

Ohio 2 District: Delivery Operations

AUDIT REPORT

Report Number 24-148-R25 | February 4, 2025



**Corryville
Station**



**Fairfield
Branch**



**Mid City
Carrier Annex**



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OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

February 4, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR: DONALD D. KRAVOS
MANAGER, OHIO 2 DISTRICT

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sean Balduff", is centered below the memorandum header.

FROM: Sean Balduff
Director, Field Operations, Central & Southern

SUBJECT: Audit Report – Ohio 2 District: Delivery Operations
(Report Number 24-148-R25)

This report presents the results of our audits of delivery operations and property conditions in the Ohio 2 District in the Central Area.

All recommendations require U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) concurrence before closure. Consequently, the OIG requests written confirmation when corrective actions are completed. Recommendation 1 should not be closed in the Postal Service's follow-up tracking system until the OIG provides written confirmation that the recommendation can be closed. We consider recommendation 2 closed with issuance of this report.

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesies provided by your staff. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Valeta Bradford, Audit Manager, or me at 703-248-2100.

Attachment

cc: Postmaster General
Chief Retail & Delivery Officer & Executive Vice President
Vice President, Delivery Operations
Vice President, Retail & Post Office Operations
Vice President, Central Area Retail & Delivery Operations
Director, Retail & Post Office Operations Maintenance
Corporate Audit and Response Management

Results

Background

The U.S. Postal Service’s mission is to provide timely, reliable, secure, and affordable mail and package delivery to more than 160 million residential and business addresses across the country. To fulfill this role, the Postal Service is committed to ensuring its delivery platform and services are always a trusted, visible, and valued part of America’s social and economic infrastructure. This includes leveraging people, technology, and systems to provide world-class visibility of mail and packages as they move through the Postal Service’s integrated system. The U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) reviews delivery operations at facilities across the country and provides management with timely feedback in furtherance of this mission.

This report presents a summary of the results of our audits of delivery operations and property conditions at three delivery units, as well as district-wide delivery operations in the Ohio 2 District in the Central Area (Project Number 24-148). The delivery units included the Corryville Station, Fairfield Branch, and Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex in Ohio.

We previously issued interim reports¹ to district management for each of the three delivery units regarding the conditions we identified. In addition, we issued a report on the efficiency of operations at the Cincinnati Processing and Distribution Center (P&DC) and Network Distribution Center (NDC),² which services these delivery units.

We judgmentally selected the three delivery units based on the number of Customer 360³ (C360) inquiries related to delivery,⁴ Informed Delivery⁵ contacts associated with the unit, and stop-the-clock (STC)⁶ scans performed away from the delivery point and compared them to the district average. The units were also chosen based on first and last mile failures⁷ and undelivered routes.

These three delivery units had a total of 147 city routes and 12 rural routes that served about 247,190 people in several ZIP Codes (see Table 1). Specifically, of the people living in these ZIP Codes, 242,643 (98 percent) live in urban communities and 4,547 (2 percent) live in rural communities.⁸

Table 1. Service Area and Population

Delivery Units	Service Area and ZIP Codes	Population	City Routes	Rural Routes
Corryville Station	45219, 45220, 45223, and 45225	57,350	30	0
Fairfield Branch	45011, 45014, and 45015*	136,294	69	12
Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex	45202, 45203, 45204, 45205, and 45214	53,546	48	0
Total		247,190	147	12

Source: OIG analysis of Postal Service National Labeling List and Census data.
*Note: Fairfield Branch also services ZIP Code 45018 for Post Office Boxes.

1 Corryville Station, Cincinnati, OH: Delivery Operations (Report Number 24-148-1-R25, dated December 4, 2024); Fairfield Branch, Fairfield, OH: Delivery Operations (Report Number 24-148-2-R25, dated December 4, 2024); and Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex, Cincinnati, OH: Delivery Operations (Report Number 24-148-3-R25, dated December 4, 2024).

2 Efficiency of Operations at the Cincinnati Processing and Distribution Center and Network Distribution Center, Cincinnati, OH (Report Number 24-147-R25, dated December 4, 2024).

3 A cloud-based application that enables Postal Service employees to diagnose, resolve, and track customer inquiries.

4 A compilation of package inquiry, package pickup, daily mail service, and hold mail inquiries.

5 Informed Delivery is a free and optional notification service that gives residential customers the ability to digitally preview their letter-sized mail and submit inquiries for mailpieces that were expected for delivery but have not arrived.

6 A scan event that indicates the Postal Service has completed its commitment to deliver or attempt to deliver the mail piece. Examples of STC scans include “Delivered,” “Available for Pickup,” and “Delivery Attempted-No Access to Delivery Location.”

7 First mile failures occur when a mailpiece is collected and does not receive a processing scan at the P&DC on the day that it was intended. Last mile failures occur after the mailpiece has been processed at the plant on a final processing operation and is not delivered to the customer on the day it was intended.

8 We obtained ZIP Code information related to population and urban/rural classification from 2020 Census Bureau information.

We conducted a text analysis of C360 inquiries for the entire Ohio 2 District between October 1, 2023, and October 31, 2024. In total, we reviewed and categorized the customer notes for 105,616 inquiries.⁹ See Figure 1 for the results.

Package delivery, mail delivery, and package scanning issues made up the majority of the C360 comments. Examples of customer comments from these categories included:

- Receiving “delivered” scans for packages that were not delivered.
- Not receiving mail delivery for several days in a row.
- Not receiving all intended mail each delivery day.

We also analyzed the Postal Service’s Triangulation Report¹⁰ to determine how the Ohio 2 District performed for mail and package delivery in relation to all 50 Postal Service districts. Each day, the Postal Service provides an opportunity ranking that

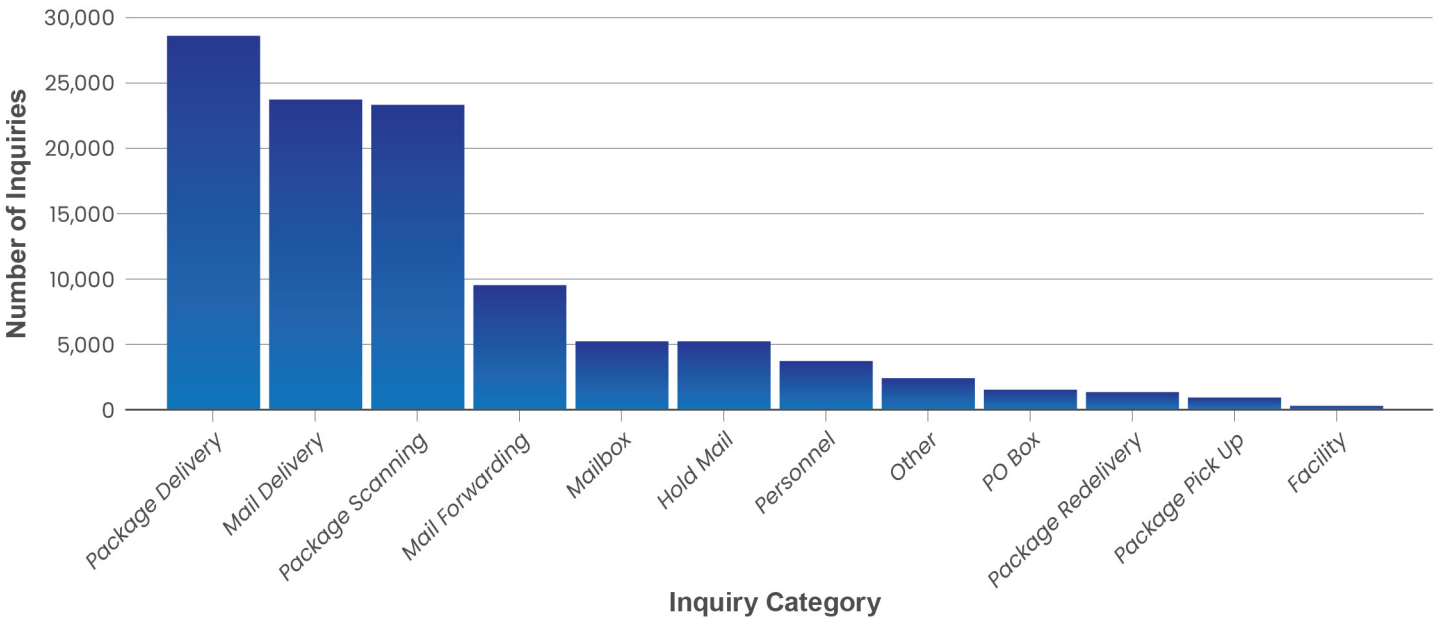
lists all 50 districts from 1 through 50, where 1 indicates the lowest performing district and 50 is the top performing district. For the period from September 1 through November 30, 2024, the Ohio 2 District had an average rank of 31 for mail delivery and 34 for package delivery, placing this district above average for both mail and package delivery. See Table 2 for the results of our analysis.

Table 2. Ohio 2 District Average Ranking Compared to All 50 Districts

Month	Mail Delivery Opportunity Rank	Package Delivery Opportunity Rank
September	31	35
October	31	32
November	30	34
Average	31	34

Source: Postal Service Triangulation Report.

Figure 1. C360 Inquiry Analysis



Source: OIG analysis of C360 inquiries.

⁹ We analyzed 152,503 inquiries and excluded 29,794 voice messages, 11,870 text messages with less than or equal to 40 characters, and 5,223 outliers—resulting in 105,616 records used to create the model by category.

¹⁰ The Triangulation Report is designed to provide the health of operations within a delivery unit regarding mail and package delivery. The report includes an analysis of several key performance indicators including C360 inquiries, first and last mile failures, route coverage, employee availability, and scanning integrity.

In addition, we analyzed employee retention data obtained from Workforce¹¹ for the Ohio 2 District. From October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, the Ohio 2 District hired a total of 2,258 carriers and clerks. Of those hired during this time, 729 (32 percent) were no longer employed in the district as of December 13, 2024. Furthermore, the district had 584 authorized executive and administrative level positions of which 559 employees (4.3 percent vacancy rate) were on the rolls as of December 13, 2024. The district manager stated the district participates in job fairs, advertises vacancy announcements on various social media platforms, and uses Every Door Direct Mail to target specific locations for potential applicants. The district also actively pursues military veterans to fill vacancies by visiting Veterans of Foreign Wars legion halls.

Objective, Scope, and Methodology

Our objective was to evaluate mail delivery operations in the Ohio 2 District of the Central Area.

To accomplish our objective, we focused on the following audit areas: delayed mail, package scanning, arrow keys,¹² carrier separations and transfers, and property safety and security conditions. Specifically, we reviewed delivery metrics, including the number of routes and carriers, mail arrival time, amount of reported delayed mail, package scanning, and carrier complement. During our site

visit we observed mail conditions; package scanning procedures; arrow key security procedures; employee separation procedures; and unit safety and security conditions. We also analyzed the scan status of mailpieces at the carrier cases and interviewed unit management and employees.

In addition to summarizing our findings at the three delivery units, we analyzed service performance scores for First-Class Mail, Marketing Mail, Priority Mail,¹³ and Ground Advantage¹⁴ products, and reviewed carrier and clerk retention levels within the Ohio 2 District. We discussed our observations and conclusions, as summarized in Table 3, with management on January 22, 2025, and included its comments, where appropriate. See [Appendix A](#) for additional information about our scope and methodology.

Results Summary

We identified issues related to service performance across the Ohio 2 District, and issues affecting delivery operations and property conditions at all three delivery units audited. Specifically, we found delayed mail and deficiencies with package scanning, arrow key management, and property conditions at all three units. We also found deficiencies with separation of packages for dispatch and contractor badges at one of the three units (see Table 3).

Table 3. Summary of Issues Identified

Controls Reviewed	Deficiencies Identified – Yes or No		
	Corryville Station	Fairfield Branch	Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex
Delayed Mail	Yes	Yes	Yes
Package Scanning and Handling	Yes	Yes	Yes
Arrow Keys	Yes	Yes	Yes
Carrier Separations and Transfers	No	No	No
Property Conditions	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other Issues: Separation of Packages for Dispatch & Contractor Badges	No	Yes	No

Source: Interim reports for selected units.

11 Workforce is a centralized hub that links to staff planning, insights, and analytics.
12 A distinctively shaped key carriers use to open mail-receiving receptacles, such as street collection boxes and panels of apartment house mailboxes equipped with an arrow lock. Arrow keys are accountable property and are subject to strict controls.
13 An expedited service for shipping mailable matter, subject to certain standards, such as size and weight limits, that includes tracking and delivery in one to three expected business days.
14 A service providing an affordable and reliable way to send packages inside the U.S. Packages under 70 pounds arrive in two to five business days.

Finding #1: Service Performance in the Ohio 2 District

What We Found

We visited three delivery units in the Ohio 2 District on the morning of September 10, 2024, and identified about 14,003 pieces of delayed mail from the prior day.¹⁵ See Table 4 for the number of pieces for each mail type and Figure 2 for an example of delayed mail

found at a unit. Management at these three units did not report this mail as undelivered in the Delivery Condition Visualization (DCV)¹⁶ system. In addition, only one carrier from the three units completed the Postal Service (PS) Form 1571, *Undelivered Mail Report*,¹⁷ to document undelivered mailpieces.

Table 4. Type of Delayed Mail

Type of Mail	Corryville Station	Fairfield Branch	Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex	Total
Letters	4,309	1,296	2,417	8,022
Flats	905	4,710	341	5,956
Packages	0	25	0	25
Totals	5,214	6,031	2,758	14,003

Source: OIG count of delayed mailpieces identified during our visit September 10, 2024.

Figure 2. Examples of Delayed Mail at the Corryville Station



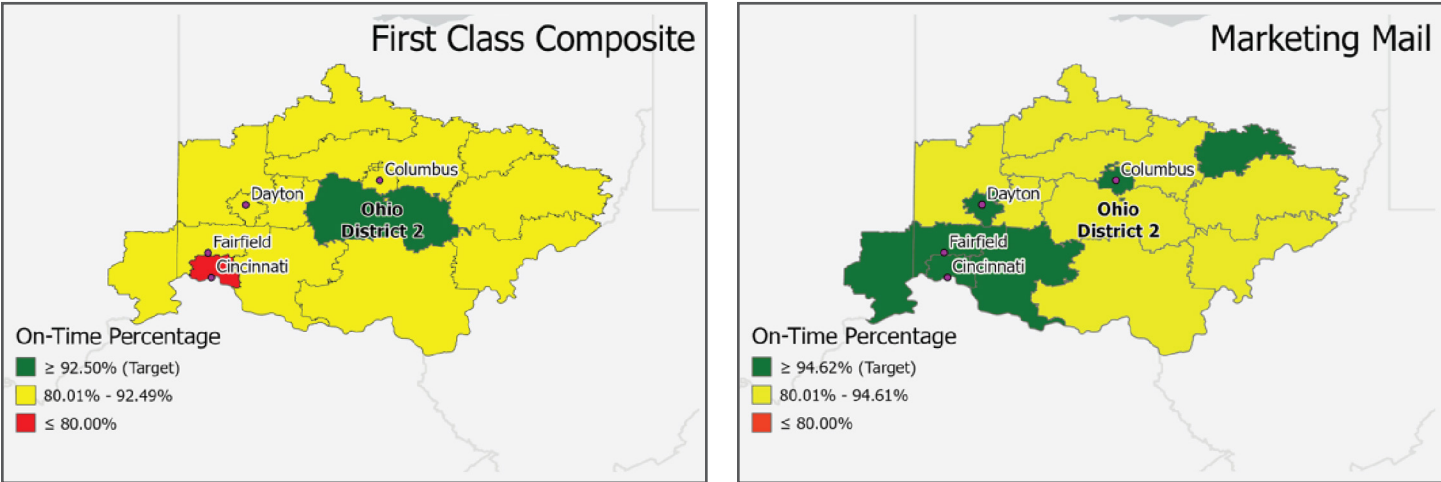
Source: OIG photo taken September 10, 2024.

¹⁵ Count of mail included individual piece counts and estimates based on conversion factors in Management Instruction PO-610-2007-1, *Piece Count Recording System*.
¹⁶ A tool for unit management to manually self-report delayed mail, which provides a snapshot of daily mail conditions at the point in time when carriers have departed for the street.
¹⁷ PS Form 1571 lists all mail distributed to the carrier for delivery that was left in the office or returned undelivered.

We also found portions of the district had service performance scores that did not meet target goals. Specifically, we analyzed service performance scores in the district for First-Class Mail, Marketing Mail, Priority Mail, and Ground Advantage products mailed within the Ohio 2 District between April 1

and September 30, 2024. This analysis showed performance scores for these products did not meet the targets for a large portion of the district. See Figure 3 for heat maps showing the performance for each product in the Ohio 2 District.

Figure 3. Service Performance Heat Maps by 3-Digit ZIP Code in the Ohio 2 District from April 1 – September 30, 2024



Source: OIG analysis of Postal Service Informed Visibility (IV) and Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW) data. IV provides comprehensive and integrated capabilities for data-driven real-time service performance measurement and diagnostics of market-dominant products, mail inventory and predictive workloads of all mail to include packages, and end-to-end tracking and reporting for mail. EDW is a repository intended for all data and the central source for information on retail, financial, and operational performance.

We also analyzed service performance scores for the same period for mail being sent from the district to other locations in the nation and mail coming into the district from other locations in the nation. Overall, we found the district met performance targets for inbound and outbound Marketing Mail and Ground Advantage products. However, it did not meet the targets for First-Class Mail and Priority Mail for most of the district. Although service performance failures for this type of mail could be attributed to a plant or delivery unit outside the district, the failures may negatively impact customer perceptions within the district.

While the district had an above average mail and package delivery opportunity ranking in the Triangulation Report, we found 14,003 unreported delayed mail pieces at the three units. Based on our observations, we would expect to see a significant amount of reported delayed mail across the district. However, we reviewed DCV data for the entire district for September 9, 2024. Of the 268 units listed in the DCV system for the district, we determined only five units (2 percent) reported 6,723 total pieces of delayed mail. This could indicate issues with reporting delayed mail are more widespread within the district.

Why Did It Occur

The delayed mail identified at all three delivery units occurred primarily because unit management did not enforce the Redline¹⁸ process. Specifically, Corryville Station supervisors did not complete the PM checklist, which would have included looking through the carrier cases for undelivered mail brought back to the unit. In addition, the PM supervisor's desk location at the Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex did not allow her to properly monitor carriers returning to the unit.

Further, management at all three units did not ensure carriers completed a PS Form 1571 to note the reason why mail could not be delivered. Fairfield Branch management indicated it did not enforce the Redline process for delayed mail because two recently hired supervisors were not fully trained. However, it attributed most delayed mail to a P&DC truck arriving late the morning before, resulting in clerks not having sufficient time to sort all the mail prior to carriers departing for the street.

Delayed mail was not always properly reported in the DCV system due to a Corryville Station supervisor not having access to the system; Fairfield Branch supervisors focusing on other duties, such as mail sortation and managing carriers; and a Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex supervisor not knowing delayed mail had to be reported.

What Should Have Happened

Management should have processed and delivered all mail daily and properly identified any mail returned from a route. The Postal Service requires all types of Priority Mail Express, Priority Mail, and First-Class Mail to be committed for delivery on the day of receipt. In addition, policy¹⁹ states delivery units must follow the Redline process, which includes carriers completing a PS Form 1571 for any undelivered mail brought back to the delivery unit. Further, managers must complete the PM checklist verifying that the unit is free of all outgoing mail.

Managers are also required²⁰ to report all mail in the delivery unit after the carriers have left for their street duties as either delayed or curtailed in the DCV system. Further, management must update the DCV system if volumes have changed prior to the end of the business day.

¹⁸ A standardized framework encompassing manager and carrier responsibilities after carriers return to the delivery unit upon completion of delivery assignments, ensuring that any mail returned from the street is identified with a signed completed PS Form 1571 and that no mail is taken back to the carrier case.

¹⁹ Standard Operating Procedures, Redline Policy.

²⁰ DCV Learn and Grow, August 1, 2024.

Effect on the Postal Service and Its Customers

When mail is delayed, there is an increased risk of customer dissatisfaction, which may adversely affect the Postal Service brand. For example, in our analysis of the C360 inquiries detailed in the [Background](#), we found numerous instances of customers stating mail was not delivered for multiple days in a row. In addition, inaccurate delayed mail reporting provides management at the local, district, area, and headquarters levels with an unreliable status of mail delays and can result in improper actions taken to address issues.

Management Actions

During our audit, management at all three units received training on proper delivery practices and reporting of delayed mail. In addition, district management monitored for proper delayed mail reporting at the units we visited which may improve mail visibility. Further, the district obtained access for a Corryville supervisor to the DCV system after our site visit.

Recommendation #1

We recommend the **District Manager, Ohio 2 District**, train management at all delivery units in the district on the proper procedures for reporting delayed mail.

Postal Service Response

The Postal Service agreed with this finding and the associated recommendation. District management stated it will provide training for non-bargaining employees at all delivery units on the proper procedures for identifying and reporting delayed mail in the DCV system. The target implementation date is March 31, 2025. See [Appendix B](#) for management's comments in their entirety.

OIG Evaluation

The OIG considers management's comments responsive to the recommendation.

Finding #2: Package Scanning and Handling

What We Found

We identified package scanning and handling issues at all three delivery units. In total, employees scanned 951 packages at the Corryville Station, Fairfield Branch, and Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex instead of at the recipients' delivery point from May 1 – July 31, 2024 (see Table 5).

Further analysis of STC scan data for these packages showed about 82 percent were scanned as "Delivered." This data did not include scans that could properly be made at a delivery unit such as "Delivered – PO Box" and "Customer (Vacation) Hold,"

but rather represented scans that should routinely be made at the point of delivery.

We also reviewed 260 scans occurring away from the delivery unit and over 1,000 feet²¹ from the intended delivery point for the Fairfield Branch from May 1 – July 31, 2024.²² We removed scans that could have been performed away from the delivery point per the policy, such as "Animal Interference" and "Unsafe Conditions," from our review. Further analysis of the STC scan data for these packages showed 95 percent were scanned as "Delivered" (see Table 6).

Table 5. STC Scans at Delivery Unit

STC Scan Type	Corryville Station	Fairfield Branch	Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex	Total	Percent
Delivered	92	445	247	784	82.4%
Delivery Attempted – No Access to Delivery Location	23	44	62	129	13.6%
Delivered to Agent For Final Delivery	0	2	17	19	2.0%
Delivery Exception – Animal Interference	0	2	10	12	1.3%
No Secure Location Available	0	1	4	5	0.5%
Receptacle Full / Item Oversized	0	2	0	2	0.2%
Total	115	496	340	951	100%

Source: OIG analysis of Postal Service's Product Tracking and Reporting (PTR) System data from May 1 – July 31, 2024, for these Ohio 2 District facilities. PTR is the system of record for all delivery status information for mail and packages with trackable services and barcodes.

21 Packages are expected to be scanned within a designated buffer distance from the delivery point. The OIG evaluates any package that was scanned more than 1,000 feet from the delivery point.

22 We found a nominal amount of scans occurring over 1,000 feet from the intended delivery point for the Corryville Station and the Mid City Carrier Annex, from May 1 – July 31, 2024.

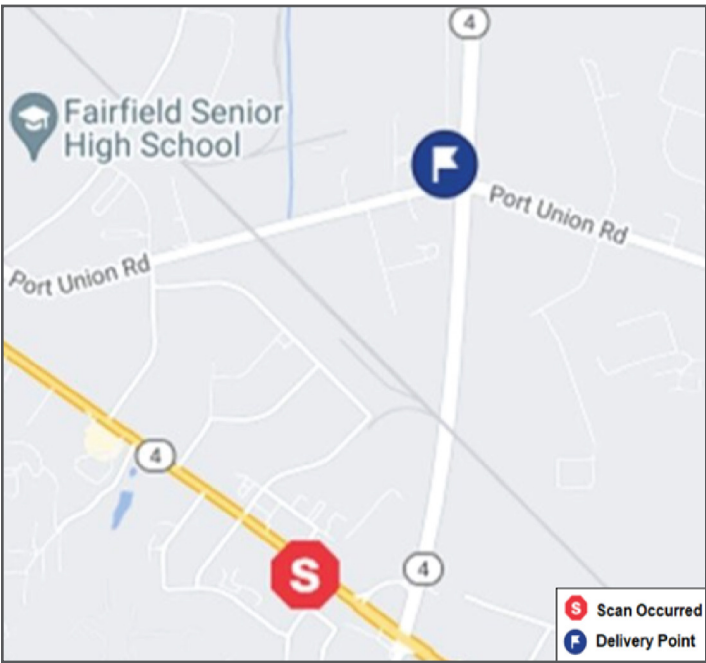
Table 6. Fairfield Branch STC Scans Over 1,000 Feet Away From the Delivery Point

STC Scan Type	Number of Scans	Percent
Delivered	247	95.0%
Delivery Attempted – No Access to Delivery Location	12	4.6%
Return to Sender	1	0.4%
Total	260	100%

Source: OIG analysis of the Postal Service’s PTR System data from May 1 – July 31, 2024, for Ohio 2 District facilities.

For example, the map below (see Figure 4) shows an instance where a carrier scanned a package as delivered 1.8 miles away from the delivery point.

Figure 4. Scanned Away From the Delivery Point in Fairfield, OH



Source: Postal Service Single Package Look Up.

In addition, on the morning of September 10, 2024, before the carriers arrived for the day, we selected a total of 88 packages from carrier cases at the three delivery units to review and analyze for scanning

and tracking history. Of the 88 sampled packages from carrier cases, 33 (38 percent) had missing or improper scans or improper handling.

Twenty-seven packages had scanning issues, including:

- Twelve packages were scanned “Delivery Attempted – No Access to Delivery Location” between 0.6 and 1.8 miles away from the delivery point. Scans should be made as close to the delivery point as possible.
- Six packages were scanned “Held at Post Office at Customer Request”; however, the customers did not request their mail to be held.
- Four packages were scanned “Delivered,” which should only be performed when a package is successfully left at the customer’s delivery address.
- Three packages were missing STC scans to let the customer know the reason for non-delivery.
- One package was scanned “Available for Pickup, for Caller Service” by the supervisor. However, the customer did not have a caller service account.
- One package was missing an “Arrival at Unit” scan, which is necessary to provide complete visibility.

Six packages had handling issues, including:

- Three packages were scanned “Held at Post Office at Customer Request” or “Delivery Attempted – No Access to Delivery Location” from August 22–30, 2024. These packages should have been moved to the “Notice Left”²³ area.
- Three packages were scanned “Vacant” or “Insufficient Address” from August 22–30, 2024. These packages should have been returned to sender.

Further, Corryville Station and Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex management did not properly manage employee barcodes. Specifically, unit management posted a list of employee barcodes on the workroom

23 The area of a postal facility where letters or packages that the carriers were unable to deliver are stored for customer pickup.

floor, which could allow employees to log into package scanners as someone else.

Why Did It Occur

Management at the three units did not provide adequate oversight of package scanning and handling procedures. Specifically, these issues occurred because:

- Corryville Station management stated it monitored scans daily via scan failure reports, instead of reports showing improper scans and scans made away from the delivery point. In addition, supervisors did not complete the PM checklist, which includes checking carrier cases to identify packages scanned incorrectly.
- Fairfield Branch management stated it monitored package scans daily to verify they had STC scans; however, it did not review the type of scan for accuracy. The station manager stated the newly hired supervisors were hesitant to question carriers about their scanning accuracy since they were new to the role and struggled with enforcing policy. In addition, the new supervisors' lack of experience contributed to their inability to effectively monitor and enforce proper package scanning and handling procedures.
- Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex management stated unit supervisors did not always review integrity scan reports to verify that scans were completed correctly and performed at the right location. In addition, unit management explained that it instructed carriers to scan Caller Service packages "Delivered" in the unit to mitigate package failures in that section.

Further, Corryville Station and Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex management teams were not aware employee barcode lists should be secured.

What Should Have Happened

Management should have monitored scan performance daily and enforced compliance, including verifying all packages were scanned at the delivery point and not at the delivery unit. The Postal Service's goal is to ensure proper delivery attempts for mailpieces to the correct address with proper service,²⁴ which includes scanning packages at the time and location of delivery.²⁵ In addition, temporary badges must be controlled and issued by the facility head to authorized personnel who arrive without their assigned badge during normal duty hours.²⁶ Delivery unit management must protect sensitive information against theft and disclosure to unauthorized individuals. Postal Service policy requires employee identification barcodes to be secured at all times.²⁷

Effect on the Postal Service and Its Customers

Customers rely on accurate scan data to track their packages in real time. When employees do not scan mailpieces correctly, customers are unable to determine the actual status of their packages. By improving scanning operations, management increases mail visibility and customer satisfaction, and enhances the customer experience and integrity of the Postal Service brand. Further, unsecured employee identification barcodes can result in unauthorized access to personally identifiable information. Securing employee sensitive information limits the opportunity for theft or other non-authorized activities to occur.

Management Actions

During our audit, district management provided evidence showing managers at the three units were trained on standard operating procedures governing package scanning and handling, and the tracking of scanning performance. In addition, district management verified that unit managers were

²⁴ *Delivery Done Right the First Time* stand-up talk, March 2020.

²⁵ *Carriers Delivering the Customer Experience* stand-up talk, July 2017.

²⁶ AS-805 *Information Security*, September 2022.

²⁷ AS-805-C, *Information Security Requirements for All Personnel*, section 4. Protection of Sensitive and Critical Information, November 2021.

properly monitoring package scanning at the three delivery units. Due to district management taking these actions, we are not making a recommendation for tracking and reducing inaccurate scans.

In addition, Corryville Station and Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex management promptly removed employee barcode lists from the workroom floors after becoming aware of the policy. Thus, we are not making a recommendation regarding barcode security.

Postal Service Response

The Postal Service agreed with this finding.

Finding #3: Arrow Keys

What We Found

Management at the three delivery units did not properly manage arrow keys, and management at Fairfield Branch and Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex did not properly safeguard keys. We reviewed the units' arrow key certification list in the Retail and Delivery Applications Reports (RADAR)²⁸ system and conducted a physical inventory of keys at the units. Although the RADAR lists contained a combined 369 keys at the three units, we found discrepancies during our observations. For example:

- At the Corryville Station, the unit reported 46 keys in RADAR; however, we could not locate four of them at the unit. In addition, unit management did not report any missing keys to the Inspection Service.
- At the Fairfield Branch, the unit reported 111 keys in RADAR; however, we found two additional keys not on the list and could not find one key that was on the list. In addition, management did not consistently ensure carriers returned keys to the accountable cart to be locked away in the evening. Further, during our visit, we identified three keys that were taken home by the carriers and two keys [REDACTED]
- At the Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex, the RADAR list contained 212 keys; however, we could not locate 13 of them at the unit. In addition, we found collection route arrow keys kept in an [REDACTED] [REDACTED] that was often left unattended.
- At the Fairfield Branch, a supervisor stated he was new at reconciling the monthly RADAR certification report and did not fully understand the reconciliation process. As a result, he was not aware of any discrepancies. Further, he relied on other supervisors to ensure all keys were accounted for daily and to inform him of any concerns.
- At the Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex, the unit received over 200 arrow keys in late 2023 that were ordered by district personnel to conduct collection routes throughout the Cincinnati area. In May 2024, the Inspection Service determined the district ordered too many keys for the Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex and redistributed them to other offices without accurately updating the inventory in RADAR. In addition, management did not properly secure collection route arrow keys because it prioritized the convenience of keeping the [REDACTED] to facilitate driver check-in. Further, management stated there were too many keys to lock in the wall-mounted arrow key case.

What Should Have Happened

Management should have verified that arrow key security procedures were properly followed. According to Postal Service policy,²⁹ management must keep an accurate inventory of all arrow keys. Any missing arrow keys must be immediately reported to the Inspection Service.

In addition, policy states that arrow keys must remain secured until they are individually assigned to personnel. A supervisor or clerk must verify employees are signing out keys on the inventory log. Upon return, arrow keys should be deposited in a secure location and a supervisor or clerk must verify all keys have been returned and accounted for daily.

Why Did It Occur

Management at the three delivery units did not provide sufficient oversight to properly manage arrow keys. Specifically:

- Corryville Station management did not properly inventory arrow keys due to competing priorities, such as overseeing delivery operations and monitoring carriers as they returned from the street.

²⁸ The arrow key certification in RADAR provides a national platform for all facilities to verify current inventory and account for all arrow keys.

²⁹ Arrow/Modified Arrow Key (MAL) Key Accountability Standard Work Instruction, dated May 2024.

Effect on the Postal Service and Its Customers

When there is insufficient oversight and supervision of accountable items, such as arrow keys, there is increased risk of mail theft. These thefts damage the Postal Service's reputation and diminish public trust in the nation's mail system. Additionally, because arrow keys open mail receptacles, lost or damaged keys can result in undelivered mail.

Management Actions

During our audit, district management provided evidence showing the district was monitoring arrow key procedures at all three units. The units also updated their arrow key log and properly secured the keys. In addition, Corryville Station management provided support showing that the four lost arrow keys were reported to the Inspection Service.

Due to management taking these corrective actions, we are not making a recommendation for these arrow key issues.

Postal Service Response

The Postal Service agreed with the finding.

Finding #4: Property Conditions

What We Found

We found safety and security issues at the three delivery units. Examples include:

Property Safety:

- Monthly and annual fire extinguisher inspections were missing. In addition, we identified three fire extinguishers that were blocked (see Figure 5), and one extinguisher that was not mounted.
- Two exit signs were not illuminated.
- Floor tiles were chipped and not leveled, and an electrical outlet in a lobby area was broken (see Figure 6).
- Exit and Postal Inspection Service doors were blocked.
- A microwave and vending machine in an employee break room were plugged into a power strip.

Property Security:

- “Subject to Search” signs were missing.
- Employee and Business Mail Entry Unit (BMEU) parking lot gates were inoperable and not secured.
- Doors leading to the workroom floor and BMEU dock were not secured.

Figure 5. Blocked Fire Extinguisher at the Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex



Source: OIG photo taken September 12, 2024.

Figure 6. Broken Outlet in the Corryville Station Lobby



Source: OIG photo taken September 12, 2024.

Why Did It Occur

Management did not provide sufficient oversight and take the necessary actions to verify property condition issues were corrected because it was not aware of the existing conditions or had competing responsibilities, such as delivery operations, customer complaints, and conference calls. For example:

- Corryville Station management was aware of the chipped floor tiles and reported the issue in the electronic Facilities Management System in May and November 2023. However, the issue was disapproved by facilities³⁰ due to the unit's failure to respond to a request for additional information.
- Fairfield Branch management was not aware of the requirement to have a "vehicles subject to search" sign in the employee parking lot.
- Mid City Cincinnati Carrier Annex management was not aware of the unsecured gates.

What Should Have Happened

Management should have provided sufficient oversight of personnel responsible for maintaining facilities, reported safety and security issues as they arose, and followed up for completion. The Postal Service requires management to maintain a safe environment for employees and customers.³¹

Effect on the Postal Service and Its Customers

Management's attention to safety and security deficiencies can reduce the risk of injuries to employees and customers; reduce related costs, such as workers' compensation claims, lawsuits, and penalties; and enhance the customer experience and Postal Service brand.

Management Actions

During our audit, management addressed all property condition issues identified at the three units. For example, Corryville Station management unblocked the exit door which had blue hampers in front. Due to management taking these corrective actions, we are not making a recommendation for these property conditions.

Postal Service Response

The Postal Service agreed with the finding.

³⁰ Hub Management – The first group within Headquarters Facilities to contract out repairs to buildings.

³¹ Postal Service Handbook EL-801, *Supervisor's Safety Handbook*, July 2020.

Finding #5: Separation of Packages for Dispatch

What We Found

Fairfield Branch employees did not properly separate packages destined for the Cincinnati P&DC and NDC. Specifically, during the unit's evening operations, employees commingled Ground Advantage packages and Priority Mail in the same containers going to these processing centers.

Why Did It Occur

Fairfield Branch management did not provide oversight to ensure employees properly separated packages for dispatch to the Cincinnati P&DC and NDC. The manager stated she was not aware the clerk was not following proper separation requirements and using the wrong placard.

What Should Have Happened

In September 2023, the Postal Service implemented changes³² for the preparation and dispatch of packages to processing facilities by delivery units of a certain level.³³ The Postal Service requires these units to separate certain classes of packages when dispatching this mail to the processing facility and identify the placards to be used for proper separation.

Effect on the Postal Service and Its Customers

Proper mail preparation is required for visibility throughout the Postal Service network. When mail is not properly separated for dispatch to the processing facility in accordance with procedures, there is an increased likelihood that mail will require additional processing steps. Furthermore, this can result in delays and service failures and an increased risk of customer dissatisfaction, which may adversely affect the Postal Service brand.

Management Actions

During our audit, district management provided documentation showing it was verifying Fairfield Branch employees were properly separating packages for dispatch to the local processing facilities. Due to management taking this corrective action, we are not making a recommendation for the package separation issue.

Postal Service Response

The Postal Service agreed with the finding.

³² Mail Preparation (MTEL) Changes Level 22 and Above Only, September 2023.

³³ All level-22 units and higher are required to follow these package separation requirements.

Finding #6: Contractor Badges

What We Found

We found all three contract delivery service (CDS) carriers at the Fairfield Branch did not have a photo identification (ID) barcoded badge.³⁴ The CDS carriers were using other employees' ID barcode badges to log into scanners to deliver the mail.

Why Did It Occur

Unit management did not follow policy or provide oversight to ensure that the CDS carriers had valid barcoded ID badges. The station manager stated she was not aware the CDS carriers did not have valid badges.

What Should Have Happened

The Postal Service requires that management obtain screening information from highway transportation suppliers and their contractor personnel to verify their eligibility. Postal Service guidelines³⁵ state that highway transportation suppliers, suppliers' personnel, and subcontractors' personnel who transport mail or who are allowed access to Postal Service operational areas must receive nonsensitive clearances. Pending clearance, a temporary photo ID badge, PS Form 5139, *Non-Postal Service Temporary Employee*, allows such access. Once clearance is obtained, a photo ID badge, PS Form 5140, *Non-Postal Service Contract Employee*, allows access to mail and mail-processing facilities. A barcode for an ID badge is provided once the contract driver has been granted a nonsensitive clearance.

Effect on the Postal Service and Its Customers

When CDS carriers do not have an appropriate barcoded contractor ID badge, management is unable to determine if the carrier is allowed access to Postal Service operational areas or allowed to deliver mail. In addition, CDS carriers using barcodes from previous contractors or other carriers causes inaccurate package scanning data, which makes it difficult for management to hold these carriers responsible for inaccurate scanning.

Recommendation #2

We recommend the **District Manager, Ohio 2 District**, verify all contract delivery service carriers at the Fairfield Branch have a photo identification barcoded badge.

Postal Service Response

The Postal Service agreed with this finding and the associated recommendation. Management stated it verified all Contract Delivery Service carriers at the Fairfield Branch possess a valid Postal Service photo identification badge. The Postal Service requested closure upon issuance of this report

OIG Evaluation

The OIG considers management's comments responsive to the recommendation. After reviewing the supporting documentation management provided to support actions taken, the OIG agreed to close the recommendation upon issuance of the report.

³⁴ A barcoded ID badge indicates a background check was completed and clearance was granted to enter the facility and access the mail.

³⁵ Management Instruction PO-530-2009-4, *Screening Highway Transportation Contractor Personnel*, section 122.

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**Fairfield
Branch**



**Mid City
Carrier Annex**



Appendix A: Additional Information

We conducted this audit from November 2024 through February 2025 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards and included such tests of internal controls as we considered necessary under the circumstances. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective.

In planning and conducting the audit, we obtained an understanding of the delivery operations internal control structure to help determine the nature, timing, and extent of our audit procedures. We reviewed the management controls for overseeing the program and mitigating associated risks. Additionally, we assessed the internal control components and underlying principles, and we determined that the following three components were significant to our audit objective:

- Control Activities
- Information and Communication
- Monitoring

We developed audit work to ensure these controls were assessed. Based on the work performed, we identified internal control deficiencies in all three components that were significant within the context of our objective. Our recommendations, if implemented, should correct the weaknesses we identified.

We assessed the reliability of IV, EDW, and Workforce data by reviewing existing information, comparing data from other sources, observing operations, and interviewing Postal Service officials knowledgeable about the data. We determined the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

Appendix B: Management's Comments



January 27, 2025

VICTORIA SMITH
ACTING DIRECTOR, AUDIT SERVICES

SUBJECT: Management Response: Ohio 2 District: Delivery Operations (Report Number 24-148-DRAFT)

Thank you for providing the Postal Service an opportunity to review and comment on the findings contained in the draft audit report Ohio 2 District: Delivery Operations.

Management generally agrees with the findings related to delayed mail, package scanning and handling, arrow keys, property conditions, and other issues: separation of packages for dispatch & contractor badges.

Following are our comments on each of the two recommendations.

Recommendation 1: We recommend the District Manager, Ohio 2 District, train management at all delivery units in the district on the proper procedures for reporting delayed mail.

Management Response/Action Plan: Management agrees with this recommendation. District management will provide training for non-bargaining employees at all delivery units on the proper procedures for identifying and reporting delayed mail in the Delivery Condition Visualization system.

Target Implementation Date: 03/31/2025

Responsible Official:
Manager, Ohio 2 District

Recommendation 2: We recommend the District Manager, Ohio 2 District, verify all contractor delivery service carriers at the Fairfield Branch have a photo identification barcoded badge

Management Response/Action Plan: Management agrees with this recommendation. District management has verified all Contract Delivery Service carriers at Fairfield Branch possess a valid Postal Service photo identification badge.

Management request recommendation be closed with issuance of the final report.

Target Implementation Date: 02/28/2025

Responsible Official:
Manager, Ohio 2 District

E-SIGNED by Donald.D Kravos
on 2025-01-27 13:48:45 EST

Donald D. Kravos
Manager, Ohio 2 District

cc: Vice President, Area Retail & Delivery Operations (Central)
Corporate Audit Response Management

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE



This document contains sensitive information that has been redacted for public release. These redactions were coordinated with USPS and agreed to by the OIG.

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