:

- a. Office A:
 - (1) All letters for ZIP Code 45 and carrier letters for ZIP Code 46.
 - (2) All flats for ZIP Code 45 and carrier flats for ZIP Code 46.
 - (3) All parcels for ZIP Code 45 and carrier parcels for ZIP Code 46.

For each MEP, the MFPC adds a note in the comment box that says, "Include mail from both Office A and Office B."
- b. Office B: All box section letters, flats, and parcels for ZIP Code 46.

5-7 MEP Maintenance

5-7.1 Overview

The MFPC must keep the MEP System accurate and current to support the ODIS-RPW sample selection process. The integrity of the revenue, volume, and performance measurement system depends on the continuous review, management, and upkeep of MEPs. Failure to update the MEP System can result in MEPs missing from the frame, duplicate and overlapping MEPs, and MEPs with inaccurate information. Follow consistently the frame maintenance policies in this section to limit the frequency with which errors can occur and support to accurate statistical estimation.

5-7.2 On-site MEP Review

5-7.2.1 Overview

A MEP must be reviewed on-site if an ODIS-RPW test is scheduled on that MEP during the quarter. Complete the on-site review in conjunction with the test.

The MFPC may voluntarily schedule additional reviews, particularly if data collectors can complete the review as they conduct the test. The MFPC may schedule reviews on multiple MEPs in the same facility at the same time, as long as the test window allows it and the test is not compromised by the additional review.

5-7.2.2 Administrative Information

The MFPC must check for inaccurate administrative information on the Header Report. Complete all of the following steps:

- a. Verify that the ZIP Code listed on the Header Report is the physical ZIP Code of the test facility.

- b. Review the one-way travel time and verify that the travel time for the data collector who usually completes tests for this MEP is listed. Ensure that the one-way travel time is in the correct format.
- c. Verify that the six-digit finance number on the Header Report is the correct finance number for the test facility.
- d. Review the MEP description and verify that the test facility name, test ZIP Codes, shapes, and cutoff times accurately describe the MEP. Also confirm that all of these items match their respective sections on the Header Report.
- e. Verify that the facility's time is listed accurately and identifies when the first clerk arrives.
- f. Verify that the test facility's name, address, telephone number, and contact e-mail address are correct. This information ensures that the data collector has the correct information for contacting and traveling to the test facility.
- g. Review the non-DPS and DPS truck arrival times for accuracy. Correct dispatch times are pivotal for managing the test workload and timing the mail.
- h. Verify that all mail arrives within the MEP cutoff times and that the final cutoff time is at least 1 hour after the last scheduled dispatch (see [5-4.3](#)). If the test mail regularly arrives after the cutoff time, revise the cutoff time.
- i. Ensure that the additional information about where mail is tested properly supports the administrative information, and that it contains no duplicate or unnecessary information.
- j. Verify that all ZIP Codes tested in the MEP are listed in the administrative information section of the Header Report. Verify that the mail for all ZIP Codes to be tested is isolatable and accessible within the test facility.
- k. For letter MEPs tested on an automated machine at a mail processing facility, verify that the correct MODS number is used.

5-7.2.3 Test Information

The data collector must check for inaccurate test information on the Header Report. This information is critical to testing consistently from day to day, and it ensures an accurate sample selection file each quarter. Identify inaccurate test information by examining the Header Report and investigating mail flows in conjunction with knowledgeable facility employees. Discuss any changes in mail flows, mail processing, or dispatch schedules that could affect the MEP. Complete all of the following steps:

- a. Review the information on the Header Report ("Mail Streams To Be Tested," "Mail Stream Type," and "Delivery Unit") and verify that everything is correct. The combination of these three sections accurately describes the mail shapes, ZIP Codes, mail types, and delivery units included in the MEP. Also, verify that the mail can be isolated for testing.

- b. Inspect all of the mail captured in the MEP to see if the mail meets any of the stratification criteria listed in [5-3.5](#). Stratification information supports accurate statistical estimation.
- c. Verify that the additional test information properly supports the test and contains no duplicate or unnecessary information.

5-7.2.4 Documenting the Review

Upon completing the on-site MEP review, the data collector must mark the test Header Report and must list any changes that are needed. Do not record these comments in the CODES software unless they are relevant to the test review and approval process. The MFPC must enter the date of the review in the MEP System when the on-site review is complete and must make all necessary corrections in the MEP System before the close of the frame (see [5-7.4.5](#)).

5-7.3 Weekly Reference Volume Updates

5-7.3.1 Overview

The MEP History Report is the primary tool used to maintain MEP reference volumes. The MFPC must use the information gathered from the MEP History Report to manually update mailstream reference volumes.

5-7.3.2 MEP History Report

The MEP History Report provides an average of the historical mail volume data for a MEP. The MFPC must generate and review all MEP History Reports at the end of each week. Always accept the given average, unless the average contains corrupted tests (e.g., wrong skip intervals used, mail not properly isolated, wrong MEP tested, etc.) or suspicious external data. In such cases, recalculate the average excluding those tests. Adjust the MEP History Report *only* after a careful review of the individual tests and the external records.

5-7.3.3 Mailstream Reference Volume

After a careful review of the MEP History Report, and considering the calculated test average, update mailstream reference volumes. Do not update mailstream reference volumes to the exact volume for the given test day without considering the reference volume averages from the MEP History Report. Consider individual test volumes only when no other test or external data are available. Manually update mailstream reference volumes with the correct historical volumes.

5-7.4 Frame Review Before Sample Selection

5-7.4.1 Overview

The on-site MEP review and the weekly reference volume updates are continuous frame maintenance processes. In addition, complete a final review process before the close of the frame for ODIS-RPW sample selection.

5-7.4.2 Additions, Deletions, and Changes

The MFPC must keep a record of all additions, deletions, and changes to MEPs by constructing a log using a notebook or an electronic spreadsheet that lists the types of modifications that were performed. To verify that these modifications have not resulted in missing, duplicate, or overlapping MEPs, review all additions, deletions, and changes 2 weeks before the close of the frame. Ensure that the MEPs are listed correctly in the MEP System.

5-7.4.3 CODES Web Base Unit Reports

Before the close of the frame for sample selection, review the following CODES WBU reports for accuracy:

- a. *Red Flag Report*: This report lists mailstreams not included in a MEP. Review these mailstreams to confirm that they were not removed from a MEP in error.
- b. *Add Report*: This report lists all main offices and destination facilities that were added.
- c. *Move Report*: This report lists all destination facilities that moved from one main office to another and all MEPs that moved from one test facility to another.
- d. *AMS Report*: This report lists all ZIP Codes added or removed from the Address Management System (AMS) database since the previous frame freeze. Before the close of the frame, add each new ZIP Code to a mailstream and MEP, and remove all deleted ZIP Codes.

5-7.4.4 Frame Maintenance Report

Each quarter, the service center sends out the Frame Maintenance Report, which lists MEPs that might need updating for reasons such as missing ZIP Codes, missing mailstreams, and duplicate selections. Review each table and make all necessary corrections in the MEP System before the close of the frame for ODIS-RPW sample selection (see [5-7.4.5](#)).

5-7.4.5 Frame Maintenance Schedule

Complete all additions, changes, and deletions to the MEP System by 4:00 P.M. ET on the following dates:

- a. August 21, for first quarter sample selection.
- b. November 21, for second quarter sample selection.
- c. February 21, for third quarter sample selection.
- d. May 21, for fourth quarter sample selection.

6 Training

6-1 Overview

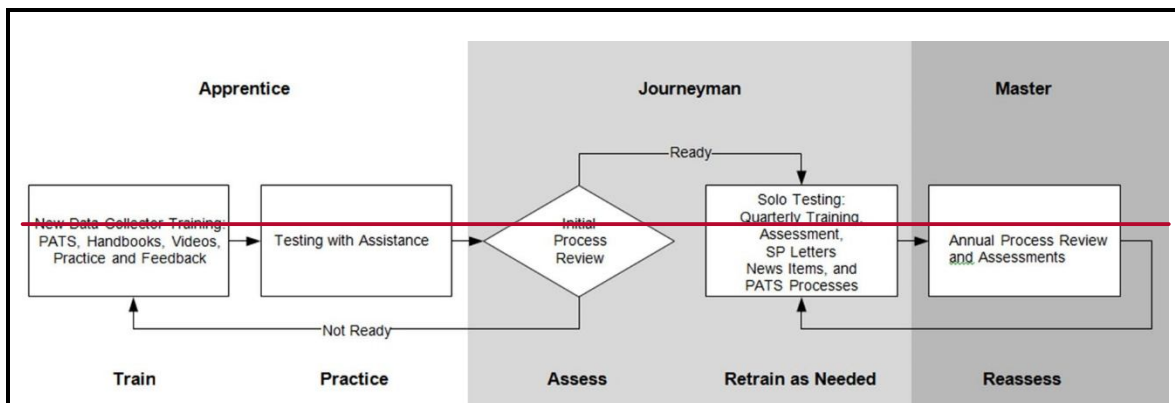
The mission of Statistical Programs is to provide quality data to the organization. Training is essential in achieving that level of quality, by minimizing variation in the complicated processes of data collection. To that end, training aims to teach all data collectors to perform data collection exactly the same way at all times and in all locations. Statistical Programs data received by the Postal Service is most accurate when all data collectors across the country learn how to collect data in the same way from the same materials.

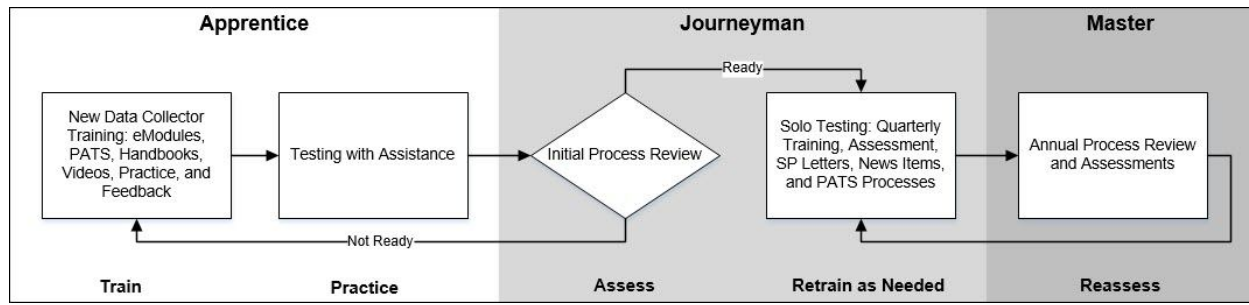
For the data collector, learning is continuous because the Statistical Programs environment is complex and ever changing. The MFPC is responsible for training both new and experienced data collectors, and for capturing and recording their training data. The MFPC is responsible for providing data collection employees with the appropriate tools to do their jobs — a laptop, up-to-date software, and a scale that weighs mailpieces accurately.

The MFPC employs many tools over time to foster the professional development of data collectors. [Exhibit 6-1](#) provides a graphic representation of data collector development and the tools used to aid in that development.

Exhibit 6-1

Data Collector Development





6-2 Training Policy and Procedures

Only trained employees may conduct a Statistical Programs test in any of the domestic and international revenue, volume, performance measurement, and cost programs. To qualify, employees must access the Process Activated Training System (PATs) and take new data collector training courses, which provide the training required for each program. All new data collectors (full-time, cadre, and ad hoc) must complete this training prior to conducting a test on their own in that program.

Each quarter, every district must conduct at least 1 day of Statistical Programs training for data collectors. The MFPC must send all relevant training information to the station, associate office, and mail processing employees who are IOCS telephone readings respondents.

6-3 Training the New Data Collector

6-3.1 Overview

Training all new data collectors is vital to the success of accurate data collection in Statistical Programs. Standardized training provides a solid foundation of skills and knowledge to ensure that all data collectors gather data properly and without bias.

The following sections offer detailed information on [eModule training](#), PATs training, remote training, and training for new data collectors.

6-3.2 eModule Training

eModules are self-paced, self-taught courses. A data collector must complete all 14 Initial Training eModules before beginning program-specific training (e.g., ODIS-RPW, IOCS, CCCS, etc.). The Initial Training eModules courses are available on the Data Collector eModules Web site at <https://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/training-employee-development/dct-training.htm>.

A data collector must complete the eModules associated with specific statistical programs systems before beginning the required PATs processes.

Upon completing an eModule, the software prompts the data collector to enter his or her ACE User Name and password in the Statistical Programs Training Documentation System (SPTDS). The completed training is automatically documented in the SPTDS.

6-3.3 PATs Training

The Process Activated Training System (PATs) is ~~the primary~~ a training tool in the Statistical Programs national standardized training program for data collectors. PATs is structured, on-the-job training, in which a subject matter expert (SME) teaches the data collector — the Process Activated Learner (PAL) — using a standardized lesson plan.

The following requirements identify fundamental elements of PATs training:

- a. Only a certified SME trainer may teach the lesson plan.

- b. Trainers must use current lesson plans, which are available on the PATS Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/training-employee-development/pats.htm>.
- c. Trainees (i.e., PALs — in this case, the data collectors) must complete all prerequisites before training.
- d. SMEs must cover all statements in all steps of the lesson plan, and in the proper order.
- e. PALs must complete the requirements in each process step.
- f. PALs must demonstrate the learning objective at the end of the lesson.

For any PATS process that does not require physical examples or does not involve sampling or subsampling procedures, a trainer may conduct the training via ~~WebEx~~[Zoom \(video conferencing\)](#) or other remote training methods. Course guides identify the processes eligible for remote training (see [6-3.3](#)).

Note: PATS lessons demonstrated by a SME during a quarterly training session is considered quarterly training and not PATS training.

6-3.34 PATS Remote Training Guidelines

Current and new data collectors can use remote learning for certain PATS processes. For a list of processes that can be taught remotely for each program, see the PATS course guides on the Statistical Programs Web site (see item [6-3.3b](#)). PALS can access remote training using video- and voice-conferencing software (e.g., [WebExZoom \(video conferencing\)](#)).

For PATS remote training, the following rules apply:

- a. Only a certified SME trainer may teach the lesson plan.
- b. Trainers must use current PATS lesson plans, which are available on the PATS Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/training-employee-development/pats.htm>.
- c. The PAL must complete all prerequisites before training.
- d. SMEs must learn all statements in all steps of the lesson plan in the proper order.
- e. PALS must complete the requirements in each process step.
- f. PALS must demonstrate the learning objective at the end of the lesson.
- g. If the training is done through [WebExZoom \(video conferencing\)](#), PALS and SMEs must use their Microsoft® Outlook® e-mail accounts.
- h. Face-to-face training is preferred; however, if this would require travel, the SME may teach qualifying PATS processes remotely.
- i. PATS processes not eligible for remote teaching require face-to-face teaching.

6-3.45 ODIS-RPW PATS Assessment

ODIS-RPW data collectors must complete and pass the ODIS-RPW PATS assessment before conducting ODIS-RPW tests independently. This assessment (which is accessible through the CODES WBU Assessment System) measures the data collector's knowledge as it relates to mailpiece recording and data entry. Data collectors must achieve a score of at least 96 percent in order to pass and receive credit. The MFPC must review all incorrect responses with the data collector and, if necessary, use the PATS processes specific to the recording errors to retrain the data collector.

6-3.56 Training Program for New Data Collectors

~~These course guides provide a curriculum for training new data collectors in a specific statistical program. Typically, the curriculum includes test observation, eModules. Course guides that outline the training program for new data collectors are available in the PATS section of the Statistical Programs Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/training-employee-development/pats.htm>. These course guides provide a curriculum for training new data collectors in a specific statistical program. Typically, the curriculum includes test observation, PATS processes, handbook readings, videos, assessments, and extensive opportunities for practice and feedback. However, the MFPC may adjust the~~

training content to fit the requirements for each office. The MFPC, for example, may exempt a data collector who_

will not conduct any tests using container subsampling from learning those related PATS processes. The course guides also identify those PATS processes eligible for remote teaching.

6-4 Quarterly Training

6-4.1 Overview

All data collectors must receive quarterly training. The following sections describe the policy in detail.

6-4.2 Test Management

To ensure that the district has sufficient time to conduct quarterly training, the MFPC has the option of rescheduling or canceling all Statistical Programs tests for 1 day within the final month of each quarter — the MFPC must cancel any test that is not rescheduled.

Note: These options apply only to nondigital tests. Never reschedule digital tests within the CODES WBU. Conduct digital tests within 2 weeks of the original test date or by the end of the scheduled month (whichever comes first). Do not cancel digital tests unless instructed by the service center.

If a district decides not to conduct nondigital Statistical Programs tests for a day so that it may conduct comprehensive training, the MFPC must select the date in the TSSR section of the CODES WBU under the Reports menu. However, the calendar also blocks out some dates as “test-sensitive days” (i.e., days that are statistically important for tests and that are not available as quarterly training days). Access the non-training days report in the TSSR area of the CODES WBU at <http://statprog.usps.gov/NewEcodes/resources/welcome.html>.

6-4.3 Quarterly Training Methods, Topics and Materials, and Requirements

6-4.3.1 Methods

It is not necessary to train all data collectors in the district simultaneously at one site. The following options are also acceptable:

- a. Train smaller groups of data collectors at multiple sites.
- b. Conduct one-on-one training.
- c. Conduct training using distance-learning tools (e.g., video conferencing or ~~WebEx~~**Zoom (video conferencing)**) that allow for two-way interaction between the trainer and learner.

Note: When using distance-learning tools to train data collectors, managers are required to provide classroom training at least once a year. The group setting provides interaction among the data collectors and enhances the learning process

~~**Note:** When using distance-learning tools to train data collectors, managers are required to provide classroom training at least once a year. The group setting provides interaction among the data~~

collectors and enhances the learning process.

If a data collector is on leave during quarterly training, and if the policy from the quarterly training is still in effect upon the data collector's return, the data collector may not conduct tests until the MFPC trains the data collector on the missed quarterly training material.

6-4.3.2 Topics and Materials

Just as management has options on the size of the training (e.g., big groups, small groups, one-on-one training, distance learning), management can also amend training topics and materials from quarter to quarter and from district to district. One recommended strategy for identifying appropriate topics is to review process review forms for data collectors and identify items that have many negative responses. These negative responses might reveal a need for training in a specific area. The training may include a review of PATS processes addressing these items and explaining the recommended way to perform a specific task.

In addition, USPS Headquarters provides training materials each quarter to the MFPC and SSP covering data collection changes, policy and procedure changes via Statistical Programs letters, plus any data issues identified by independent audit findings. Managers must include these materials in the training.

Note: When using PATS processes in quarterly training, record the training using the quarterly training course number, not the PATS course number.

6-4.3.3 Requirements

Each quarterly training agenda must include a review of CODES equipment security policy and scale testing/calibration policies and procedures. Conducting training focused on security procedures on a quarterly basis ensures protection of Statistical Programs equipment. Reviewing scale testing/calibration policies and procedures verifies that the scales are functioning properly, and it provides accurate weight data.

Also do the following during the quarterly training:

- a. See Handbook AS-805-C, *Information Security Requirements for All Personnel*, for information regarding data and laptop security, in conjunction with the policies and procedures of Statistical Programs. Handbook AS-805-C is available at <http://about.usps.com/handbooks/as805c.pdf>.
- b. Review the corporate procedures for reporting security incidents.
- c. Review the notification policy for contacting the CODES Computer Support Center and/or the service center, located on the Privacy Office Web site at http://blue.usps.gov/caweb/privacy/equipment_data_security.htm.

6-4.4 Quarterly Assessments

The Assessment System is a Statistical Programs training tool designed to measure the effectiveness of training, as well as written policies and procedures. This web-based application is available via the Statistical Programs web page and has multiple purposes. At the national level, the

assessment provides a measure of effectiveness of the system-wide training programs for data collectors, identifying areas of strength and areas that need improvements. At the district level, the assessment provides the MFPC with feedback on the effectiveness of training initiatives.

All Statistical Programs employees are required to complete quarterly assessments. The MFPC is responsible for scheduling data collectors to complete assessments, and to meet and address assessment errors with data collectors individually. Statistical Programs Units must maintain documentation of these discussions.

If a data collector misses two or more questions in one category on the quarterly assessment, the MFPC must provide remedial training using all related training by teaching the related PATS process that includes the material for that category. The MFPC must provide this remedial training within 3 months of receiving the assessment scores must document the completed training in the SPTDS or on PS Form 2432, Individual Training Progress Report and must enter the training into the HERO Learning Portal.

If a data collector does not participate in the quarterly assessment, and if the MFPC either does not submit an exception request or does not receive approval for an exception request, then the MFPC must assess the data collector's level of knowledge by performing a process review of the data collector for each system covered in that assessment.

6-4.5 Management Assessment

Each permanent MFPC and SSP must complete the yearly Statistical Programs Management Assessment. Also open to acting MFPCs and acting SSPs, this assessment is a training tool that does the following:

- a. Measures the MFPC's or SSP's effectiveness to implement written policies and procedures as they relate to Statistical Programs management duties and responsibilities.
- b. Gauges the MFPC's or SSP's knowledge and understanding of Statistical Programs management policies and procedures, identifying areas of strength and improvement opportunities.

MFPCs and SSPs are required to have the Administration qualification in their Process Support and Tracking System (PSTS) profile to ensure access to the Statistical Programs Management Assessment

6-5 Training Documentation

6-5.1 Overview

The MFPC must maintain records of Statistical Programs training for each employee who participates in Statistical Programs data collection activities until the employee retires or transfers out of the unit. This training includes PATS training, quarterly training, testing with assistance, and any other ad hoc training. The MFPC must enter PATS training and quarterly training records into the Statistical Programs Training Documentation System ~~HERO Learning Portal, which is maintained by Human Resources~~. The MFPC must also use PS Form 2432, *Individual Training Progress Report*, to document

and maintain records of testing with assistance and any other ad hoc training. A copy of PS Form 2432 is available at <http://blue.usps.gov/formmgmt/forms/ps2432.pdf>.

6-5.2 **PATS Training**

Each PATS lesson plan has a unique course number. To access PATS course numbers, go to <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/training-employee-development/pats.htm>, and under “Access Process Documents,” click on *All Course Numbers*.

6-5.3 **Quarterly Training**

Each quarter uses a different training course number, as shown in [Exhibit 6-5.3](#):

~~Exhibit 6-5.3~~**Quarterly Training Course Numbers**

| Course Title | Course Number |
|---|---------------|
| Statistical Programs Quarterly Training: Q1 | 31201-32 |
| Statistical Programs Quarterly Training: Q2 | 31203-46 |
| Statistical Programs Quarterly Training: Q3 | 31203-47 |
| Statistical Programs Quarterly Training: Q4 | 31203-48 |

6-5.4 Required Records

The MFPC must maintain a current and complete record of training for each employee who participates in Statistical Programs data collection activities.

In addition to training entered into the Statistical Programs Training Documentation System, ~~HERO Learning Portal~~, the MFPC or SSP must complete PS Form 2432, *Individual Training Progress Report*, for each employee who completes training outside the training documented in the HERO Learning Portal. PS Form 2432 maintains a record of completed training for each employee who participates in Statistical Programs data collection activities. A copy of PS Form 2432 is available at <http://blue.usps.gov/formmgmt/forms/ps2432.pdf>.

The MFPC must also retain quarterly training sign-in sheets for the current year and the previous year.

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7 Process Review Activities

7-1 Overview

Statistical Programs conducts process review activities to assess the work performance of data collectors and their application of data collection procedures to the various statistical tests. This is the primary method of quality control for Statistical Programs.

Because of changes in policies, procedures, and technology, the MFPC or SSP must conduct process reviews along with the regular training activities mentioned in chapter 6. The process review activities ensure that data collectors accurately understand and perform statistical data collection procedures to protect data integrity.

Effective reviews are critical to quality data. The MFPC or SSP must actively verify that data collectors apply correct sampling techniques and accurately and precisely record the data.

7-2 Process Review Responsibilities

To ensure that all data collectors are employing proper test procedures, the MFPC or SSP must conduct observations of live tests. The following are the programs for which the MFPC or SSP must conduct observations of data collectors:

- a. Origin-Destination Information System — Revenue, Pieces, and Weight (ODIS-RPW).
- b. Carrier Cost Systems: City Carrier Cost System (CCCS) and Rural Carrier Cost System (RCCS).
- c. Transportation Cost System (TRACS).
- d. In-Office Cost System (IOCS).
- e. System for International Revenue and Volume Outbound — International Origin-Destination Information System (SIRVO-IODIS).
- f. System for International Revenue and Volume Inbound (SIRVI).

The MFPC or SSP must observe each data collector for each program in which the data collector is qualified, according to the following requirements:

- a. A data collector with less than 12 months experience in a program is reviewed for that program at least twice during the first 12 months.

- b. A data collector with more than 12 months experience in a program is reviewed for that program at least once during the fiscal year.
- c. A data collector who meets any of the following conditions is reviewed within 3 months:
 - (1) Was identified on a data quality report from USPS Headquarters.
 - (2) Was identified by an external auditor such as an Office of Inspector General or SOX audit.
 - (3) Demonstrated a pattern of errors or lack of knowledge that the MFPC identified during test approval.

Note: A review under this condition is at the manager's discretion.

Example: If the First-Class Single Piece report from USPS Headquarters identifies a data collector with unusual test anomalies in the same quarter in which the data collector received 82 percent on the ODIS-RPW assessment, only one process review is required.

The MFPC or SSP is responsible for initiating action for any improvement opportunities noted during the observations.

Use the various forms in the PS Form 1444 Series (including PS Forms 1444-B, -E, -H, -I, -N, -P, -Q, -R, and -S) to document process review activities. Images of the forms in the PS Form 1444 Series are available on the Postal Service PolicyNet Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov>, in the right column, click on Forms, then click on the range of forms, and then click on the link for the desired form. Links to the forms are also available on the Statistical Programs Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/process-reviews.htm>. (See [3-7.4](#) to determine the duration for keeping forms.)

7-3 Policy

7-3.1 Process Review Objectives

The following are the objectives of the process review:

- a. Observe and assess the general performance level of administrative procedures and accuracy of the sampling frames.
- b. Observe data collectors to detect irregularities that are not apparent from reviewing the data and test printouts.
- c. Verify that the data collector is following current policy and procedures.
- d. Recommend corrective actions and provide remedial training to overcome irregularities or inadequacies.
- e. Follow up with subsequent visits to ensure that corrective action has occurred and proper procedures are used.

7-3.2 Types of Process Reviews

7-3.2.1 Overview

There are two types of process reviews: Administration Process Review, and Data Collector Process Review. This section describes each process review and provides the details of when the MFPC or SSP conducts each process review. This section also describes a tool used to plan process reviews.

7-3.2.2 Description

Listed below are descriptions of the two types of process reviews:

- a. *Administration Process Review:* During the administration process review, the MFPC or SSP assesses the administrative processes to confirm that data collectors receive proper training and that they have the necessary tools to properly conduct Statistical Programs tests. Review data collectors in assigned tests that they conduct. This ensures that the data collectors secure and update all Computerized On-site Data Entry System (CODES) equipment.
- b. *Data Collector Process Review:* During the data collector process review, the MFPC or SSP assesses the ability of a data collector to conduct tests. Use the appropriate form in the PS Form 1444 Series to review the data collector for each test conducted.

7-3.2.3 Frequency Requirements

USPS Headquarters establishes the minimum frequency requirements for each type of review, as listed here:

- a. *Administration Process Review:* The MFPC must perform a self-audit of the administrative procedures used in the Statistical Programs unit at least once per fiscal year. If the district has a subordinate unit with Statistical Programs administrative responsibilities, then the MFPC also reviews the subordinate unit at least once per fiscal year.
- b. *Data Collector Process Review:* USPS Headquarters has established a minimum requirement for data collector process reviews. The intent is to provide the MFPC and SSP with the flexibility to conduct data collector process reviews more frequently for those data collectors who require it. For each data collector involved with collecting Statistical Programs data, the MFPC conducts reviews on each system that the data collector performs.

7-3.2.4 Planning Tool

To plan process reviews, the MFPC or SSP uses PS Form 8216, *Statistical Programs Planning Calendar for Process Review*. PS Form 8216 is available on the USPS internal Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/formmgmt/forms/ps8216.pdf>, and the MFPC or SSP can reproduce the form locally.

7-3.3 **Advance Preparation for Data Collector Process Review**

The MFPC or SSP must plan effectively to maximize the efficiency of the process review by taking the following measures:

- a. Schedule a live test that enables the MFPC or SSP to observe the data collector.
- b. Before the process review, discuss with the data collector the purpose of the review and fully answer any questions the data collector might ask.
- c. Explain to the data collector the purposes of the process review:
 - (1) Assess the individual strengths of the data collector on activities correctly conducted.
 - (2) Further the learning and improve the performance of the individual data collector.
 - (3) Identify training opportunities for the data collector.
 - (4) Track the progress of the data collector over time. (The MFPC or SSP enters the results of each review into a database for later access and review, often before the next review.)
- d. Indicate how many times the data collector will be reviewed during the current fiscal year (see [7-3.2.3](#)).
- e. Explain how the process review is conducted using the following criteria:
 - (1) Provide a copy of the appropriate form in the PS Form 1444 Series so that the data collector can review it before the process review.
 - (2) Discuss the items covered in the review and the review process.
 - (3) Explain the mailpiece recording process to the data collector.
- f. Provide the data collector with the date for the process review.
- g. Ask for and answer any questions from the data collector.
- h. Review the data collector's process review report from the previous year, if it is available. Review any form in the PS Form 1444 Series that has an item marked with "No," and then observe the data collector's action for that item in the forthcoming review to verify that the data collector has corrected the deficiency.

7-3.4 **On-site Preparation for Data Collector Process Review**

To prepare for an on-site data collector process review, the MFPC must review the basics of the process with the data collector, and answer any questions.

7-3.5 **Conducting the Data Collector Process Review**

The MFPC or SSP uses the following steps to conduct the data collector process review:

- a. Observe the data collector conducting a live test.
- b. Complete the items on the appropriate form in the PS Form 1444 Series as follows (while observing the data collector, the MFPC or SSP might find it convenient to record the results on a printed copy or an electronic version of the form):
 - (1) Mark "Y" on the form if the data collector performs all of the elements of the item correctly.
 - (2) Mark "N" on the form if the data collector does not perform one or more of the elements of the item correctly. For any item on the form that the MFPC or SSP marks with an "N," mark each element of the item with a "Y" or "N" to identify the specific element that the data collector did not complete correctly. If the MFPC or SSP corrects the data collector so that the data collector subsequently performs the item correctly, the MFPC or SSP still marks an "N" but must make a note in the comments section.
- c. For question 6 on PS Form 1444-E (for ODIS-RPW reviews), observe the data collector enter 15 mailpieces into the CODES software. Target mailpieces with indicia that are representative of the type of mail being tested in the MEP. For each observed mailpiece, submit an answer to question 6, and annotate the corresponding mailpiece ID number from the CODES software.
- d. Observe and take notes, but do not answer any leading questions the data collector might ask during the observation. Instead, wait until after the observation to address and discuss such questions.
- e. Give the data collector immediate feedback to correct errors observed during the live tests.

If during the process review the MFPC or SSP observes any error that cannot be corrected on-site, the MFPC or SSP submits an entry to the anomaly log.

7-3.6 **Evaluating the Process Review**

The MFPC or SSP uses the following steps to evaluate the results of the data collector process review:

- a. Compare the current process review to historical reports and graphs.
- b. Discuss the review with the data collector.
- c. Provide a detailed assessment:
 - (1) Provide feedback by discussing the activities that the data collector performed well. Review strengths and weaknesses (as indicated by the "Y" and "N" marks on the appropriate form in the PS Form 1444 Series).
 - (2) Answer questions that emerged during or after the review.

- (3) Discuss the next steps that will help the data collector improve job performance and meet personal goals (e.g., additional training).

7-3.7 **Remedial Training**

When an annual process review indicates that a data collector is not following or meeting Statistical Programs policy, the MFPC or SSP is responsible for correcting the deficiency. The appropriate procedure is to teach the related PATS process to the data collector.

8 Administrative Procedures

8-1 Overview

8-1.1 **CODES Architecture**

The Computerized On-site Data Entry System (CODES) computer architecture is structured around the functions of a physical work site. A CODES site could include, but is not limited to, a district office, an airport mail facility, a network distribution center, or an international service center.

The main tool used in CODES is the CODES WBU, which serves as the central gathering place of collected data from a district's data collectors. From it, the MFPC reviews and in some cases edits data. Each system has its own requirements for edit, review, and approval. The responsibility for gathering and uploading data according to schedule is as important as ensuring the quality of that data.

The CODES Web Base Unit is a Web-based application and is available via the Postal Service Intranet at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/welcome.htm>; under "Quick links," click on *CODES Web Base Unit*.

8-1.2 **Statistical Programs Automated Systems**

Statistical Programs has the following automated systems, which serve a wide variety of needs:

- a. Origin-Destination Information System — Revenue, Pieces, and Weight (ODIS-RPW).
- b. City Carrier Cost System (CCCS).
- c. Rural Carrier Cost System (RCCS).
- d. Transportation Cost System (TRACS).
- e. In-Office Cost System (IOCS).
- f. System for International Revenue and Volume Outbound — International Origin-Destination Information System (SIRVO-IODIS).
- g. System for International Revenue and Volume Inbound (SIRVI).
- h. Mail Exit Point System (MEPS).
- i. Scheduler.
- j. Inventory.

8-1.3 Management Responsibilities

The MFPC is responsible for the overall administration and operation of CODES at the site. The MFPC must perform the specific procedures related to CODES functions as described in the following sections.

Note: The procedures described in this handbook are the responsibility of the MFPC. No other individual may perform CODES WBU procedures unless trained and authorized by the MFPC.

8-2 MFPC and SSP Task Schedule

8-2.1 Overview

The MFPC and SSP must adhere to daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly, and quarterly task schedules. The following sections list and describe the specific tasks organized by frequency of occurrence.

8-2.2 Daily Procedures

8-2.2.1 Overview

The following sections describe duties and responsibilities that the MFPC and SSP perform on a daily basis.

8-2.2.2 Dashboards

The MFPC or SSP must check the dashboards in the Statistical Programs Virtual Image Enterprise Warehouse (SP VIEW) to ensure that digital tests are arriving as scheduled and that data collectors are completing each test. Access the SP VIEW application from the Statistical Programs Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/welcome.htm>. Notify the service center of any significant test delays or failures.

8-2.2.3 Test Status

For all digital and on-site tests on the CODES WBU, the MFPC must ensure that the data collectors upload all tests and must maintain the status of all tests, which includes whether they are rescheduled, canceled, delinquent, or zero-volume. The MFPC must code the reasons for rescheduling and canceling on-site tests.

8-2.2.4 Test Data Approval Process

8-2.2.4.1 Overview

The MFPC must review and approve test data according to the schedule in [Exhibit 8-2.2.4.1](#).

Exhibit 8-2.2.4.1

Test Data Approval Schedule

| Program | Time | Day of Month |
|------------|-----------------|------------------|
| ODIS-RPW | 3:00 P.M. LOCAL | Daily |
| CCCS | 8:00 P.M. ET | 1, 8, 15, 22, 27 |
| RCCS | 8:00 P.M. ET | 1, 8, 15, 22, 27 |
| TRACS | 8:00 P.M. ET | 1, 8, 15, 22, 27 |
| IOCS | 8:00 P.M. ET | 1, 8, 15, 22, 27 |
| SIRVO-ODIS | 8:00 P.M. ET | 1, 8, 15, 22, 27 |
| SIRVI | 8:00 P.M. ET | 1, 8, 15, 22, 27 |

In order for the tests to be included in the monthly and quarterly estimation processes, the MFPC must approve all tests no later than the first of the following month, by the times listed in [Exhibit 8-2.2.4.1](#). If the approval day is a Sunday or Holiday, the MFPC must transmit the data on the last work day before the Sunday or Holiday. Tests that are not approved on the CODES Web Base Unit on the date scheduled are considered to be delinquent (DELQ).

8-2.2.4.2 **CODES WBU Applications**

For any test not approved by the first of the following month, the MFPC must notify the service center and approve the test as soon as possible.

8-2.2.5 **CODES Web Base Unit Daily Best Practices**

The following steps describe the daily best practices for using the CODES WBU:

- a. Review the CODES WBU dashboard.
- b. Review the *News* item page for any new items.
- c. Check the status of each test on the current day.
- d. Conduct the following tasks for each received test:
 - (1) Check whether all sessions are received, paying particular attention to 24-hour tests that could require more than one session.
 - (2) Check whether the ODIS-RPW Summary/Analysis Report is available.
 - (3) Check for any comments from the data collector by clicking on comments for each test.
- e. Review the PS Form 2846 or 2848 status (by selecting the 2846 or 2848 report button on the CCCS or RCCS consolidated sample screen) to identify delinquent PS Forms 2846 or 2848. (See [8-5.3](#) for more information on PS Forms 2846 and 2848.)
- f. Run the delinquent report for at least that month (by selecting *Status of DELQ* and the appropriate date range) to ensure that all tests are received and approved. Resolve all delinquencies.
- g. Look at Received tests to verify they are approved.
- h. Make sure that any rescheduled test is rescheduled in the CODES WBU before the test is received from the laptop in the field.

- i. Approve all tests on a daily basis.
- j. Review the CODES WBU in the morning to ensure that the tests from the previous day have been transmitted.

8-2.3 Weekly Procedures

8-2.3.1 Overview

The following sections describe duties and responsibilities required of the MFPC and/or the SSP on a weekly basis.

8-2.3.2 Login to the Network

8-2.3.2.1 Weekly Software Update

At least once a week, the MFPC must ensure that every laptop is connected to the local area network (LAN) to update the software, including security and anti-virus updates. This update prevents the laptop from being “locked out.”

8-2.3.2.2 Postal Service Local Area Network (LAN)

The MFPC must download software, security, and anti-virus updates to the CODES laptops via the Postal Service LAN. This happens automatically when laptops are connected to the LAN. Users who have access to a LAN connection only need to connect to the network to update their CODES laptops.

Offices located 100 miles or more from a district office might not have access to the LAN, so they might have to use a dial-up connection to receive updates. Dial-up connections are time consuming and challenging because the connection must be kept open for at least 1 hour (sometimes up to 2 hours) and the laptop must not go into the hibernate mode during this time.

8-2.3.3 Schedule Tests

When new samples are available on the CODES WBU, the MFPC must assign a data collector to each test using either the Scheduler or another local scheduling system.

The MFPC must schedule assignments as follows:

- a. The schedules must outline the duty assignments for the entire week. They consist of information related to all scheduled tests, reporting times, and any applicable office duties.
- b. The MFPC must develop test schedules in compliance with Handbook EL-912, *Agreement between United States Postal Service and American Postal Workers Union AFL-CIO*:
 - (1) The current agreement stipulates that the MFPC must complete schedules and give them to data collectors by the end of their tours on the Wednesday before the scheduled week. If a holiday occurs in the following week, the MFPC must complete the schedule before Tuesday.
 - (2) When preparing schedules, the MFPC must also take into consideration any local memorandum of understanding.

8-2.4 **Biweekly Procedures**

The MFPC must use the CODES WBU to access the IOCS Readings Schedule Report, which is generated every pay period (biweekly). This report contains information about the sampled employees and provides their start and end times. Using the report, the MFPC performs the following tasks:

- a. Verifies the start and end times for the sampled employees, because employee schedules might have changed since the sample selection was created, and because the report might not have all start and end times for the sampled employees. To verify the start and end times, consult the Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS) or the locally maintained office roster, or call the office of the sampled employee.
- b. Schedule the readings in the CODES WBU. While scheduling the readings, update the start and end times as appropriate. For an explanation of how to compute the scheduled reading time, see Handbook F-45, *Data Collection User's Guide for In-Office Cost System*, chapter 2.
- c. Assign data collectors to conduct the readings. Load sample data onto the CODES laptop from the CODES WBU.

8-2.5 **Monthly Procedures**

8-2.5.1 **Overview**

The following sections describe duties and responsibilities required of the MFPC and/or the SSP on a monthly basis.

8-2.5.2 **Review the Test Status and Statistics Report**

Pull the Test Status and Statistics Report (TSSR) from the CODES WBU, and review the TSSR for missed, canceled, and rescheduled tests. Reconcile any missed test by canceling or rescheduling it.

8-2.5.3 **Other Possible Tasks**

Although not required by Statistical Programs, the MFPC must perform the following tasks for the district on a monthly basis:

- a. Pull Corporate Information System (CIS) reports:
 - (1) Vehicle Utilization Report.
 - (2) Vehicle Certification Report.
- b. Verify voyager card purchases (credit card gas purchases for vehicles).
- c. Procure supplies.

8-2.6 **Quarterly Procedures**

8-2.6.1 **Overview**

The following sections describe duties and responsibilities required of the MFPC and/or the SSP on a quarterly basis.

8-2.6.2 Download and Review Samples

New software or sample files released by USPS Headquarters are automatically updated in the CODES WBU. Sample selections are usually available at least 2 weeks prior to the beginning of the new quarter or pay period. The News page displays a notice when new sample files become available. The MFPC is responsible for processing the new software and sample files when they become available.

Note: The IOCS schedule is different from the other schedules because it generates bi-weekly for each pay period.

8-2.6.3 Update Software

Quarterly software updates occur due to requirement changes, changing customer needs, classification reform, etc. Statistical Programs at USPS Headquarters releases these software updates via the Postal Routed Network (PRN). The PRN automatically updates the software as long as the laptop is connected to the PRN — the only time that the MFPC has to install and update the software manually is when a viable internet connection cannot be obtained. In such a situation, notes for software releases are available on the Statistical Programs Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/release-notes.htm>. These software release notes contain necessary information and instructions for installing the software updates on the CODES laptops.

8-2.7 Scale Certification

Data collectors use electronic scales in conjunction with the CODES laptop to collect accurate weight data on test mailpieces.

Except for a few differences, the CODES scale (manufactured especially for the Postal Service by Mettler Toledo, Inc.) operates much like any other electronic scale. The CODES scale uses a built-in computer to measure, balance, and compute the weight of objects placed on the weighing platter and then transfers the data to the CODES laptop via a serial input/output (I/O) port connection. The CODES software then processes the data and displays the weight on the laptop screen. The CODES scale is calibrated only by CODES Computer Support.

The MFPC is responsible for maintaining the Scale Certification log. The Scale Certification Log screen in the CODES WBU Inventory documents the quarterly certification of the scales and automatically records the certification date. The MFPC and SSP must confirm that all scales are recording accurate weights and determine whether calibration is necessary. If necessary, the MFPC sends the scale to CODES Support for calibration and updates the *Current Inventory* in the CODES WBU.

8-2.8 Procedures Performed As Needed

8-2.8.1 Overview

The following sections describe duties and responsibilities required of the MFPC and/or the SSP on an as-needed basis.

8-2.8.2 **Inventory: CODES Web Base Unit**

8-2.8.2.1 **Equipment Inventory**

The MFPC or the SSP must include all CODES equipment (e.g., scales, scanners, laptops, weights) in the inventory system, which is available in the CODESWBU.

Update the inventory files when any of the following situations occur:

- a. New equipment is received.
- b. Equipment is transferred from one office to another.
- c. Equipment has been taken out of service.
- d. All other equipment changes not otherwise listed here.

8-2.8.2.2 **Management Responsibilities**

The MFPC is responsible for all district CODES equipment and must check the inventory in the *Inventory* system to ensure accuracy. The following are some guidelines for checking equipment:

- a. Note in the inventory where the equipment is housed or located (e.g., in the Main Office Registry Section or at an associate office or a station/branch).
- b. Check every location where CODES equipment is assigned.
- c. Verify inventory at least once every 6 months or when equipment is sent in for repair.

Note: Although Information Technology (IT) has overall responsibility for the laptops, the MFPC is required to document the location of all equipment under the unit's control.

8-3 **CODES Computer Support Center**

The CODES Computer Support Center (CCSC) provides technical direction and support to all CODES field sites that request help. CCSC diagnoses hardware problems (the result of equipment failures) and software problems (including but not limited to program malfunctions) and provides procedures necessary to obtain hardware and software repair services.

The CCSC can provide the following services:

- a. Help retrieve test data, if needed.
- b. Ensure that the CODES software is not causing the malfunction.
- c. Determine whether the laptop requires an updated image of the current software version.

Because resolving any problem requires gathering as much information as possible about the issue, be prepared as follows before contacting CCSC:

- a. Have all information readily available, including any e-mails sent.
- b. Capture any error messages displayed on the screen, either by writing them down or using the *Print Screen* key to capture the image electronically. This information can help CCSC determine whether the problem is hardware or software related.

- c. Have the laptop readily accessible when in contact with the CCSC.
- d. Understand that the time needed to correct the problem depends not only on its severity, but on the amount of information provided to the CCSC.

Contact CCSC by e-mail at *computersupportcenter.codes@usps.gov* or by telephone at 866-877-2633.

Note: Statistical Programs staff must not seek help from IT unless CCSC has directed staff to do so. IT has received instructions not to work on any CODES equipment, including laptops. Solutions by staff other than the CCSC might result in unrecoverable data or damaged equipment.

Address questions regarding policy issues to the service center.

8-4 CODES Equipment

The following sections provide detailed descriptions of, and instructions for, essential forms required for documenting various CODES administrative activities.

The MFPC is responsible for all CODES equipment and for performing the following equipment-related tasks:

- a. Store all CODES equipment in the district offices for use in conducting Statistical Programs tests.
- b. Maintain accurate inventory and tracking records, and always coordinate the movement of CODES equipment (transfers to other districts) through the service center.
- c. Contact the service center with any questions or problems.
- d. Update inventory on the *Inventory Web* site whenever equipment is new or transferred.

The forms described in this section serve as a means of documentation and accountability.

8-5 CODES Equipment Log and Related Forms

8-5.1 CODES Equipment Log

The CODES Equipment Log (see [Exhibit 3-2.3](#)) is one of the instruments used to track the CODES equipment within an office (whether a district office or a cadre office). The MFPC and SSP are responsible for maintaining the log and reporting problems to the service center.

The log allows employees to sign in and sign out all portable computers and scales. Each piece of equipment must be accounted for, and everyone must sign the log when checking equipment in or out.

The log serves two purposes:

- a. Provide written accountability for all equipment.
- b. Provide a record of any hardware or software problems encountered during a test.

There are different ways to use this log sheet:

- a. Record all of the computers on one sheet.
- b. Have a separate sheet for each piece of equipment.
- c. Document a particular laptop assigned to a data collector.

Note: All equipment, whether located in a district or cadre office, must be accounted for regardless of the method used.

For information on the retention period of CODES Equipment Log Sheets, see [Exhibit 3-7.4](#).

8-5.2 Scale Certification Log

8-5.2.1 Overview

The MFPC and SSP use the Scale Certification Log to document the quarterly review and testing of the scales as follows:

- a. Confirm that all scales are recording accurate weights by certifying the scales for proper calibration quarterly, and document the task on the Scale Certification Log. The log provides electronic accountability and documentation for all certifications.
- b. Indicate the shipping date when returning the scale to CODES Computer Support for calibration.

The MFPC is responsible for creating and maintaining the log on a quarterly basis. The MFPC must ensure that documentation is maintained regardless of where the scale is located.

8-5.3 Carrier Cost Systems Test Forms

8-5.3.1 Overview

The MFPC must enter all Postal Service forms from Carrier Cost Systems tests (City or Rural) in the CODES WBU according to the guidelines listed below, and must check the information for accuracy and edit it when necessary.

8-5.3.2 PS Form 2846

The test site postmaster must complete PS Form 2846, *City Carrier Route Mail Acceptance Data*, to report the volume of mail that the carrier collects as the carrier delivers the route. The postmaster completes the form and submits it to the Statistical Programs office on the same date of the test. The data collector must provide the current edition of PS Form 2846 to the postmaster. PS Form 2846 is available online at <http://blue.usps.gov/formmgmt/forms/ps2846.pdf>.

The MFPC must process the form as follows:

- a. Review the submitted form for completeness and accuracy, and discuss any incomplete or inconsistent items with the postmaster.
- b. Enter data from PS Form 2846 into the CODES WBU within 4 days of the test date.

- c. Approve the data on PS Form 2846 in the CODES WBU. The MFPC may assign a designee to key the data into the CODES WBU, and in such a case, the MFPC must also select a trained reviewer to approve the data keyed by the designee.

8-5.3.3 **PS Form 2847**

The Postal Service uses PS Form 2847, *Rural Carrier Payment Authorization*, to compensate the rural mail carrier for the time spent on the RCCS test. The current edition of PS Form 2847 is available online at <http://blue.usps.gov/formmgmt/forms/ps2847.pdf>.

The type of RCCS test determines who completes the form — for an on-site RCCS test, the data collector completes the form, and for an RCCS test that is not completed on-site, the carrier and postmaster complete the form. The appropriate personnel complete the form as follows:

- a. Complete the form only if the carrier is delayed because of the test.
- b. Complete the form only if the carrier has a roster designation of 70 through 78.
- c. Complete the form at the test site.
- d. Record the carrier's time in minutes, not hours.
- e. Record the minutes that the carrier spends on the test, including minutes the carrier spends performing the following activities:
 - (1) Listening to the data collector explain the test.
 - (2) Helping the data collector gather mail.
 - (3) Performing any other test-related tasks that require additional time in the office, including completing PS Form 2847.
 - (4) Waiting for the data collector to sample and record the mail.
- f. If the postmaster designates the carrier to count and record the collection mail, include on PS Form 2847 the carrier's time required to complete PS Form 2848, *Rural Carrier Route Mail Acceptance Data*.
- g. Complete PS Form 2847 for a substitute rural mail carrier who helps conduct the test if the substitute is delayed and if the substitute's roster designation is between 70 and 78.
- h. Enter the carrier's Employee Identification Number (EIN) correctly.
- i. Ensure that both the carrier and the postmaster sign the form.

Other employees must process the form as follows:

- a. Intermediate office postmasters sign PS Form 2847 for intermediate offices.
- b. The postmaster mails the completed and signed form to the Eagan Accounting Service Center at the address that appears on the form.
- c. When reviewing the form, the MFPC must ensure that the employees used the current PS Form 2847.

8-5.3.4 PS Form 2848

The test site postmaster must complete PS Form 2848, *Rural Carrier Route Mail Acceptance Data*, to report the volume of mail that the carrier collects as the carrier delivers the route. The postmaster completes the form and submits it to the Statistical Programs office on the same date of the test. The data collector must provide the current edition of PS Form 2848 to the postmaster. PS Form 2848 is available online at <http://blue.usps.gov/formmgmt/forms/ps2848.pdf>.

The MFPC must process the form as follows:

- a. Review the submitted form for completeness and accuracy, and discuss incomplete or inconsistent items with the postmaster.
- b. Enter data from PS Form 2848 into the CODES WBU within 4 days of the test date.
- c. Approve the data on PS Form 2848 into the CODES WBU. The MFPC may assign a designee to key the data into the CODES WBU, and in such a case, the MFPC must, if possible, also select a trained reviewer to approve the data keyed by the designee.

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9 Reports, Analysis, and Interpretation

9-1 Overview

This chapter focuses on some of the Statistical Programs reports that are available after testing has been completed and the test data have been transmitted. The reports mentioned here are those most commonly created, although management may generate many other reports for its use.

Statistical Programs generates a variety of reports unique to itself. These reports can reveal everything from suspicious mail exit point (MEP) volumes, to how many pieces of flats mail have passed through the district for a given period. The MFPC can use these reports to determine how the district is performing.

Statistical reports serve a number of valuable purposes:

- a. Provide specific information that is based on statistical data and that is free from abstract generalizations.
- b. Enable the MFPC to recognize trends at the district level.
- c. Aid the MFPC in various tasks:
 - (1) Updating the Mail Exit Point System (MEPS).
 - (2) Scheduling data collectors correctly.
 - (3) Ensuring adequate test coverage.

Trained employees — other than the data collector who completed the test — may review and approve the test. However, an employee who reviews and approves the test cannot also edit the test, and likewise, the same employee who conducts a test cannot also edit the test. When editing a test, the employee must make corrections to test data by edits in the CODES WBU or through the anomaly log. Any trained employee — other than the data collector who completed the test — can submit a request for a correction through the anomaly log. Each test receives a CODES WBU Summary or a Test Data Report. The MFPC must review each report before approving it for USPS Headquarters processing, and must consider and analyze each report in conjunction with all of the other reports.

9-2 CODES WBU Review and Approval Policy for ODIS-RPW Tests

9-2.1 On-site ODIS-RPW Test Review and Approval Policy

9-2.1.1 **Overview**

The MFPC reviews all on-site ODIS-RPW tests on the CODES WBU before transmitting the test data. The goal of the review is to ensure that the data collector captured all eligible mail during the test and that the data is valid. The MFPC may designate and train a data collector to review, edit, or

~~The MFPC reviews all on-site ODIS-RPW tests on the CODES WBU before transmitting the test data. The goal of the review is to ensure that the data collector captured all eligible mail during the test and that the data is valid. The MFPC may designate and train a data collector to review, edit, or~~

approve ODIS-RPW tests; however, Statistical Programs employees cannot review, edit, or approve their own tests.

To perform the review, the MFPC compares the Header Report (as annotated by the data collector) with the Summary Analysis Report to identify any discrepancies. The MFPC then ensures that the data collector has made any appropriate edits, and if so, the MFPC approves the test. Once the MFPC approves the test, CODES WBU automatically transmits the test data to the mainframe.

For further instructions on the test review, the MFPC may contact the service center.

9-2.1.2 **Corrections to Test Data**

The MFPC reports any changes to test IDs or test data using the Anomaly Log.

9-2.1.3 **Test Review and Approval Policy**

9-2.1.3.1 **Administrative Information**

The MFPC must check and validate identifying information on the test, and list any discrepancies on the Summary Analysis Report.

The Test ID on the Summary Analysis Report must be correct; if incorrect, move the test to the correct test session in the CODES WBU.

The data collector's name on the Header Report must match the EIN on the Skip Interval Summary Report. If this is incorrect, the MFPC must correct it on the EIN Validation Report tab in the CODES WBU.

9-2.1.3.2 **Test Notification and Test Day Checklists**

The MFPC must address any test comments or "No" responses from the Statistical Programs ODIS-RPW Test Notification Checklist or the Statistical Programs ODIS-RPW Test Day Checklist that appear on the Summary Analysis Report. (For an image of the Statistical Programs ODIS-RPW Test Notification Checklist, go to <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/reference-guides.htm>, and then click on the link for the *ODIS-RPW Reference Guide*.)

The data collector must enter comments during the test if certain conditions exist, such as if mail listed in the MEP Description or Special Instructions is not included in the test, or if the data collector enters a "No" response in the checklists. The MFPC must review those comments for any items that could affect the integrity of the test data and discuss any concerns with the data collector.

The MFPC must contact the facility manager, if needed, to resolve any conflicts or misunderstandings.

The MFPC must contact the service center if failures result in any amount of missed mail (see [9-9.1.3.2](#)), double-counting, or ineligible mail being included in the test.

9-2.1.3.3 **Test Information and MEP Description**

The MFPC must verify from annotated Mail Stream Types and Delivery Units on the Header Report that the test included all eligible mail. If any

discrepancies exist, list those on the Summary Analysis Report. The MFPC must contact the service center if the data collector missed any amount of mail (see [9-9.1.3.2](#)) or conducted the test on the wrong MEP.

The MFPC must discuss any discrepancies with the data collector and train the data collector if needed, using the following PATS Processes:

- a. PATS Process 0001, *Locating the Test Schedule and Header Report*.
- b. PATS Process 0043, *Following the Header Report to Locate the Test Facility and Mail Streams to be Tested*.

9-2.1.3.4 **Sampling Methods**

The MFPC must verify that the data collector used the correct sampling method.

To verify this, use the number of primary containers annotated on the Header Report to estimate the number of mailpieces, and then determine whether the data collector used the correct sampling method. (For an explanation of sampling methods, see Handbook F-75.) If the data collector used an incorrect sampling method, note and explain it on the Summary Analysis Report.

The MFPC must discuss any discrepancies with the data collector and train the data collector if needed, using PATS Process 0056, *Determining a Sampling Method*.

9-2.1.3.5 **Container and Mailpiece Skip Intervals**

The MFPC must verify that the skip intervals annotated on the Header Report match those on the Skip Interval Summary Report.

The MFPC must list any discrepancies on the Skip Interval Summary report, along with an explanation. If the data collector incorrectly keyed the skip intervals, correct the errors in the CODES WBU (for more information, see [9-2.1.5](#)).

The MFPC must discuss any discrepancies with the data collector and train the data collector if needed, using the following PATS Processes:

- a. PATS Process 0060, *Selecting Mailpiece Skip Intervals*.
- b. PATS Process 0061, *Selecting Container/Mailpiece Skip Intervals*.

9-2.1.3.6 **Mail Categories and Test Volume**

The MFPC must verify that the mail categories and mail types annotated on the Header Report match those on the Test Volume Summary Report. If they do not match, the MFPC must list them and explain any discrepancies on the Test Volume Summary report.

The MFPC must contact the service center if any of the following situations occurred:

- a. The data collector missed any amount of mail (see [9-9.1.3.2](#)).
- b. The equipment failed and no backup laptop was available.
- c. The data collector conducted the test on the wrong MEP.

The MFPC must discuss any discrepancies with the data collector and train the data collector if needed, using the following PATS Processes:

- a. PATS Process 0001, *Locating the Test Schedule and Header Report*.
- b. PATS Process 0043, *Following the Header Report to Locate the Test Facility and Mail Streams to be Tested*.

9-2.1.3.7 Reference Volumes

The MFPC must note whether there were any columns marked with asterisks (***) in the Reference Volume Analysis report, and then determine the cause of the volume discrepancy. There are several possible reasons for this:

- a. *Normal volume fluctuations*: The reference volume is an average, and the test in question may have occurred on a day in which the volume was unusually heavy or light.
- b. *Small reference shape volume*: Flats occasionally appear in letter tests. When flats are combined with large skip intervals, the flats test volume could be much larger than the reference volume.
- c. *Correct mail not isolated*: Mail from other MEPs was included, or mail normally tested in this MEP was excluded.
- d. *Incorrect value recorded*: An incorrect shape volume or incorrect multiple identical pieces (MIP) value was recorded.

The MFPC must note the reason for any discrepancy on the Reference Volume Analysis report and, if one of the following situations occurred, take the appropriate action as noted:

- a. If the data collector failed to isolate and test any amount of mail, contact the service center (see [9-9.1.3.2](#)).
- b. If the data collector recorded an incorrect mail shape or an incorrect MIP value, correct the error in the CODES WBU (for more information, see [9-2.1.5](#)).

The MFPC must discuss any discrepancies with the data collector and train the data collector if needed, using the following PATS Processes:

- a. PATS Process 0043, *Following the Header Report to Locate the Test Facility and Mail Streams to be Tested*.
- b. PATS Process 0058, *Isolating and Recording Multiple Identical Pieces (MIP)*.

9-2.1.3.8 High Percentage of Priority Mail or First-Class Mail

If the Priority Mail, First-Class Single-Piece Flats, or First-Class Single-Piece Letters and Cards Report appears on the Summary Analysis Report, the MFPC must determine the cause of the volume discrepancy, which could arise from the following situations:

- a. Legitimate volumes. This situation often occurs with MEPs that have a high proportion of Priority Mail or single-piece First-Class Mail, such as those defined around a business or business reply mail, or in a business district receiving predominantly First-Class Mail.
- b. Out-of-date reference volumes.
- c. Use of incorrect skip intervals.

- d. Substitution of Priority Mail or First-Class Mail containers for other containers.

The MFPC must note the reason for the high Priority Mail or First-Class Mail volume on the Priority Mail, First-Class Single-Piece Flats, or First-Class Mail Single-Piece Letters and Cards report, and, if one of the following situations occurred, take the appropriate action as noted:

- a. If the data collector substituted Priority Mail or First-Class Mail containers, contact the service center.
- b. If the data collector made a data entry error, correct it in the CODES WBU (for more information, see [9-2.1.5](#)).

The MFPC must discuss any discrepancies with the data collector and train the data collector if needed, using the following PATS Processes:

- a. PATS Process 0063, *Determining and Applying the Random Start and Container-Skip Interval for Container Subsampling*.
- b. PATS Process 0064, *Determining and Applying the Random Start and Mailpiece-Skip Interval*.

9-2.1.3.9 **Individual Test Record Analysis**

As a final check, the MFPC reviews the individual test records, looking for anomalies or recurring errors, including the following:

- a. Review any mailpieces that are flagged with the warning “Stamps Recorded As Other Than Single-Piece Category.” Annotate the reason for this anomaly on the Summary Analysis Report, and contact the service center whenever this warning appears.
- b. Check that the recording times from the Test Session # Screen tab in the CODES WBU correspond to the dispatch times on the Header Report. If they do not correspond and if the MFPC did not authorize the actual recording time, contact the service center.
- c. Check for any particular data patterns that could indicate a problem with the test, such as failure to use the electronic scale. Annotate the reason on the Summary Analysis Report, and submit the test information to the service center for the anomaly log.
- d. Contact the service center if the failures resulted in any amount of missed mail (see [9-9.1.3.2](#)), double counting, or ineligible mail being included in the test.
- e. Discuss any discrepancies with the data collector and train the data collector if needed, using the appropriate PATS Processes.

9-2.1.3.10 **Chart for On-site ODIS-RPW Test Review and Approval Policy**

See Exhibit 9-2.1.3.10 for a chart showing a synopsis of the on-site ODIS-RPW test review and approval policy, which is more fully discussed in [9-2.1.3.1](#) to [9-2.1.3.9](#).

Exhibit 9-2.1.3.10

On-site ODIS-RPW Test Review and Approval Policy

| Review | Annotate | Action | Training |
|---|--|--|------------------------|
| 1. Is the Test ID on the Summary Report correct? | List any discrepancies on the Summary Report. | If Test ID is incorrect, "Move" the test to the correct test in the CODES WBU. | N/A |
| 2. Does the data collector's name on the Header Report match the EIN on the Skip Interval Summary Report? | List any discrepancies on the Summary Report. | Correct EIN in the CODES WBU on the test EIN Validation Report tab. | N/A |
| 3. Do the mail categories/shapes annotated on the Header Report match the MEP description? | List any discrepancies on the Summary Report. | Contact the service center if: ⌘ Data collector missed any amount of mail. ⌘ Laptop failed and no backup available. ⌘ Wrong MEP tested. | PATS 0001 and/or 0043. |
| 4. Do any "No" responses from the Test Notification or Test Day checklists, or any test comments, appear on the Summary Analysis Report? | Discuss with the data collector. List any discrepancies on the Summary Report. | Contact the service center if: ⌘ Data collector missed any amount of mail. ⌘ Laptop failed and no backup available. ⌘ Wrong MEP tested. | N/A |
| 5. Did the data collector use the correct sampling method? a. Use the number of primary containers annotated on the Header Report to estimate the number of mailpieces. b. See Handbook F-75 for definitions of sampling methods. | Discuss with the data collector. List any discrepancies and their circumstances on the Summary Report. | Contact the service center if: ⌘ Data collector missed any amount of mail. ⌘ Laptop failed and no backup available. ⌘ Wrong MEP tested. | PATS 0056. |
| 6. Are the skip intervals correct? Compare the annotated skip intervals on the Header Report with the Skip Interval Summary Report and the ODIS-RPW Container Subsampling Table. | Discuss with the data collector. List any discrepancies on the Skip Interval Report. | Correct skip intervals in CODESWBU. | PATS 0060 and/or 0061. |
| 7. Do the mail categories/shapes on the Header Report match those on the Test Volume Summary Report? | Discuss with the data collector. List any discrepancies on the Test Volume Summary Report. | Contact the service center if: ⌘ Data collector missed any amount of mail. ⌘ Laptop failed and no backup available. ⌘ Wrong MEP tested. | PATS 0001 and/or 0043. |

| Review | Annotate | Action | Training |
|---|---|--|--|
| 8. Are there any columns with asterisks (***) in the Reference Volume Analysis Report? | Discuss with the data collector. List the cause of discrepancy on the Reference Volume Analysis Report: a. Normal volume fluctuations. b. Small reference shape volume. c. Correct mail not isolated. | If the mail shape or MIP is recorded incorrectly, edit in CODES WBU. Contact the service center if the data collector failed to isolate and sample the correct mail. | PATS 0043 and/or 0058. |
| 9. Do the High Percentage of Single-Piece First-Class Mail or Priority Mail reports appear? | Discuss with the data collector. List cause of discrepancy on the High Percentage Report: a. Legitimate MEP volumes. b. Out-of-date reference volumes. c. Substitution of First-Class Mail or Priority Mail. d. Skip intervals entered incorrectly. | ⌘ If cause is item b, update MEPs. ⌘ If cause is item c, contact the service center. ⌘ If cause is item d, approve with edit or anomaly log. | PATS 0063 and/or 0064. On-site MEP review. |
| 10. Individual Record Analysis: a. Review any mailpieces that are flagged with Stamps Recorded As Other Than Single-Piece Category. b. Verify that the recording times correspond to the dispatch times on the Header Report. c. Verify that there is a scanned barcode for parcels and Priority mailpieces. d. Verify that an electronic scale was used. e. Investigate any recurring problems or concerns. | Discuss with the data collector. List any discrepancies and their circumstances on the Summary Report. | Determine if data is accurate. Contact the service center if needed, or approve with edit or anomaly log. | N/A |

9-2.1.4 Zero Volume Tests

A Zero Volume test is a test on a MEP in which no mail volume arrives within the cutoff times. The MFPC reports a Zero Volume test in the CODES WBU. To minimize the occurrence of Zero Volume tests, the MFPC must design the MEPS as large as possible. The MFPC must review the reason for the Zero Volume test to determine if a change in MEP design is warranted.

Exception: To protect the validity of the ODIS-RPW system, tests with mail that arrives after the cutoff times, with any portion delivered on the test day, is not considered a Zero Volume test. If this occurs, contact the service center. For example, if another test were scheduled on this unit

on the next MEP day, the data collector scheduled to conduct that test would not have the opportunity to test all of this late arriving mail. In this case, the data collector would not enter this as a Zero Volume test. The MFPC must notify the service center when this happens and must review the MEP to determine if a change in design is warranted.

Example 1: A data collector conducts a 24-hour MEP test at a downstream facility with one dispatch scheduled to arrive at 0700 hours. The cutoff times are 0800–0800 hours, and the dispatch arrives late at 0830 hours. Since this mail cannot be held by Operations and must be delivered that day, a data collector testing on the next MEP day would miss this mail. The MFPC must notify the service center and review whether the cutoff times must be changed. If so, then the MFPC makes the cutoff time changes accordingly.

Example 2: A plant has three 8-hour MEPs set up at the caller service area; the cutoff times are 0400–1200 hours for MEP A, 1200–2000 hours for MEP B, and 2000–0400 hours for MEP C. Mail typically is ready for dispatch in the midpoint of these cutoff times, so the MFPC schedule data collectors to arrive at the testing area 2 hours after the start of the test (i.e., at 0600, 1400, and 2200 hours, respectively). A test is scheduled for MEP A. Because of machine breakdowns, the mail for the caller who picks up in that time frame is not ready until 1215 hours. This mail is dispatched when it is ready and cannot be held until 1400 hours (i.e., the time that the data collector arrives to test MEP B). Since this mail arrives after MEP A's cutoff time, and is not available for testing if a test were scheduled on MEP B, the MFPC does not enter this test as a Zero Volume test. The MFPC must notify the service center and review whether the cutoff times must be changed. If so, then the MFPC makes the cutoff time changes accordingly.

Example 3: A plant has three 8-hour MEPs set up at the caller service area; the cutoff times are 0400–1200 hours for MEP A, 1200–2000 hours for MEP B, and 2000–0400 hours for MEP C. Since mail typically is ready for dispatch throughout the 8-hour period, data collectors are scheduled to arrive at the testing area at the beginning of the testing period (e.g., at 0400, 1200, and 2000 hours, respectively). A test is scheduled for MEP A. Because of a machine breakdown, the mail for the caller who picks up in that time frame is not ready until 1215 hours. Although this time is after MEP A's cutoff time, a data collector would be able to test this mail if a test were scheduled on MEP B. Therefore, the MEP A test is a Zero Volume test.

9-2.1.5 **Editing the ODIS-RPW Test Data**

When editing test data, the MFPC approving the test *cannot* enter the changes in the CODES WBU — instead, someone else must enter the edits into the CODES WBU before approval. “Test data” refers to the mailpiece or sampling data — such as mail shape, mailpiece skip, and MIP value — that the data collector enters during a test. One person cannot reset a partial match or delete test data (which includes deleting a duplicate test session) and also approve the test. Statistical Programs employees cannot edit or approve their own tests.

9-2.1.6 **Completing the Review Process**

After completing the review, the MFPC must check the “Test Data Reviewed and Approved” box on the CODES WBU. The MFPC must retain the annotated Header Report and Summary Analysis Report for 1 year, but does not have to print and retain the checklists or a report of the entire test.

9-2.2 **Digital ODIS-RPW Test Review and Approval Policy**

9-2.2.1 **Overview**

In lieu of an individual test review and approval process, the MFPC uses the Digital Data Quality tool in the CODES WBU to review selected mailpieces and assess data quality. The goal of the review is to ensure that the data collector recorded mail characteristics correctly and that the data is valid. The MFPC may not designate a data collector to perform the data quality review.

9-2.2.2 **Test Review and Approval Policy**

The manual test review and approval process for on-site tests described in [9-2.1](#) does not apply to digital tests. Digital tests are approved automatically after they are transmitted to the CODES WBU.

9-2.2.3 **Digital Test Header Report**

As digital tests are completed, the MFPC must review the annotated Digital Header Report for any items that could affect the integrity of the test data and discuss any concerns with the data collector. Contact the service center with any significant problems pertaining to the test mail, digital software, or test data. The MFPC must sign the Digital Header Report to indicate that the review is complete, and retain the signed Digital Header Report for 1 year.

9-2.2.4 **Corrections to Test Data**

The MFPC must report any changes to test IDs or test data using the Anomaly Log. Digital test data is not available for editing in the CODES WBU.

9-3 **CODES WBU Review and Approval Policy for CCCS Tests**

9-3.1 **Overview**

Since accurate and consistent data collection is important, all Statistical Programs employees must follow several rules in order to ensure that the City Carrier Cost System (CCCS) test data are accurate. This section outlines and explains specific policies for reviewing CCCS test data.

The MFPC must review CCCS test data before approving it for USPS Headquarters processing. The reviewer and approver must be trained employees other than the data collector who completed the CCCS test.

9-3.2 **CODES WBU Reports**

When the data collector uploads a CCCS test to the CODES WBU, two reports are generated:

- a. The City Summary report shows route weighted volume by class and by shape, warnings for unusual volumes or entries (if applicable), and detail listings that include key variables and comments.
- b. The City Test report does not show any data summaries or warnings, but displays nearly all data elements for each entry sent from the laptop.

9-3.3 **Reviewing CCCS Tests**

The MFPC is responsible for reviewing the City Summary report from each test for possible keying problems by the data collector. A review of the report must include the following:

- a. Review the administrative data for accuracy.
- b. Review Test Summaries for unusual volumes:
 - (1) Extremely small or large volumes for the route.
 - (2) Unusually high volumes for low-volume products, such as Priority Mail Express.
 - (3) End-of-Run (EOR) volumes that differ substantially from estimates for Delivery Point Sequence (DPS) letters.
- c. Investigate and verify any warnings for unusual entries:
 - (1) Review comments entered by the data collector explaining or verifying unusual entries.
 - (2) If the data collector's comments do not provide verification, enter comments before approval.
- d. Review detail listings for unusual entries (use the City Test report to get more details):
 - (1) Verify all domestic and international Priority Mail Express entries using Arrival at Unit (AAU) scan data.
 - (2) Review data entry times for consistency.

9-3.4 **Data Anomalies**

If the MFPC detects an error during the review of the test, and the error is correctable on the laptop, the MFPC may perform the following tasks:

- a. Delete the test in the CODES WBU.
- b. Unarchive the test on the laptop.
- c. Correct the error that is detected.
- d. Retransmit the test to the CODES WBU.

The MFPC must report all other test anomalies to the service center for inclusion on the anomaly log. Additionally, when substantial errors cannot be corrected, the MFPC must contact the service center to determine whether to reschedule the test. For procedure or mail identification errors, the MFPC must provide training for the data collector to correct any known deficiencies.

9-3.5 Approving Tests

The MFPC can designate and train a data collector to review and approve CCCS tests. An employee who edits a test cannot also review and approve the test — two different trained employees must do these tasks.

The MFPC must approve CCCS tests only after the review is complete and only after errors are corrected or reported, if applicable.

For further instructions on test review, the MFPC must contact the service center.

9-3.6 Reviewing and Approving Completed PS Form 2846

The MFPC or another trained employee reviews all CCCS collection tests for accuracy and approval. The collection test approval process is independent of the delivery test approval process.

- a. After data entry, the MFPC must review the form and the CODES WBU collection data to ensure proper entry on the proper form:
 - (1) The postmaster used the current version of PS Form 2846.
 - (2) All information was entered properly.
 - (3) No questionable entries are present.
- b. Discuss any questionable entries or entries with incomplete or inconsistent items with the postmaster who signed the PS Form 2846.
- c. After verifying all collection test data, click the *Approve 2846* button on the Sample Control Info screen in the CODES WBU. (The CODES WBU system allows collection tests to be transmitted only after they are approved.)
- d. When available, select a trained person (other than the data collector who conducted the test) to review and approve the collection tests. An employee who edits a test cannot also review and approve the test — two different trained employees must do these tasks.

9-4 CODES WBU Review and Approval Policy for RCCS Tests

9-4.1 Overview

Since accurate and consistent data collection is important, all Statistical Programs employees must follow several rules in order to ensure that the Rural Carrier Cost System (RCCS) test data are accurate. This section outlines and explains specific rules and policies for reviewing RCCS test data.

The MFPC must review RCCS test data before approval for USPS Headquarters processing. The reviewer and approver must be trained employees and cannot be the data collector who completed the RCCS test. An employee who edits a test cannot also review and approve the test — two different trained employees must do these tasks.

9-4.2 **CODES WBU Reports**

When the data collector uploads a RCCS test to the CODES WBU, two reports are generated:

- a. The Rural Summary report shows route weighted volume by products and shapes, warnings for unusual volumes or entries (if applicable), and detail listings that include key variables and comments.
- b. The Rural Test report does not show any data summaries or warnings, but displays nearly all data elements for each entry sent from the laptop.

9-4.3 **Reviewing RCCS Tests**

The MFPC is responsible for reviewing the Rural Summary report for each test for possible keying problems by the data collector. A review of the report must include the following actions:

- a. Review the administrative data for accuracy.
- b. Review Test Summaries for unusual test volumes:
 - (1) Extremely small or large volumes for the route.
 - (2) Unusually high volumes for low-volume products, such as Priority Mail Express.
 - (3) End-of-Run (EOR) volumes that differ substantially from estimates for Delivery Point Sequence (DPS) letters.
- c. Investigate and verify any warnings for unusual entries:
 - (1) Review comments entered by the data collector explaining or verifying unusual entries.
 - (2) If the data collector's comments do not provide verification, enter comments before approval.
- d. Review detail listings for unusual entries (use the Rural Test report to get more details):
 - (1) Verify all domestic and international Express entries using Arrival at Unit (AAU) scan data.
 - (2) Review data entry times for consistency.

9-4.4 **Data Anomalies**

If the MFPC detects an error during the review of the test, and the error is correctable on the laptop, the MFPC may perform the following tasks:

- a. Delete the test in the CODES WBU.
- b. Unarchive the test on the laptop.
- c. Correct the error that is detected.
- d. Retransmit the test to the CODES WBU.

The MFPC must report all other test anomalies to the service center for inclusion on the anomaly log. Additionally, when substantial errors cannot be corrected, the MFPC must contact the service center to determine whether to reschedule the test. For procedure or mail identification errors, the MFPC must provide training for the data collector to correct any known deficiencies.

9-4.5 Approving Tests

The MFPC can designate and train a data collector to review and approve RCCS tests. An employee who edits a test cannot also review and approve the test — two different trained employees must do these tasks.

The MFPC must approve RCCS tests only after the review is complete and only after errors are corrected or reported, if applicable.

For further instructions on test review, the MFPC must contact the service center.

9-4.6 Reviewing and Approving Completed PS Form 2848

The MFPC must approve RCCS tests only after the review is complete and only after errors are corrected or reported, if applicable. The reviewer and approver must be trained employees and cannot be the data collector who completed the RCCS test. An employee who edits a test cannot also review and approve the test — two different trained employees must do these tasks.

The collection test approval process is independent of the delivery test approval process. The MFPC or another trained employee reviews all RCCS collection tests for accuracy and approval as follows:

- a. After data entry, review PS Form 2848 and the CODES WBU collection data to ensure proper entry on the proper form:
 - (1) The postmaster used the current version of PS Form 2848.
 - (2) All Information was entered properly.
 - (3) No questionable entries are present.
- b. Discuss any questionable entries or any entries with incomplete or inconsistent items with the postmaster who signed the PS Form 2848.
- c. After verifying all collection test data, click on the *Approve 2848* button in the Sample Control Info screen in the CODES WBU. (The CODES WBU system allows collection tests to be transmitted only after they are approved.)
- d. When available, select a trained employee (other than the keyer) to review and approve the collection tests. An employee who edits a test cannot also review and approve the test — two different trained employees must do these tasks.

9-5 CODES WBU Review and Approval Policy for TRACS Tests

9-5.1 Overview

Accurate and consistent data collection is important, so all Statistical Programs employees must follow several rules to ensure that the Transportation Cost System (TRACS) test data are accurate. This section outlines and explains specific rules and policies for reviewing TRACS test data.

The MFPC must review TRACS test data before approving it for USPS Headquarters processing.

9-5.2 Test Data Report

When the data collector uploads a TRACS test from the laptop to the CODES WBU, the MFPC must print and review a Test Data report before transferring the data to the mainframe. TRACS has two different types of tests — TRACS Surface Tests and TRACS Air Tests:

- a. *TRACS Surface Tests*: The MFPC focuses the review on the following areas:
 - (1) That the number of containers sampled equals the targeted number to be sampled.
 - (2) That the replacement vehicle is appropriately selected (i.e., same contract and HCR route type).
 - (3) That the item weights and tare weights appear within average.
 - (4) That the origin facility codes for items and pallets appear within average.
 - (5) That the mail categories found on pallets appear within average.
- b. *TRACS Air Tests*: The MFPC focuses the review on the following areas:
 - (1) That the number of items sampled equals the targeted number to be sampled.
 - (2) That the item weights and mailpiece weights appear within average.
 - (3) That the mailpieces found in international sacks appear within typical categories.

9-5.3 Data Anomalies

If the MFPC detects an error while reviewing the test and can correct the error on the laptop, the MFPC may perform the following tasks:

- a. Delete the test in the CODES WBU.
- b. Unarchive the test on the laptop.
- c. Correct the error that is detected.
- d. Retransmit the test to the CODES WBU.

The MFPC must report all other test anomalies to the service center for inclusion on the anomaly log. Additionally, when substantial errors cannot be corrected, the MFPC must contact the service center to determine whether to reschedule the test. For procedure or mail identification errors, the MFPC must provide training for the data collector to correct any known deficiencies.

9-6 CODES WBU Review and Approval Policy for SIRVO-IODIS Tests

9-6.1 Overview

Accurate and consistent data collection is important, so all Statistical Programs employees must follow several rules to ensure that the SIRVO-IODIS test data are accurate. This section outlines and explains specific rules and policies for reviewing SIRVO-IODIS test data.

The MFPC must review SIRVO-IODIS test data before approval for USPS Headquarters processing. The MFPC may also designate and train a data collector to review and approve SIRVO-IODIS tests. An employee who edits a test cannot also review and approve the test — two different trained employees must do these tasks.

9-6.2 Test Report

The MFPC uses the following procedures to review each SIRVO-IODIS test in the WBU:

- a. Review the Test Summary for accuracy of the following information in the report:
 - (1) The data collector EIN. Each data collector must use his or her unique EIN.
 - (2) The actual test date.
 - (3) The original test date.
 - (4) Scanner attached: “0” means “No”; “1” means “Yes.”
 - (5) Scale attached: “0” means “No”; “1” means “Yes.”
 - (6) Weight units: pounds and ounces.
- b. Review the following Receptacle Summary information for accuracy:
 - (1) The data collector EIN and entry date (under the “TD Stamp” column). Each data collector must use his or her unique EIN.
 - (2) The scanned and scale entry. The data collector must use a scanner and scale if available — if not, the MFPC must check with the data collector and correct for future use.
 - (3) The destination country, label class, mail category/transportation mode, and receptacle type. These must be consistent with the target characteristics of the test, as shown in the Test Summary.

Note: If there is a “Destination Country Mismatch” or “Class Mismatch,” the WBU displays an error code below the barcode display.

Note: Label classes used in the test report represent groups of label classes/mail subclasses as follows: “LP” represents the letter-post mail subclasses UA, UL, UN, and UX, and “CP” represents the parcel post mail subclasses CN and CC. (“CP” is the abbreviation for the French term “colis postal,” which refers to parcel post.)

- (4) The remaining elements of the receptacle summary. These elements must be complete, except that the “No. of Reported Items” might not be present for non-CP receptacles.
- (5) The number of content items and the average weight. This information must appear reasonable for the label class and receptacle type and for the product listed.
Note: The CODES WBU displays the difference between the cumulative content weight and the actual net weight on the bottom right of a receptacle’s display. However, for bulk containers, CODES does not show this comparison because data collectors perform a subsample of the items.
- (6) The number of service pieces. This number must be within 10 percent of the number of target pieces, as requested in the software. For letter-post tests, SIRVO-IODIS generally seeks 50 service pieces for letter trays, and 20 service pieces for flats trays.
- (7) The number of receptacles. Compare the number of receptacles to the “# Receptacles Selected” in the SIRVO-IODIS Test Results screen — these numbers must match. If the numbers do not match, contact the MFPC (see item 7c).
Note: The “# of Receptacles Selected” in the SIRVO-IODIS Test Results screen displays all “Open,” “Returned,” and “Modified” receptacles shown in the Receptacle Results screen. The number of receptacles might not match in this comparison because the “Open” receptacles do not appear in the CODES WBU.

If there are issues related to the above checks, the MFPC must take one of the following actions, as appropriate:

- a. If any Receptacle Summary element is incomplete, the MFPC must edit the test on the laptop using the GBS-Dispatch information from the receptacle label and must re-transmit the test.
- b. If the difference between the cumulative content weight and the actual net weight is greater than 10 percent (except for bulk containers), the MFPC must contact the data collector to correct this issue for future tests. The MFPC must delete this receptacle from the test data.
- c. If there is a difference in the two numbers of receptacles (i.e., the number of receptacles sampled and the “# Receptacles Selected” in the SIRVO-IODIS Test Results screen), the MFPC must go into GBS’s Receptacles Results screen to obtain the number of “Returned” and “Modified” receptacles related to the Test ID. The number of receptacles in the CODES WBU must match the number of “Returned” and “Modified” receptacles — if these numbers match, the MFPC may accept the test, but if they do not match, the MFPC must work with the data collector to identify and correct the discrepancy. Also, heed the following information and instructions as necessary:
 - (1) The “Returned” receptacles might include a replacement receptacle. Therefore, the receptacles in the CODES WBU and in GBS for the intended mailstream might not be the same.

- (2) For “Modified” receptacles, the barcodes in the CODES WBU and GBS must match, except for the weight (which is represented in the final four digits of the barcode). The data collector is able to modify the receptacle’s barcode weight in GBS, generally for removing missent or shortpaid mail. Do not modify the original barcode weight in the CODES WBU.
- (3) In the GBS Receptacle Selection screen, delete each “Open” receptacle that is not returned, modified, or deleted after 3 days from its selection.

Contact the service center for guidance on how to handle tests or receptacles recorded in error.

9-7 CODES WBU Review and Approval Policy for SIRVI Tests

9-7.1 Overview

Accurate and consistent data collection is important, so all Statistical Programs employees must follow several rules to ensure that the SIRVI test data are accurate. This section outlines and explains specific rules and policies for reviewing SIRVI test data.

The MFPC must review SIRVI test data for SIRVI Letter-post Daily and Monthly tests before approval for USPS Headquarters processing. The MFPC may also designate and train a data collector to review and approve SIRVI tests. An employee who edits a test cannot also review and approve the test — two different trained employees must do these tasks.

9-7.2 Test Report

The MFPC uses the following procedures to review each SIRVI test from the CODES WBU in the Consolidated Receptacle Contents screen:

- a. Review the Test Summary for accuracy of the following information in the report:
 - (1) The data collector EIN. Each data collector must use his or her unique EIN.
 - (2) The actual test date.
 - (3) The original test date.

Note: This is the same as the actual test date, as SIRVI tests are not rescheduled.
 - (4) Scanner attached: “0” means “No”; “1” means “Yes.”
 - (5) Scale attached: “0” means “No”; “1” means “Yes.”
 - (6) Weight units: kilograms (kg) and grams.
 - (7) The number of receptacles. This information must appear reasonable for the site.

- b. Review the following Receptacle Summary information for accuracy:
- (1) The data collector EIN and entry date (under the “Entry TD Stamp” column). Each data collector must use his or her unique EIN.
 - (2) The scanned and scale entry. The data collector must use a scanner and scale if available — if not, the MFPC must check with the data collector and correct for future use.
 - (3) The label class. For each receptacle, this information must be consistent with the SIRVI letter-post (“LP”) mail subclasses UA, UB, UL, UN, and UP.
 - (4) The dispatch number, receptacle number, reported weight, and actual net weight.
 - (5) The number of content pieces by receptacle type. The information must be consistent with the given receptacle type and weight. For example, letter trays generally contain several hundred mailpieces, whereas flats trays generally contain fewer than a hundred pieces. Bags have a greater variation. This review step is only to identify and potentially address unusual piece counts (e.g., a non-bulk container having more than 1,000 mailpieces, or one item in a letter tray or flats tray).
 - (6) The number of receptacles. Compare the number of receptacles to the “# of Selected Receptacles” column of the GBS-Receipt, SIRVI Test Maintenance screen. If the number of receptacles in the CODES WBU report is the same or higher than GBS, you may approve the test. The CODES WBU’s number of receptacles is likely larger because the receptacles selected for the SIRVI monthly tests (Test IDs ending in “00”) appear in CODES under the daily Test ID for the day the sample selection occurred.
- Note:** The “# of Selected Receptacles” on the GBS-Receipt, SIRVI Test Maintenance screen displays all “Open” and “Returned” receptacles from the Receptacle Selection screen.

If there are issues related to the above checks, the MFPC must take one of the following actions, as appropriate:

- a. If any Receptacle Summary elements are incomplete, the MFPC must edit the test on the laptop using the GBS-Dispatch information from the receptacle label and must re-transmit the test.
 - b. If the difference between the cumulative content weight and the actual net weight is greater than 10 percent (except for bulk containers), the MFPC must contact the data collector to correct this issue for future tests. The MFPC must delete this receptacle from the test data.
- Note:** The CODES WBU displays the difference between the cumulative content weight and the actual net weight immediately below the receptacle’s barcode.
- c. The average weight by shape must be within the range of the minimum and maximum allowed. During the test, if the shape data exceeds the weight range, a warning screen appears, and the data collector is

expected to correct the entry at that time. However, if the average weight of the shape exceeds the shape's maximum weight, the data collector must record the item as the next shape. If an individual data collector frequently exceeds this requirement, the MFPC must contact the data collector to correct this issue for future tests.

Note: If the data collector failed to respond to the warning screen, the report puts asterisks (***) next to the "Average Weight (Kg.)."

- d. If the CODES WBU's number of total receptacles is less than GBS's "# of Selected Receptacle," use the GBS Receptacle Selection screen to filter out "Open" receptacles. The number of receptacles in the CODES WBU is expected to equal or be higher than the number of "Returned" receptacles for the Test ID in GBS — if so, the MFPC may accept the test, but if not, the MFPC must work with the data collector to identify and correct the discrepancy by comparing the receptacles in the CODES WBU Consolidated Report and the SIRVI Sampling Receptacle Results. Also, heed the following information and instructions as necessary:
 - (1) The barcodes in the CODES WBU and GBS might not match because the "Returned" receptacles in GBS might actually be represented by replacements in the CODES WBU. If operations does not hold GBS-selected receptacles, the data collector must obtain replacement receptacles with the same mail characteristics. After sampling the replacement receptacles, the data collector must "return" the receptacle in GBS so that the system does not select an extra receptacle for that mailstream.
 - (2) In the Receptacle Selection screen, delete each "Open" receptacle that is not returned or deleted after 3 days from its selection.

Contact the service center for guidance on how to handle tests or receptacles recorded in error.

9-8 CODES WBU Review and Approval Policy for IOCS Tests

9-8.1 Overview

Since accurate and consistent data collection is important, all Statistical Programs employees must follow several rules in order to ensure that the In-Office Cost System (IOCS) test data are accurate. This section outlines and explains specific rules and policies for reviewing IOCS test data.

The MFPC must review and document IOCS test data (readings) before approval for USPS Headquarters processing. The MFPC may also designate and train a data collector to review and approve IOCS tests. An employee who edits a test cannot also review and approve the test — two different trained employees must do these tasks.

9-8.2 Reviewing Tests

The MFPC uses the following procedures to review groups of IOCS readings:

- a. Review at least one reading per quarter for each data collector.
- b. For each data collector who has a data recording error in the IOCS/TACS Exception Report, review a minimum of five readings per quarter.

9-8.3 Test Data Review Criteria

Summary reports are generated when a data collector uploads an IOCS reading to the CODES WBU. The MFPC is responsible for reviewing the summary reports for each reading. Review the summary reports for the following information:

- a. *EIN Validation Report tab*: Ensure that the EIN is valid.
- b. *Report tab*: Ensure that the following information is valid:
 - (1) IOCS software version number.
 - (2) Roster designation.
 - (3) Pay status.
 - (4) Begin time.
 - (5) End time.
 - (6) Time and duration of the reading.
 - (7) Questions/Answers:
 - Facility.
 - Operation number.
 - Barcodes (if necessary, correct for the item type).
 - Item counts and contents of container.
 - Logical flow — internal consistency of the data (e.g., mail class is consistent with the time of day).
 - Missing test data (e.g., Publication Number/ISSN).
 - (8) Remarks.

9-8.4 Readings With Errors

For a reading that has errors, the MFPC must perform the following tasks based on whether the reading has been approved or not:

- a. *Before approval*: Delete and reschedule the reading according to the policy outlined in [4-7.3](#).
- b. *After approval*: Perform the following tasks:
 - (1) Contact the service center and report the relevant reading information for inclusion on the Anomaly Log.
 - (2) Follow up with the data collector as follows:
 - Review errors.
 - Provide appropriate training.

- As soon as appropriate, review five readings.
- Maintain documentation: exception reports, reading reviews, training, and error resolution.

9-9 Reports and News Items

9-9.1 Status Reports

9-9.1.1 Availability

Test status is available on demand from the CODES WBU at <http://statprog.usps.gov/NewEcodes/resources/welcome.html>. Approval to enter the Statistical Programs Web Base Unit application is available via eAccess. To review test status, click on *Consolidated Samples*. The CODES WBU sorts tests by Test ID and date, and provides details about tests that are received, approved, rescheduled, or canceled.

9-9.1.2 MFPC Responsibilities

The following are the MFPC responsibilities regarding tests:

- a. Check the status of tests against unit activities. When a discrepancy is present, contact the service center to request that the records are updated properly. In some cases, the service center might require retransmission of test data.
- b. Monitor tests under the categories Canceled, Rescheduled, Delinquent, and Pending — all sorted by test ID and date. Status reports are available weekly, and the MFPC receives reports specific to the district.
- c. Just as in the CODES WBU, check the test status against the unit's activities. Sometimes, the mainframe fails to receive updates regarding Canceled, Rescheduled, Delinquent, or Pending tests. The MFPC can know this only by reviewing the status reports and checking them against unit records. When a discrepancy is present, the MFPC must contact the service center to request that the records are updated properly. In some cases, the service center might require retransmission of test data.

9-9.1.3 Anomaly Log Web Site

9-9.1.3.1 Overview

A data anomaly is any problem or irregularity that compromises the accuracy of the test or reading data.

The Statistical Programs Web site has a form available for recording anomaly log entries at <http://56.76.46.97/anomaly>. There is also a link to this form on the Statistical Programs Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/welcome.htm> — under “Quick links,” click on *Anomaly Log*.

Use this form to contact the service center regarding any data anomalies in Statistical Programs tests or readings. A data collector may not submit an anomaly request for his or her own test.~~Employees use the form at this site to contact the service center regarding any data anomalies in Statistical Programs tests or readings.~~

The following sections discuss some anomalies.

9-9.1.3.2 **Missed Mail**

9-9.1.3.2.1 **Overview**

“Missed mail” is mail that is eligible for the test but that is not isolated for testing. If the data collector missed any amount of mail during a test, contact the service center via the anomaly log. During a test, missed mail can occur between cutoff times and/or outside cutoff times.

9-9.1.3.2.2 **Missed Mail Between Cutoff Times**

Missed mail includes mail that arrives at the facility between the cutoff times but is not included in the test. This could happen for several reasons:

- a. Mail is not isolated and tagged properly.
- b. Mail is worked before it can be tested.
- c. Mail is excluded from the test in error.

If mail that arrived between the cutoff times was not included in the test, contact the service center.

9-9.1.3.2.3 **Missed Mail Outside Cutoff Times**

Mail may also be considered missed even when it is not available for testing between the cutoff times. This could happen if the mail arrives late (after the ending cutoff time) and would not have an opportunity to be sampled if the same MEP were tested the next day.

To determine whether the late-arriving mail would be missed if the same MEP were tested the next day, consider the following two questions:

- a. Would the data collector be at the facility to test the mail when it arrived?
- b. Could Operations hold the mail until the data collector arrived?

If the answer to both of these questions is “No,” then this mail would never be included in any test and could be missed. If mail is missed because it arrived outside the cutoff times, contact the service center.

Example: The MEP to be tested is all letter mail for the station, and the cutoff times are 0900–0900 hours. The data collector usually arrives at 0500 hours. The DPS mail normally arrives at the facility at 0730 hours. Due to a machine breakdown on the day of the test, the DPS mail does not arrive at the facility until 0930 hours, after the ending cutoff time. Because this mail did not arrive within the cutoff times for the test, it must not be recorded on this test. And because the same MEP is to be tested the next day, this mail must not be included on any test. Also, this mail must not be included for two other reasons: because the data collector would not be at the facility yet, and because the DPS mail could not be held until the next day to be sampled. This mail is considered missed, and the MFPC must notify the service center and review whether to change the cutoff times.

9-9.1.3.3 Other Anomalies

The following are other examples of anomalies:

- a. *Improper data collection or entry:* Any compromised test or reading data entered as a result of mail isolation errors or data entry errors.
- b. *Hardware issues:* Any issue with the scale, scanner, or laptop that affected the test or reading data. In addition to reporting the anomaly, contact CODES Support for assistance.
- c. *Test location:* Any change in test location from the test facility indicated on the Header.
- d. *General anomalies:* Any miscellaneous issue that is found in the individual test record analysis or comments from the data collector that the program manager should be aware of for further review or investigation, such as a mailpiece with dimensions that the software will not accept.

9-9.1.3.4 Correcting and Approving Anomalies

If the anomaly is correctable on the laptop, the MFPC may delete the test on the CODES WBU, unarchive the test on the laptop, correct the error, and retransmit the test to the CODES WBU. The MFPC must enter all other test anomalies in the service center Anomaly Log before approving the corresponding test or reading.

The service center either approves or disapproves each anomaly. If the service center denies an anomaly, it will send an e-mail to the MFPC and SSP with an explanation. The MFPC must enter anomalies before the end of the month in which the test or reading was conducted — for tests or readings scheduled for the last day of the month, the MFPC must enter anomalies by 8:00 P.M. ET on the first day of the next month. Additionally, if the MFPC detects substantial errors, the MFPC must contact the service center to determine whether to reschedule the test. For procedure or mail identification errors, the MFPC must provide training to the data collector to correct any known deficiencies.

9-9.1.4 CODES Data Transmission Schedule

CODES sites are required to transmit data to the mainframe on a regular basis according to the schedule in [Exhibit 8-2.2.4.1](#).

9-9.1.5 Failed Transmission

A failed transmission can occur for a variety of reasons. Properly completed tests not received by the mainframe appear as Missing tests in the weekly status report. The MFPC must review these reports weekly and must implement a review and follow-up process for the weekly status reports.

9-9.2 Statistical Programs News Items

USPS Headquarters compiles news items and makes them available on several sites:

- a. On the Statistical Programs Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/news.htm>.

- b. On the CODES WBU Web site at <http://statprog.usps.gov/NewEcodes/resources/welcome.html>.

News items provide a way for USPS Headquarters to communicate informally with the districts, so the MFPC must review news items carefully for important updates and information, including the following:

- a. Updates and clarification of policy issues.
- b. Information about software releases.

The MFPC is responsible for reviewing news items daily in order to implement any new policies and procedures or to make changes to standard operations.

Example: The MFPC has a procedural question related to a new postage technology in the district. Because the technology is new, the CODES software has not accounted for it yet, and no training materials are available yet. The MFPC contacts the service center to find out what the district staff should do. After considering the question, USPS Headquarters Statistical Programs staff may use a news item to broadcast the question and the answer to all districts.

9-9.3 **Test and Statistics Report**

The CODES WBU generates the Test Status and Statistics Report (TSSR), which provides test accomplishments, including statistics on Rescheduled, Canceled, Zero Volume, and Delinquent tests. The TSSR provides statistics by district, area, and nation. With this report, Statistical Programs personnel can review district performance and focus attention and resources appropriately.

TSSR reports are available to the service center, the MFPC, and other personnel on the CODES WBU. The MFPC uses TSSR reports to assess the district's own rates of Rescheduled, Canceled, and Missed tests. If the district's rates are high, the MFPC might want to review procedures and restructure assignments to resolve any issues.

Appendix A

Sample Letter to Inform the Postmaster of a CCCS Test

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
315 DISTRICT RD
ANY DISTRICT, ST 99999-9998

DATE: ~~August-September 13~~, 201209

TO: POSTMASTER JONES
US POSTAL SERVICE
119 W 4th ST
APPLETON CITY MO 64724-9998

SUBJECT: City Carrier Cost System (CCCS), Quarter (1, 2, 3, 4 as appropriate)

Attached is the schedule of City Carrier route tests to be taken at your office during Quarter_____.

A data collector from the Statistical Programs Unit will contact you, one or two days before each scheduled test, to determine the time the carrier for the route to test arrives in the office. On the test date, the data collector will arrive approximately one hour before the carrier.

The test should not delay the carrier. The carrier union is aware of these tests, and the assistance required of the carrier in completing the test. The CCCS test is used only to classify mail delivered by carriers.

This is not a test of the carrier; the test is designed to aid in the distribution of costs.

Please inform the carrier of the route selected for testing.

Your cooperation and assistance are appreciated.

John Doe
Manager, Finance

Attachment

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Appendix B

Sample Letter to Inform the Postmaster of an RCCS Test

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
315 DISTRICT RD
ANY DISTRICT, ST 99999-9998

DATE: ~~August~~ September

~~13~~, 20~~19~~20

TO: POSTMASTER JONES
US POSTAL SERVICE
119 W 4th STREET
APPLETON CITY MO 64724-9998

SUBJECT: Rural Carrier Cost System (RCCS) Quarter (1, 2, 3, 4 as appropriate)

Attached is a schedule of Rural Carrier route tests to be taken at your office during Quarter ____.

A data collector from the Statistical Programs unit will contact you one or two days before each scheduled test to explain the test, and clarify the help and information required to complete the test. At that time, the data collector will also ask to speak to the carrier, and the supervisor, to obtain information about the route, mail arrival times and personnel working with the mail. On the test date, the data collector will arrive approximately one hour prior to the carrier's arrival to begin sampling the mail. The data collector will interfere as little as possible with the work of the carrier.

The data collector may ask the carrier for some minor assistance while conducting the test, such as identifying mail for the route. The carrier union is aware of these tests.

This test could possibly delay the carrier. The carrier will be compensated for any delay at the carrier's average pay rate. The data collector will ask both the carrier and you to sign PS Form 2847 to cover any additional time required by the test.

You will be asked to participate in the carrier test, which should require only a few minutes. When the carrier returns from the route, you will need to record information about the mail collected on the test route, on the test day. Please inform the carrier of the route selected for the test.

Your cooperation and assistance are appreciated.

John Doe
Manager, Finance
Attachment

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