



Office of Inspector General | United States Postal Service

Audit Report

Facility Conditions, Delayed Mail, and Staffing Levels in Albuquerque, NM

Report Number SM-AR-19-005 | May 29, 2019



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Highlights

Objective

The U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) received two congressional requests. One request came from former U.S. House of Representative Michelle Lujan Grisham and another from Senator Tom Udall on September 5 and September 19, 2018, respectively. Their requests asked the OIG to assess allegations of unsafe facility conditions, delayed and unprocessed mail, and understaffing at post office (PO) facilities in Albuquerque, NM. The objectives of this audit were to determine whether the Postal Service complied with applicable building maintenance, safety, and security standards; and assess mail distribution to carriers and PO Box sections and staffing levels at facilities in Albuquerque, NM.

The scope of our audit included 13 facilities in Albuquerque, NM — the eight POs named in the congressional requests and five POs we judgmentally selected based on proximity to the facilities included in the allegations.

What the OIG Found

Postal Service facilities in Albuquerque did not consistently meet prescribed building maintenance, safety, and security standards. Although Postal Service management implemented some corrective actions based on issues stemming from the allegations, we identified deficiencies at all 13 facilities during the audit. These deficiencies ranged from minor oversight infractions to more serious structural issues. Examples of deficiencies observed include:

- Six POs (46 percent) had excessively stained ceiling tiles resulting from water leaks, including repeatedly roof leaks at the Five Points Station.
- Six POs (46 percent) did not maintain their facilities consistent with appropriate sanitary conditions. For example, we observed excessive dust on retail lobby floors, wall fixtures, and vents; dirty customer counter tops; and restrooms not cleaned to standards.
- The Albuquerque Main Post Office had visible structural cracks in its walls and floors. Based on an October 2017 work order, the Postal Service hired a structural engineering contractor to assess the cracks. The subsequent

contractor report concluded that most of the cracks assessed had stabilized, were no longer moving, and recommended continued monitoring for a 1- to 2-year period. The Postal Service is searching for a local structural engineer to monitor crack movements and perform crack gauge work as of the issuance of this report.

We did not identify instances of reported or observed delayed mail at the 13 POs; however, Albuquerque POs did not consistently meet prescribed scan requirements for distributing mail to carriers and PO Box sections by their designated times.

Regarding staffing levels at Albuquerque PO facilities, from FYs 2016 to 2018 there was a slight decrease in authorized positions in the maintenance function, while the customer service function gained 10 authorized positions. The adjustment in authorized positions can be attributed to the use of staffing models to periodically calculate and adjust authorized levels based on, among other factors, actual mail volume and target productivity. As of September 30, 2018, there were two (13 percent of authorized) maintenance and 13 (9 percent of authorized) customer service vacancies. Our work indicated that changes to authorized staffing levels were generally not the cause of the poor facility maintenance and upkeep. Thus, filling vacant positions to meet the authorized complement should be the goal.

Deficiencies related to building maintenance, safety, and security occurred due to the lack of management oversight. Issues with meeting scanning requirements occurred because unit supervisors were not properly trained on entering scan data and reporting the reasons the scans were late, or mail was delayed as required. Lastly, the reduction in maintenance and customer service staff on board in Albuquerque was due to attritions.

When corrective actions related to building maintenance, safety, and security issues are not implemented, or are implemented but inadequate, issues may continue to exist, increasing the Postal Service's potential exposure to Occupational Safety and Health Administration fines and the risk of injury to employees and customers. In addition, when daily mail conditions are not

reported correctly, management will not have accurate and timely information to make informed decisions for operations.

What the OIG Recommended

We recommended management address roof issues at the Five Points Station and structural crack issues at the Albuquerque MPO; develop and implement an action plan to address building maintenance, safety and security issues identified during our audit; instruct customer service operations management to monitor, report, and record all instances of delayed mail daily in the Customer Service Daily Reporting System; and hire additional maintenance and customer service function staff up to the authorized staffing levels based on staffing models at appropriate locations.

Transmittal Letter



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

May 29, 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR: RICHARD M. CHAVEZ
DISTRICT MANAGER, ARIZONA DISTRICT (A)

E-Signed by Charles Turley
Verify Authenticity with eSign Desktop

FROM: Charles L. Turley
Deputy Assistant Inspector General
for Supply Management and Human Resources

SUBJECT: Audit Report – Facility Conditions, Delayed Mail, and Staffing
Levels in Albuquerque, NM (Report Number SM-AR-19-005)

This report presents the results of our audit of the facility conditions, delayed mail, and staffing levels in Albuquerque, NM (Project Number 19SMG001SM000).

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesies provided by your staff. If you have any questions or need additional information, Lori Lau Dillard, Director, Supply Management and Facilities, or me at 703-248-2100.

Attachment

cc: Postmaster General
Corporate Audit Response Management

Results

Introduction/Objective

This report presents the results of our audit of facility conditions, delayed mail, and staffing levels at Albuquerque, NM, post office (PO) facilities (Project Number 19SMG001SM000). The report responds to the following two congressional requests:

- On September 5, 2018, former U.S. House of Representative Michelle Lujan Grisham, 1st Congressional District of New Mexico, communicated allegations concerning poor working conditions and delayed PO Box mail resulting from staffing cuts at Albuquerque facilities.
- On September 19, 2018, U.S. Senator Tom Udall of New Mexico, communicated allegations raised concerning poor facility conditions, understaffing, and delayed PO Box mail at Albuquerque facilities.

Our objectives were to determine whether the Postal Service complied with building maintenance, safety, and security standards; and assess mail distribution to carriers and PO Box sections and staffing levels at PO facilities in Albuquerque, NM.

The scope of our audit included 13 facilities in Albuquerque — the eight POs named in the congressional requests and five POs we judgmentally selected based on proximity to the facilities included in the allegations. Of the 13 facilities visited, seven were postal-owned and six were leased facilities (see Table 1). We conducted site visits of these facilities from October 1 to 4, 2018. [Appendix A](#) provides additional information regarding the audit’s scope and methodology.

Background

Postal Service facilities in Albuquerque are part of the Arizona District in the Western Area. In fiscal year (FY) 2018, Albuquerque housed one processing and distribution center (P&DC) and 24 post offices and employed 908 Postal Service workers. These facilities and employees supported 503 delivery routes and 26,019 PO Boxes. The Albuquerque Main Post Office (MPO), specifically named in the allegation, was built in 1973, and is collocated with the P&DC.

Table 1. Post Offices Selected for Review

	Post Office Name	Included in Congressional Request	Leased or Owned Facility
1	Academy Station	Yes	Owned
2	Alameda Branch	Yes	Leased
3	Albuquerque Main PO	Yes	Owned
4	Coors PO Express/Store 498	No	Leased
5	Downtown Station	No	Leased
6	Five Points Station	Yes	Owned
7	Highland Station	Yes	Owned
8	Manzano Station	No	Owned
9	Mountain Run PO Express/Store 494	No	Leased
10	North Valley Carrier Annex	Yes	Owned
11	Old Albuquerque Station	No	Leased
12	Steve Schiff Station	Yes	Owned
13	University Station	Yes	Leased

“In FY 2018, Albuquerque housed one P&DC and 24 post offices and employed 908 Postal Service workers.”

The Postal Service is obligated, by both internal policies¹ and federal regulations,² to maintain facilities in accordance with prescribed standards and provide a safe and healthy environment for both employees and customers. In FYs 2017 and 2018, Albuquerque POs spent \$512,523 and \$576,789, respectively, on building maintenance, repairs and alterations, supplies, and contract services.

Overview of Allegations and Citations

In 2018, the Postal Service received several allegations related to understaffing, delayed PO Box mail, and unsafe conditions at post offices in Albuquerque.

Specifically,

- In August 2018, the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) issued four letters to the Arizona District Manager alleging poor facility conditions, PO box mail delays, and chronic staff cuts.
- On September 4, 2018, Senator Martin Heinrich of NM issued a letter to the Postmaster General detailing allegations received from the APWU regarding staff cuts, PO Box mail delays, and dirty facilities.
- On September 20, 2018, former Representative Lujan Grisham and APWU officials made an unannounced visit to the Five Points Station. While they were denied access to the facility, they recorded a video from the retail lobby about the facility conditions. In the video, an active roof leak was captured.

In addition, on September 25, 2018, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued citations with proposed penalties³ for the Albuquerque MPO and Five Points Station:

- OSHA cited the Albuquerque MPO for not having a continuing and effective extermination program.
- OSHA cited the Five Points Station for not keeping the facility clean due to various ongoing water leaks that exposed employees to slips and falls.

Summary of Conclusions

In September of 2018, Postal Service management began to implement corrective actions at Albuquerque POs to address the numerous allegations and two OSHA citations received. These corrective actions included adding 100 custodial workhours in August and September 2018 used to mitigate some of the issues identified across Albuquerque POs. However, our audit identified that building maintenance, safety, and security issues still existed, ranging from minor infractions to serious structural issues.

Regarding delayed PO Box mail, based on Postal Service reporting and audit observations, there was no delayed mail at the facilities we visited. However, we identified that at all Albuquerque PO facilities, mail distribution scans were late in the Scan Point Management System⁴ (SPMS) during the period October 1 through October 31, 2018, indicating that customer service operations clerks may have distributed mail to carriers and PO Box sections late. We reviewed the Customer Service Daily Reporting System⁵ (CSDRS) data to understand why the scans were late, but because necessary system data fields were incomplete, the reasons for late scans could not be determined.

Lastly, regarding staffing levels at Albuquerque PO facilities, from FYs 2016 to 2018 there was a slight decrease in authorized positions in the maintenance function, while the customer service function gained 10 authorized positions. As of September 30, 2018, there were two (13 percent of authorized) maintenance and 13 (9 percent of authorized) customer service vacancies. The adjustment in authorized positions can be attributed to the use of staffing models to periodically calculate and adjust authorized levels based on, among other factors, actual mail volume and target productivity. As we concluded staffing levels were not a significant impact to poor facility maintenance and upkeep, filling vacant positions to complement should be the goal.

1 Maintenance Management Order, MMO-136-17, February 8, 2018 and Handbook MS-47, *Housekeeping Postal Facilities*, TL-5: June 27, 2014.

2 OSHA Act of 1970 and Handbook EL-801, *Supervisor's Safety Handbook*.

3 On January 9, 2019, OSHA withdrew the \$1,141 fine for the Albuquerque MPO and reduced it to \$500 for the Five Points Station.

4 An application for the internal measurement of specific customer service operations using scanning technology to evaluate performance by comparing actual scans to scheduled scans.

5 CSDRS is a formal delayed mail-reporting tool that provides timely information to management on mail and operational exception situations.

Finding #1: Facility Conditions

Facilities reviewed in Albuquerque, NM, were not consistently maintained in accordance with applicable building safety, maintenance, and/or security standards. Across the 13 facilities assessed, we identified 97 deficiencies,⁶ which ranged from minor oversight infractions to serious structural issues.

Building Maintenance Deficiencies

We identified that 10 of the 13 POs (77 percent) assessed did not consistently adhere to applicable building maintenance standards. Examples of the deficiencies identified included excess roof leaks, unsanitary conditions, and structural issues.

1. Six POs (46 percent) had excessively stained ceiling tiles resulting from water leaks. At the Five Points Station, there were numerous roof leaks. In reviewing work orders for the Five Points Station, which is a postal-owned facility, we identified 11 roof leak repairs performed since October 2016. As shown in Table 2, roof leaks occurred repeatedly in the retail lobby, employee breakroom, and manager's office areas. Based on the repair history, it took on average, about 60 days to complete a work order. The Postal Service does not have a formal response time to complete a repair, as it may vary based on the issue identified. However, there are guidelines that prioritize issues as emergency or non-emergency, and these roof leaks were prioritized as non-emergency and contained until repair was completed.

“Facilities reviewed in Albuquerque, NM, were not consistently maintained in accordance with applicable building safety, maintenance, and/or security standards.”

Table 2. Five Points Station Roof Leak Repair History

Call Date	Completion Date	Roof Leak Areas and Description
10/25/2016	1/25/2017	Repaired roof leaks and replaced ceiling tiles.
1/6/2017	2/28/2017	Manager's office.
8/29/2017	10/11/2017	Janitor room and south wall above storage shelves.
9/28/2017	11/29/2017	Employee breakroom, rural route section, and lobby areas.
10/24/2017	2/15/2018	Workroom floor, employee breakroom, and lobby areas.
4/30/2018	6/25/2018	Retail lobby.
7/11/2018	12/18/2018	Ceiling has small leak; stained tiles were replaced.
8/3/2018	10/1/2018	Accountable room.
9/20/2018	11/5/2018	Retail lobby area and the manager's office.
10/24/2018	11/7/2018	Repaired 28 areas using seal tape.
11/6/2018	1/7/2019	Manager's office and women's restroom.

Source: eFMS.

On October 1, 2018, we observed the ceiling tiles throughout the Five Points Station were replaced or in the process of being replaced after an active roof leak as shown in [Figure 1](#). The next day, after an overnight rain, the newly replaced ceiling tiles had new water stains.

⁶ Of the 13 POs we visited, we noted 56 maintenance, safety, and security deficiencies at postal-owned facilities and 41 at leased facilities.

Figure 1. Damaged Ceiling Tiles Near the Manager’s Office and Women’s Restroom



Source: OIG photo taken October 1, 2018, at the Five Points Station.

On October 29, 2018, the Postal Service created a new work order to replace the roof at the Five Points Station. The procurement document to replace the roof estimated a cost of \$500,000. The new roof is scheduled to be installed at the Five Points Station in Spring 2019; however, as of this reporting, a new roof has not been installed.

2. Six POs (46 percent) did not maintain their facilities consistent with appropriate sanitary conditions. For example, we observed excessive dust accumulated on retail lobby floors, wall fixtures, and vents; dirty customer counter tops; and uncleaned restrooms, including non-functioning toilets and leaky faucets at two POs.

In addition, the Postal Service took actions to address allegations of rodent and pest issues at the Albuquerque MPO and Five Points Station. Specifically:

- On September 21, 2018, a facility work order was created reporting the seal around the Albuquerque MPO building was old and dry, causing bugs and bats to enter the building through the eaves.
 - Postal Service management consulted with the Wildlife Command Center on recommendations to protect bats, and subsequently hired a contractor to seal intrusion points around the perimeter of the building, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Roof Net To Prevent Bat Entry



Source: OIG photograph taken October 1, 2018.

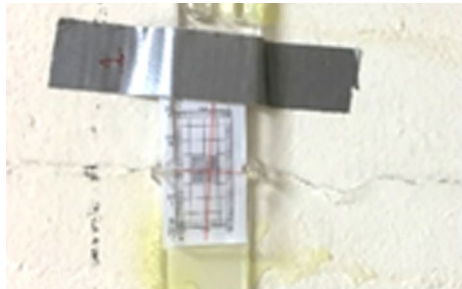
- The work order indicated the contractor’s work was completed in November 2018.
 - As the seal work was ongoing during our site visit in October 2018, we did not observe any signs of bats or bugs.
 - In December 2017, the facility hazard log⁷ at the Five Points Station identified one rodent incident. The incident involved a mouse falling from the ceiling.
 - According to the Albuquerque Postmaster, mice entered the facility when the adjacent field was cleared by the landowner. The postmaster stated they have weekly pest control treatments⁸ which began in March 2017.
 - During our site visit, we did not observe any mice, but noted several mouse traps throughout the facility for continuous pest control.
3. The Albuquerque MPO has visible structural cracks in the walls and floors as illustrated in Figure 3. To assess the maintenance activity regarding these issues, we assessed the work orders within eFMS,⁹ the Postal Service’s maintenance management system, and identified the following:

⁷ Facility hazard log is recorded in the Safety Toolkit, which is an online interactive management tool for safety personnel. It is also used to record and track facility inspections, program evaluation guides (PEG), and OSHA citations.

⁸ Performed by a commercial rodent elimination program at Albuquerque facilities.

⁹ Electronic Facilities Management System (eFMS) program is the official Postal Service record for real property inventory and the management system for administering all property-related projects including acquisition, design, construction, disposal, repairs, health and safety mitigations, and property inspections.

Figure 3. Cracks in the Wall and Floor at the Albuquerque MPO



Wall Crack Gauge.

Source: OIG photograph taken October 3, 2018.

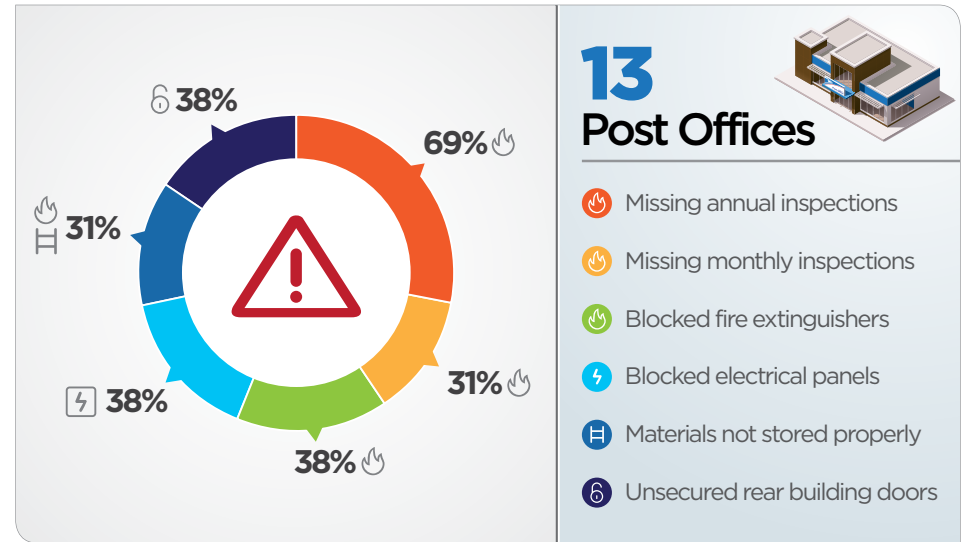


Crack Between Baseboard and Floor.

Source: OIG photograph taken October 3, 2018.

- From October 2016 through September 2018, there was one work order (on October 26, 2017) related to cracks in the walls at this facility.
- Based on the October 2017 work order, the Facilities Repair and Alterations Office contracted with a structural engineering firm to investigate the cracks. The structural engineering firm activities included:
 - In May 2018, installed 10 crack gauges on walls at the facility and measured movement during a five-month period.
 - In November 2018, issued a report concluding most of the cracks sampled have stabilized and were no longer moving.
 - The report further recommended the Postal Service continue to monitor the cracks for an extended one- to two-year period.
 - The Postal Service is searching for a local structural engineer to monitor crack movements and perform crack gauge work as of the issuance of this reporting.

Building Safety and Security Deficiencies



None of the 13 POs consistently adhered to applicable building safety and security standards. Examples of the common deficiencies identified included:

- Nine POs (69 percent) were missing annual fire extinguisher inspections. Two extreme examples include annual inspections not being conducted since 2012 and 2015.
- Four POs (31 percent) were missing monthly fire extinguisher inspections.
- Five POs (38 percent) had blocked fire extinguishers.
- Five POs (38 percent) had blocked electrical panels.
- Four POs (31 percent) had multiple instances of ladders and flammable materials not stored properly.
- Five POs (38 percent) had unsecure rear building doors (see [Figure 4](#)).

Figure 4: Unsecured Door



Source: OIG photo taken October 1, 2018 – Five Points Station.

Maintenance staff remedied certain deficiencies brought to their attention during our site visits, such as unblocking exits and electrical panels and securing unlocked doors; however, these were temporary remedies and not long-term solutions. When corrective actions are not implemented, or are implemented but inadequate, issues may continue to exist, increasing the Postal Service’s potential exposure to OSHA fines and the risk of injury to employees and customers.

Recommendation #1

The **Manager, Arizona District**, develop and implement an action plan to address roof issues at the Five Points Station, including a timeline for completing items.

Recommendation #2

The **Manager, Arizona District**, develop and implement an action plan to monitor and address the movement of cracks in concrete at the Albuquerque Main Post Office, including a timeline for hiring a structural engineer and completing items.

Recommendation #3

The **Manager, Arizona District**, develop and implement an action plan to address all building maintenance, safety and security issues identified during our audit, including a timeline for completing items.

¹⁰ The target time for distribution of mail to the letter carriers.

¹¹ The target time for having mail ready for collection by PO Box customers.

¹² For our audit purposes we used 30 minutes as a minimum threshold.

Finding #2: Delayed Mail

During the audit, there were no reported occurrences (by the Postal Service) or physical observations (by the audit team) of delayed mail at the 13 PO facilities we reviewed. While there were occurrences of late scans for Distribution Up-Time (DUT)¹⁰ and PO Box Up-Time,¹¹ they did not explicitly result in delayed mail.

Each facility must have a scheduled DUT for distributing mail to carriers and PO Box Up-Time for committed box mail to be finalized and available to customers. The up-time varies from facility to facility and is established based on variables, such as mail arrival time, average truck mail volume dispatched from processing plants, and staffing availability. The Postal Service reports and maintains up-time scan data for 30 days in SPMS. Customer Service management is required to check CSDRS throughout the day to ensure all scans are captured and document the reasons for any delays.

“While there were occurrences of late scans for DUT and PO Box Up-Time, they did not explicitly result in delayed mail.”

Of the 24 facilities in Albuquerque, 12 have delivery functions and 17 have PO Box functions. As of March 2019, there were 19,076 rented PO boxes at these facilities. As indicated in [Table 3](#), all 12 facilities with delivery functions had late/missing scans for DUT, and all 17 facilities with PO Box functions had late/missing scans for PO Box Up-Time. In some instances, late scan times for the DUT ranged from 30 minutes¹² up to 6.5 hours, and for PO Box Up-Time delays were up to 10 hours.

Table 3. Delivery Units Scheduled DUT and PO Box Up-Time

Unit Name	DISTRIBUTION UP-TIME				PO BOX UP-TIME			
	Period Reviewed (2018)	Late Scans	Missing Scans	Percentage Late / Missing Scans	Period Reviewed (2018)	Late Scans	Missing Scans	Percentage Late / Missing Scans
Academy Station	10/1-10/31	25	0	96%	10/1-10/31	25	0	96%
Airport Mail Facility	10/1-10/31	7	0	27%	10/1-10/31	9	0	35%
Alameda Branch	--	--	--	--	10/1-10/31	6	2	31%
Albuquerque MPO	9/17-10/25	25	0	76%	10/1-10/31	24	1	96%
Cottonwood Station	--	--	--	--	10/1-10/31	13	0	50%
Pino Station	9/17-10/25	24	0	75%	10/1-10/31	18	1	73%
Downtown Station	--	--	--	--	10/1-10/31	8	0	36%
Five Points Station	9/17-10/25	6	1	22%	10/1-10/31	19	0	73%
Foothills Station	9/17-10/25	14	1	47%	10/1-10/31	24	2	100%
Highland Station	9/17-10/25	0	1	3%	10/1-10/31	11	0	42%
Manzano Station	9/17-10/25	3	0	9%	10/1-10/31	13	0	50%
North Valley Retail & Delivery	9/17-10/25	27	0	84%	10/1-10/31	7	0	27%
Old Albuquerque Station	--	--	--	--	10/1-10/31	14	2	62%
Rio Rancho Station	9/17-10/25	19	0	59%	10/1-10/31	25	1	100%
Steve Schiff Station	9/17-10/25	20	0	63%	10/1-10/31	25	0	96%
University Station	--	--	--	--	10/1-10/31	5	0	19%
Uptown Station	9/17-10/25	6	0	18%	10/1-10/31	8	0	31%

Source: Analysis of Postal Service Distribution Up-Time report in CSDRS and PO Box Up-Time report in SPMS.

A review of CSDRS indicated that the necessary fields were incomplete to gauge a determination of the reasons why scans were late. Unit supervisors indicated they lacked knowledge in using the system or understanding of how to report late scan reasons in CSDRS.

On October 17, 2018, after our site visits, a Western Area representative facilitated a training¹³ to 12 managers on how to properly utilize CSDRS. The training included communicating the importance of using the system accurately for reporting purposes. The Albuquerque Postmaster and Customer Service Operations Manager, in turn, trained the supervisors on using the CSDRS. After the training, the Postmaster and Customer Service Operations Manager stated they will retrieve the CSDRS report daily and monitor it for any unusual entries to make sure issues are addressed immediately.

When systems are not used as intended or key information is not appropriately input, subsequent reports generated to assess performance or identify issues may not be comprehensive enough to conduct an adequate assessment of the circumstances. In this instance, management cannot appropriately identify delayed mail.

Recommendation #4

The **Manager, Arizona District**, instruct customer service operations management to monitor, report and record all instances of delayed mail daily in the Customer Service Daily Reporting System.

Finding #3: Staffing Levels

From FY 2016 through 2018, staffing levels in the Arizona District have had an overall slight net increase. However, for Albuquerque PO facilities, the number of employees on board in maintenance and customer service functions have decreased by a double-digit percentage, while delivery functions employees on board have slightly increased as illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4. On Board Staff Level Changes from FY 2016 to FY 2018

Function	FY 2016	FY 2018	Employee Increase (Decreased)	Percentage Change
ARIZONA DISTRICT				
Maintenance	714	665	(49)	-6.86%
Customer Service	2,073	1,922	(151)	-7.28%
Delivery	6,828	7,096	268	3.93%
Total	9,615	9,683	68	0.71%
CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE POS				
Maintenance	15	13	(2)	-13.33%
Customer Service	143	127	(16)	-11.19%
Delivery	732	768	36	4.92%
Total	890	908	18	2.02%
13 POS REVIEWED				
Maintenance	7	6	(1)	-14.29%
Customer Service	82	74	(8)	-9.76%
Delivery	413	421	8	1.94%
Total	502	501	(1)	-0.20%

Source: Eagan Mainframe Payroll System and OIG analysis.

¹³ Course Title: CSDRS – Customer Service Daily Volume Recording System Training.

Understaffing allegations were specific to two concerns: poor facility maintenance and upkeep and untimely mail distributions. To assess the validity of these claims, we analyzed the following:

1. Maintenance staffing levels at Albuquerque POs. As shown in Table 5, over a three-year period from FYs 2016 to 2018:

- The number of authorized staff was reduced by one position, from 16 to 15.
- The number of vacancies at the end of FYs 2016 to 2018 was one, one, and two, respectively.

Table 5. FYs 2016 to 2018 Authorized Maintenance Staff Complement

	2016			2017			2018		
	Authorized	On Board	Vacant	Authorized	On Board	Vacant	Authorized	On Board	Vacant
Albuquerque POs	16	15	1	16	15	1	15	13	2
13 POs Reviewed	8	7	1	8	7	1	7	6	1

Source: Arizona District and OIG analysis.

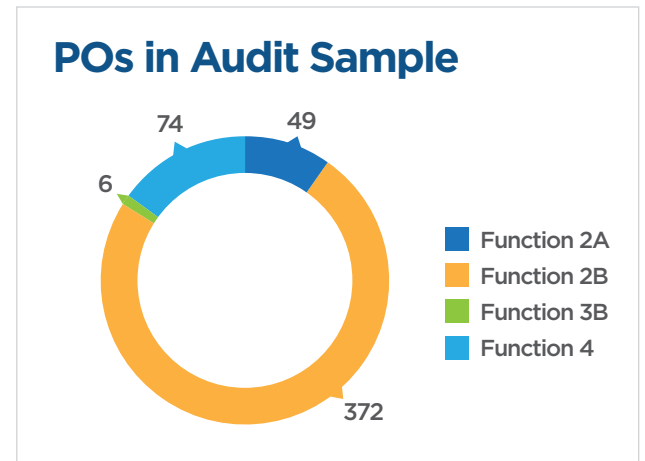
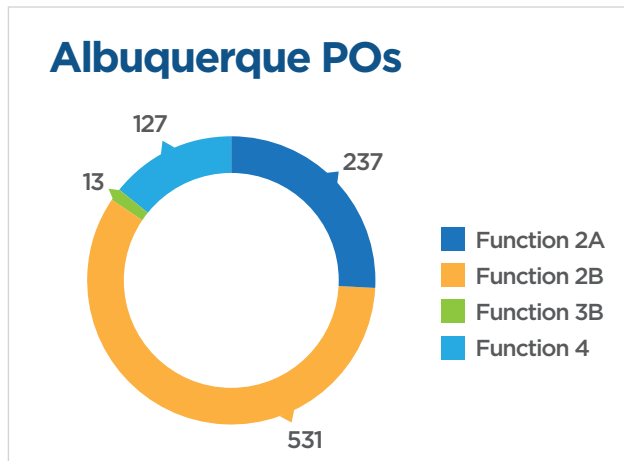
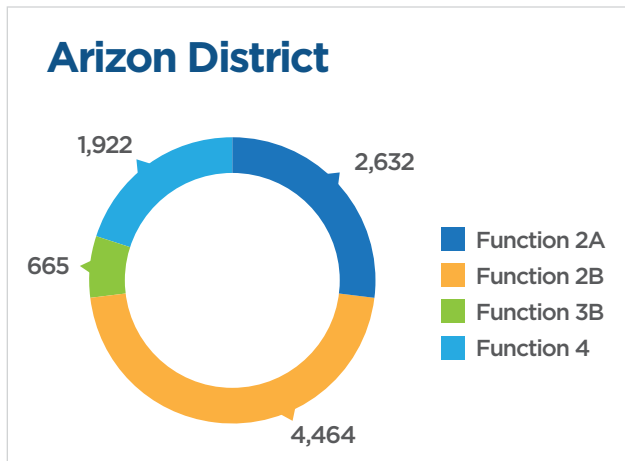
2. Customer service staffing levels at Albuquerque POs. As shown in Table 6, over a three-year period from FYs 2016 to 2018:

- The number of authorized staff was increased by 10, from 130 to 140.
- The number of vacancies were 5 and 13 for fiscal years 2017 and 2018. At the end of fiscal year 2016 there were no vacancies.

Table 6. FYs 2016 to 2018 Authorized Customer Service Complement

	2016			2017			2018		
	Authorized	On Board	Vacant	Authorized	On Board	Vacant	Authorized	On Board	Vacant
Albuquerque POs	130	143	+13	135	130	5	140	127	13
13 POs Reviewed	73	82	+9	78	76	2	80	74	6

Source: Arizona District and OIG analysis.



Management indicated the reduction in customer service operations staff on board from FY 2016 to 2018 was due to attritions.

As of September 2018, the Arizona District's facility staff on board for the following functions was:

- Delivery services – Function 2A, rural delivery carriers:** (District) 2,632 employees, (Albuquerque units) 237 employees, and (13 POs in audit scope) 49 employees. **Function 2B, city delivery carriers:** (District) 4,464 employees, (Albuquerque units) 531 employees, and (13 POs in audit scope) 372 employees.
- Maintenance – Function 3B:** (District) 665 employees, (Albuquerque units) 13 employees, and (13 POs in audit scope) 6 employees.
- Customer Service - Function 4:** (District) 1,922 employees, (Albuquerque units) 127 employees, and (13 POs in audit scope) 74 employees.

Based on the staffing analysis of authorized complements and employees on board as of September 2018, the following factors would conclude that staffing was not a significant impact to the poor facility maintenance and upkeep and/or delayed mail distributions:

- The overall maintenance staff complement has not been significantly reduced over the last three years. (Facility Conditions).

- The overall number of maintenance staff vacancies have remained relatively low over the last three years. (Facility Conditions).
- The overall number of customer service complement has increased over the last three years. (Mail Distributions).
- Although there has been a reduction in total employees on the board over the last three years, there were no reported occurrences (by the Postal Service) or physical observations (by the audit team) of delayed mail in this audit. (Mail Distributions).

Although staffing on board was not determined to be the cause of the issues identified in this report, filling vacant positions is essential for any organization to meet overall goals and objectives. Likewise, long-term vacancies and/or reductions in authorized complement can serve as a constraint in maintaining facilities within required standards, processing and delivering mail timely, and efficiently managing operations and costs.

Recommendation #5

The **Manager, Arizona District**, hire additional maintenance operations and customer service operations staff at applicable facilities up to the authorized staffing levels at appropriate locations.

Management's Comments

Management agreed with all of the report's findings and recommendations.

Regarding recommendation 1, management stated the Five Points Station roof replacement project began on April 16, 2019, and was expected to be completed by May 24, 2019. Management also stated that a water-stained ceiling is not a safety concern and they will replace the roofs as needed. The target implementation date was May 24, 2019.

Regarding recommendation 2, management stated that they have contracted with the same engineering firm that investigated the wall crack issues to monitor wall cracks movement at the Albuquerque Main Post Office. Management stated the contractor is scheduled to be onsite May 30, 2019, and monthly thereafter to inspect gauges, take measurements, and submit a report to the Postal Service for review following each visit. The target implementation is May 30, 2019.

Regarding recommendation 3, management stated the required annual (2019) and monthly (May) fire extinguisher inspections have been completed at all facilities, and maintenance supervisors will monitor monthly inspections for compliance. Management also stated that they have corrected the blocked fire extinguisher, the electrical panel, and ladder storage issues identified in the audit, and have added these items to the daily building inspection safety checklist report. Further, management stated that they have instructed facility managers and supervisors to verify and enforce compliance with building security requirements. Lastly, management stated that they have informed all employees at all Albuquerque facilities about door security requirements. Management did not provide a target implementation date.

Regarding recommendation 4, management stated that on May 16 and 17, 2019, the Postmaster and Manager of Customer Service Operations provided trainings to all managers and supervisors on the proper use CSDRS to report delayed mail. Management stated that to ensure ongoing compliance, the Manager

of Customer Service Operations will randomly visit stations daily to check for delayed mail and for consistency with CSDRS reporting. The target implement date was May 17, 2019.

Regarding recommendation 5, management stated that they are currently filling 14 vacant customer service operations positions using the American Postal Worker Union (APWU) Residual Vacancy Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) process. Management stated that they expect to fill all vacant positions no later than August 3, 2019. Management also stated that after employees processed under the APWU Residual Vacancy MOU are in place, those employees actually on the rolls will be aligned with the authorized complement.

For the custodial staff, management stated that Albuquerque facilities have earned 15.26 custodial positions according to the Postal Service Housekeeping Postal Facilities staffing model. However, only 14 employees are currently on the rolls. Management stated that they have submitted a request for an additional custodial position on May 22, 2019. The target implementation is August 3, 2019.

See [Appendix B](#) for management's comments in their entirety.

Evaluation of Management's Comments

The OIG considers management's comments responsive to the recommendations and planned actions should resolve the issues identified in the report.

All recommendations require OIG concurrence before closure. Consequently, the OIG requests written confirmation when corrective actions are completed. Recommendations should not be closed in the Postal Service's follow-up tracking system until the OIG provides written confirmation that the recommendations can be closed.

Appendices

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Appendix A: Additional Information

Scope and Methodology

Our scope included 13 judgmentally selected facilities in Albuquerque – eight named in inquiries received from Congresswoman Michelle Lujan Grisham’s and Senator Tom Udall’s offices and five that we randomly selected based on geographical proximity to other Albuquerque facilities.

To accomplish our objective, we:

- Interviewed APWU officials to obtain their feedback on facility conditions and safety grievances.
- Completed facility condition review checklists for each facility and summarized the results.
- Accessed the FSSP, eFMS, and eMARS to review repair and maintenance records and determine maintenance spend for FYs 2017 and 2018.
- Reviewed and analyzed data in the eFMS, eMARS, and applicable reports in the Safety Toolkit to determine if building-related issues identified were corrected.

- Reviewed and analyzed data in the Mainframe Payroll System, Web Complement Information System, and Postal Service Enterprise Data Warehouse to assess staffing levels at Albuquerque facilities.
- Interviewed the postmaster, maintenance manager and staff for Albuquerque facilities to obtain an understanding of their roles and responsibilities and procedures related to maintenance, safety and security standards, and mail distribution.

We conducted this performance audit from October 2018 through May 2019, 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 objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We discussed our observations and conclusions with management on May 3, 2019, and included their comments where appropriate.

We assessed the reliability of data from CSDRS. Although management did not always accurately input daily mail data in CSDRS, we determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

Prior Audit Coverage

Report Title	Objective	Report Number	Final Report Date	Monetary Impact (in millions)
<i>Facility Condition Review - Capping Report</i>	Identify trends or systemic issues identified from previous OIG facility condition reviews of Postal Service retail facilities.	SM-AR-18-005	6/21/2018	None
<i>Delivery Delays - Atlanta District</i>	Evaluate mail delivery delays in selected delivery units in the Atlanta District.	DR-AR-18-007	7/3/2018	\$11
<i>Working Conditions at the Jal Post Office</i>	Investigate reported poor working conditions at the Jal Post Office in NM.	HR-MA-15-004	3/19/2015	None

Appendix B: Management's Comments

DISTRICT MANAGER
ARIZONA/NEW MEXICO DISTRICT



May 23, 2019

LAZERICK POLAND
DIRECTOR, AUDIT OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: *US Postal Service response to May 8, 2019 Draft Audit Report - Facility Conditions, Delayed Mail and Staffing Levels in Albuquerque, NM. (Report Number SM-AR-19-DRAFT)*

The Arizona/New Mexico District Manager has thoroughly reviewed and considered The Draft Audit Report – Facility Conditions, Delayed Mail and staffing Levels in Albuquerque, NM issued by the Office of Inspector General, United States Postal Service dated May 8, 2019.

Based on a review of the Draft Audit, we agree with the findings and recommendations made by the Office of Inspector General related to facility conditions, delayed mail and staffing levels in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Each recommendation will be addressed in detail below.

Recommendation 1: The Manager, Arizona District develop and implement an action plan to address roof issues at the Five Points Station, including a timeline for completing items.

Management Response/Action Plan: Management is in agreement with this recommendation. The project to replace the roof of the Five Points Station building is currently in progress. The Postal Service has entered into a contract with Tabcon Inc. to perform the roof replacement project. The contract number is 089495-19-B-0039. The roof replacement project commenced on April 16, 2019 and is expected to be completed by May 24, 2019. The Postal Service would note that although water stained ceiling tiles are unsightly, they are not a safety concern and they will be replaced as needed.

Target Implementation Date: May 24, 2019.

Responsible Official: Manager, Maintenance, Albuquerque P&DC.

Recommendation 2: The Manager, Arizona District, develop and implement an action plan to monitor and address the movement of cracks in concrete at the Albuquerque Main Post Office, including a timeline for hiring a structural engineer and completing items.

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Management Response/Action Plan: Management is in agreement with this recommendation. As noted in the OIG Draft Audit, the Postal Service contracted with a structural engineer in October of 2017 to evaluate the cracks at the Albuquerque Main Post Office. In May of 2018, the structural engineer installed multiple crack gauges on walls at the facility to measure movement over a five month period. In November of 2018, a report was issued by the structural engineer concluding that most of the cracks had stabilized and were no longer moving. There was a recommendation that the Postal Service continue to monitor the cracks for an additional 1-2 years. NCA Architects was hired effective May 10, 2019 to monitor the movement in the cracks. The firm is scheduled to be onsite to inspect the gauges and to take measurements on May 30, 2019. Thereafter, the firm will visit the facility monthly to take measurements and after each visit will submit a report of findings.

Target Implementation Date: May 30, 2019.

Responsible Official: Manager, Maintenance, Albuquerque P&DC.

Recommendation 3: The Manager, Arizona District develop and implement an action plan to address all building maintenance, safety and security issues identified during our audit, including a timeline for completing items.

Management Response/Action Plan: Management agrees, in principle, with the recommendation that management develop and implement a plan to address building maintenance, safety and security issues identified during the audit. Management provides the following specific responses and action plans.

Annual fire extinguisher inspections for 2019 have been completed on all fire extinguishers at all stations. Monthly fire extinguisher inspections have been completed on all fire extinguishers at all stations for the month of May. Monthly inspections are on the monthly maintenance EMSYS routes and will be monitored by Maintenance Supervisors for ongoing compliance.

The blocked fire extinguisher and electrical panel areas identified in the audit have been cleared. Red tape has been placed on the floor in front of the fire extinguishers and electrical panels to designate a non-storage area to prevent blockage in the future.

All ladders are properly stored in the correct locations.

Daily safety checklist will be used during the daily "gemba" walk through the building to validate the fire extinguishers and electrical panels are not blocked and ladders stored properly each day.

Rear building doors have been locked and pinned. The only time the doors will be kept unlocked is for short periods during peak (carrier) leaving times. At all other times, the rear dock doors will be kept locked. Managers and Supervisors have been instructed to verify and enforce compliance with building security requirements. Stand up talks have been completed at every station to inform all employees of required door security. (Attachments)

Target Implementation Date: Completed.

Responsible Official: Postmaster, Albuquerque

Recommendation 4: The Manager, Arizona District instruct customer service operations management to monitor, report and record all instances of delayed mail daily in the Customer Service Daily Reporting System (CSDRS).

Management Response/Action Plan: Management is in agreement with this recommendation. As noted in the OIG Audit, a review of the CSDRS information indicated that the necessary fields in the systems were incomplete and it was not possible to determine the reason(s) for the late scans. Further, unit supervisors indicated that they lacked sufficient knowledge about using the system or how to report late scan reasons properly in CSDRS. This appears to be a training issue related to scanning protocol and not reflective of an actual issue that resulted in delayed mail.

As further indicated in the OIG Audit, on October 17, 2018, Western Area Operations Program Analyst Jon Hummel trained all station managers and acting stations managers on how to properly use CSDRS to report delayed mail. Postmaster Chris Yazzie and Manager Customer Services Operations (MCSO) Janell Aragon attended this training. On May 16, 2019 and May 17, 2019, Postmaster Yazzie and MCSO Aragon provided additional training to ensure all managers and supervisors have a clear understanding about how to properly use CSDRS to report delayed mail. To ensure ongoing compliance, the MCSO Aragon will randomly visit stations on a daily basis to check for delayed mail and for consistency with CSDRS reporting. (Attachment)

Target Implementation Date: Completed May 17, 2019.

Responsible Official: Postmaster, Albuquerque and MCSO, Albuquerque PO

Recommendation #5: The Manager, Arizona District, hire additional maintenance operations and customer service operations staff at applicable facilities up to the authorized staffing levels at appropriate locations.

Management Response/Action Plan: Management is in agreement with the recommendation that the Arizona District hire additional maintenance operations and customer service operations staff at applicable facilities up to the authorized staffing levels at the appropriate locations. (Attachment)

Customer Service Operations (Clerk positions): Currently, the Albuquerque Post Office has 14 vacant bid clerk positions: eleven (11) in the bidding process, and three (3) in the eReassign process. All current clerk bid positions are filled utilizing the APWU Residual Vacancy Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and expected to be filled no later than June 22, 2019, with the exception of the SSDA bid position at Five Points Station, which is expected to be filled no later than August 3, 2019. Once the clerk bid positions are filled, the Albuquerque Post Office will be 11 bid positions (not actual employees on the rolls) over earned. As bids become vacant, the Albuquerque management team will follow contractual procedures to align the number of actual bid positions with the number of authorized bid positions.

Moreover, the Albuquerque Post Office is currently under earned clerk complement by three (actual employees on the rolls). Once the employees being processed in eReassign are placed, the actual complement will be aligned with the authorized complement. There will be the same number of employees on the rolls as compared to the authorized positions. This is different from the number of bid positions as compared to authorized (earned), to include PSE positions, discussed above.

Maintenance Operations (Custodial positions): Custodian staffing is governed by the Handbook MS47. In accordance with the current MS47 staffing model, no vacant custodial position exists in the Albuquerque Post Office; however, the request for an additional custodial position was submitted for approval on May 22, 2019. The complement dashboard shows on-rolls incrementally under earned positions due to rounding rules. The chart below shows the number of earned positions allocated to each facility as well as the number of custodial positions (employees) actually on the rolls. Across the Albuquerque facilities, the total number of earned custodial positions is 15.26. It is important to note that the earned positions for each facility are not expressed in whole numbers. For example, Academy Station has 1.32 earned positions based on the custodial workload. This would result in 1 custodial employee on the rolls although authorized more than one position (-.32). Similarly and conversely, Manzano Station has .83 earned positions with 1 custodial employee on the rolls (+.17). Some stations have slightly more work than the number of custodial employees on the rolls and other stations have less work than the number of custodial


employees on the rolls. The overall net results across all stations is 15.26 earned positions with 14 employees on the rolls. Management contends that, despite there being an overall difference of (+1.26) earned positions as compared to employees on the rolls, there is no facility that is understaffed by more than a fraction of a position.

Based on the MS 47, there is not an office that earns an additional FT position. Complement is working with the installation head to request an additional position by having the MS 47 reviewed.

FINANCE NUMBER	FINANCE NAME	EARNED	ON ROLLS	VACANT
340128	ABQ-ACADEMY STA	1.32	1	0
340138	ABQ-MANZANO STA	0.83	1	0
340141	ABQ-OLD TOWN PLAZA STA	0.05	0	0
340145	ABQ-UNIVERSITY STA	0.31	0	0
340131	ABQ-DOWNTOWN STA	0	0	0
340132	ABQ-COTTONWOOD STA	0.15	0	0
340134	ABQ-FOOTHILLS STA	0.94	1	0
340139	ABQ-NORTH VALLEY CARRIER ANX	1.09	1	0
340140	ABQ-OLD ALBUQUERQUE STA	0.23	0	0
340142	ABQ-RICHARD PINO STA	1.83	2	0
340146	ABQ-UPTOWN STA	1.41	1	0
340147	ALBUQUERQUE PO	0	0	0
340133	ABQ-FIVE POINTS STA	1.3	1	0
340135	ABQ-GALLERIA STA	0.13	0	0
340137	ABQ-KIRTLAND AFB BR	0.24	0	0
340144	ABQ-STEVE SCHIFF STA	1.19	1	0
340127	ABQ-MAIN OFFICE STA	0.17	0	0
340129	ABQ-AIRPORT STA	1.36	2	0
340130	ABQ-ALAMEDA STA	0.13	0	0
340136	ABQ-HIGHLAND STA	1.23	1	0
340143	ABQ-RIO RANCHO BR	1.35	2	0
TOTALS		15.26	14	0

Target Implementation Date: August 3, 2019.

Responsible Official: Postmaster, Albuquerque


Richard M. Chavez
District Manager, Arizona District (A)



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UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

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