



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

Delivery and Customer Service Operations – Bronx, NY

Audit Report

Report Number
DR-AR-17-004

April 20, 2017





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Highlights

Background

Delivering high-quality service and providing excellent customer experiences are performance outcome goals the U.S. Postal Service has established to measure corporate strategy success and continuous improvement efforts.

Mail delivery and retail services present challenges in large populous areas, such as the Bronx, where many people live in multi-family buildings and high-rise apartments. Owners or managers of apartment buildings, or other multi-unit dwellings are responsible for providing carriers access to buildings and for the purchase, installation, and maintenance of mail receptacles, authorized by Postal Service authorities. Failure to follow policy is sufficient justification for withholding mail delivery and requiring occupants to call for their mail at the local post office or carrier delivery unit.

Mail delivery in the Bronx and other areas in the New York District is accomplished by using two types of routes – a foot route and a parcel route. A foot route carrier walks the route and delivers letters, flats, and small packages that fit into their carts. Carriers on dedicated parcel routes supplement multiple foot routes by using vehicles to deliver packages and any other mail that cannot fit into the foot route cart.

When packages cannot be delivered, carriers must complete a Postal Service (PS) Form 3849, Delivery Notice/Reminder/Receipt, and place it in the customer's mailbox. Carriers must

endorse packages with their initials, route number, and date of initial attempt. Carriers then return the packages to the station for redelivery or pick up by the customer. Customers claim their packages by presenting PS Form 3849 to the retail employee at the location shown on the form. Customers may request redelivery on the PS Form 3849 or online through My Post Office®. If the package is not redelivered or picked up by the customer within 15 days of the initial delivery attempt, it is returned to the sender.

This audit responds to concerns raised about mail service at selected offices in the Bronx borough of New York City, New York. Customers complained of long lines, rude retail employees, and misdelivered and untimely mail delivery.

Our objective was to evaluate mail delivery delays and customer retail service at selected delivery units in the Bronx.

What the OIG Found

Mail was not always delivered timely by carriers at the nine selected stations in the Bronx. This occurred primarily because parcel route carriers lacked access to many buildings while foot route carriers had access through the use of non-postal keys provided by building owners or managers, a practice that does not comply with Postal Service policy. Additionally, some buildings had damaged or unsecured mailboxes which stopped the carrier from delivering mail to those addresses.



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Although station management for these selected locations have attempted to enforce Postal Service policy by requesting building owners to correct access issues or repair broken boxes, many building owners or managers have not responded to these requests.

In addition, retail customers faced long wait times in line averaging seven minutes or more, up to a maximum of 56 minutes. Customers picking up packages experienced even longer wait times, averaging 12 minutes or more, up to a maximum of two hours. Further, our analysis of the Enterprise Customer Care system complaint data showed 43 of 491 customer complaints were not resolved timely. These issues were caused by the high number of undelivered

packages, inefficient package storage methods, and station personnel not sending final PS Form 3849 notifications to customers for mail stored at the station.

New York District management has taken some corrective actions and is in the process of implementing additional actions to address customer complaints. These include: purchasing parcel lockers, conducting on site reviews, implementing service specific retail customer services lines, adding mobile point of sale devices to improve wait time in line, holding “meet and greet” sessions with customers to better understand customer needs, monitoring wait time in line and notifying station management when wait times exceed established goals.



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Successful delivery of packages on the first attempt is important to the customer and the Postal Service to meet customer expectations and to save the Postal Service additional handlings and labor costs associated with redelivering the package or storing and retrieving it for customer pick up.

In other matters, the Postal Service could benefit from additional communication to mitigate customer complaints. During our observations and in conversations with customers and delivery unit employees, we found that additional communication efforts could be beneficial to the residents served by the nine units we visited. A joint effort by Postal Service district management, building owners, and city

officials, would serve to show customers that their complaints have been heard and are being addressed.

What the OIG Recommended

We recommended management coordinate with building owners or managers to comply with Postal Service access and mail receptacle policies, evaluate existing package storage methods, and provide refresher training to staff responsible for the notification procedures of packages stored at the stations. We also recommended management conduct additional community outreach activities to enhance the customer experience.


Transmittal Letter



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

April 20, 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR: LORRAINE G. CASTELLANO
DISTRICT MANAGER, NEW YORK DISTRICT

E-Signed by Janet Sorensen
VERIFY authenticity with eSign Desktop


FROM: Janet M. Sorensen
Deputy Assistant Inspector General
for Retail, Delivery, and Marketing

SUBJECT: Audit Report –Delivery and Customer Service
Operations – Bronx, NY
(Report Number DR-AR-17-004)

This report presents the results of our audit of Delivery and Customer Service Operations – Bronx, NY (Project Number 17RG008DR000).

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesies provided by your staff. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Rita F. Oliver, Director, Delivery, or me at 703-248-2100.

Attachment

cc: Corporate Audit and Response Management
Postmaster General
Vice President, Delivery Operations
Vice President, Northeast Area Operations

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Findings

Mail was not always delivered timely by carriers at the nine selected stations in the Bronx because parcel route carriers lacked access to many buildings.

Introduction

This report presents the results of our audit of Delivery and Customer Service Operations – Bronx, New York (Project Number 17RG008DR000). This audit responds to concerns raised about mail service at selected offices in the Bronx borough of New York City, New York. Customers complained of long lines, rude retail employees, and misdelivered and untimely mail delivery. Our objective was to evaluate mail delivery delays and customer retail service at selected stations¹ in the Bronx. See [Appendix A](#) for additional information about this audit.

Delivering high-quality service and providing excellent customer experiences are performance outcome goals the Postal Service has established to measure corporate strategy success and continuous improvement efforts. For mail delivery, the goal is to deliver 96.5 percent of the mail on time. For retail services, the customer experience goal is a wait time in line of five minutes or less for domestic transactions.

In fiscal year (FY) 2016,² the New York District received 13,395 customer complaints regarding mail delivery and customer services at post offices and stations. Of these, 491 were complaints about the selected nine stations; specifically, 39 misdelivery of mail, 298 untimely mail delivery, 127 unprofessional behavior by Postal Service employees, and 27 complaints about long lines. Mail delivery in the Bronx, and other areas in the New York District, is accomplished by a foot route and a parcel route. A foot route carrier walks the route and delivers letters, flats, and small packages that fit into their carts (see Figure 1).

Carriers on dedicated parcel routes supplement multiple foot routes by using vehicles to deliver packages and any other mail that cannot fit into the foot route cart.

Summary

Mail was not always delivered timely by carriers at the nine selected stations in the Bronx. This occurred primarily because parcel route carriers lacked access to many buildings, while foot route carriers had access through the use of [REDACTED], a practice that does not comply with Postal Service policy. Additionally, some buildings had damaged or unsecured mailboxes which stopped the carrier from delivering mail to those addresses. Although station management for these selected locations have attempted to enforce Postal Service policy by requesting building owners to correct access issues or repair broken boxes, many building owners or managers have not responded to these requests.

Figure 1. Carrier Cart Loaded with Mail



Foot Route Carrier Cart

Delivery carts are normally designed to carry two satchels and have a normal load carrying capacity of 90 pounds.

Source: Photo provided to OIG by Hub Station management.

¹ Nine stations reviewed included Boulevard Station, Bronx General Post Office, Hub Station, Hunts Point Station, Morrisiana Station, Mott Haven Station, Soundview Station, Tremont Station, and West Farms Station.

² The Postal Service changed the formatting for reporting complaints effective February 19, 2016. Therefore, complaint data was reviewed from February 19, 2016 through September 30, 2016.

In addition, retail customers faced long wait times in line (WTIL) averaging seven minutes or more, up to a maximum of 56 minutes. Customers picking up packages experienced even longer wait times, averaging 12 minutes or more, up to a maximum of two hours. Further, our analysis of the Enterprise Customer Care (eCC) system complaint data showed 43 of 491 customer complaints were not resolved timely. These issues were caused by the high number of undelivered packages, inefficient package storage methods, and station personnel not sending final Postal Service (PS) Form 3849, Delivery Notice/Reminder/Receipt, notifications to customers for mail stored at the station.

New York District management has taken some corrective actions and is in the process of implementing additional actions to address customer complaints. These include: purchasing parcel lockers, conducting on site reviews, implementing service specific retail customer services lines, adding mobile point of sale devices to improve WTIL, holding “meet and greet” sessions with customers to better understand customer needs, monitoring WTIL and notifying station management when wait times exceed established goals.

Successful delivery of packages on the first attempt is important to the customer and the Postal Service to meet customer expectations and to save the Postal Service additional handlings and labor costs associated with redelivering the package or storing and retrieving it for customer pick up.

In other matters, the Postal Service could benefit from additional communication to mitigate customer complaints. During our observations and in conversations with customers and delivery unit employees, we found that additional communication efforts could be beneficial to the residents served by the nine units we visited. A joint effort by Postal Service district management, building owners, and city officials would serve to show customers that their complaints have been heard and are being addressed.

Untimely Mail Delivery

Mail was not always delivered timely by carriers at the nine selected stations in the Bronx. Specifically, parcel route carriers had limited access to buildings, while foot route carriers had access through the use of [REDACTED], a practice that does not comply with Postal Service policy. Additionally, mail could not be delivered to buildings that had damaged or unsecured mailboxes. See [Appendix B](#).

Postal Service carriers must have access to the buildings along their routes and secure mail receptacles in those buildings to successfully deliver the customers mail. If these conditions are not met by the responsible parties, customers can experience delivery delays and can incur additional liabilities if [REDACTED].

Successful delivery of packages on the first attempt is important to the customer and the Postal Service to meet customer expectations. A successful first delivery attempt saves the Postal Service additional handlings and labor costs and saves the customer the effort and time associated with going to the post office to pick up their package.

Postal Service policy requires building owners or managers of apartments, or other multi-unit dwellings, to provide appropriate building access authorized by postal authorities.

Limited Building Access

We found many buildings that did not have Postal Service approved access methods. In order to deliver the mail, foot route carriers often [REDACTED] [REDACTED] where the mailboxes are located. However, parcel route carriers did not have these [REDACTED] to access buildings and could not deliver packages, or leave the customer a notice of attempted delivery since they could not access the mailboxes. Postal carriers cannot deliver mail if doors to a building are locked and there is no authorized access method to allow the carrier entry (see Figure 2).

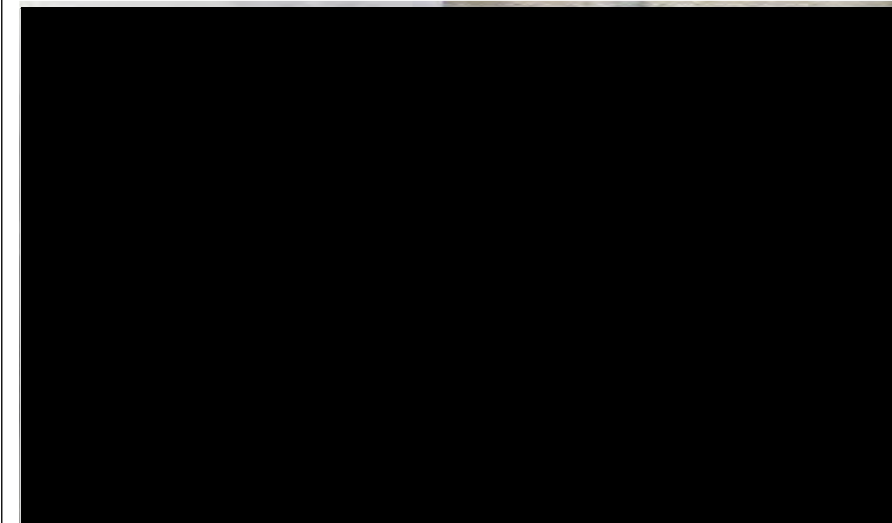
Postal Service policy³ requires building owners or managers of apartments, or other multi-unit dwellings, to provide appropriate building access authorized by postal authorities. [REDACTED]

Figure 2. Building Entrance with No Postal Approved Access Method



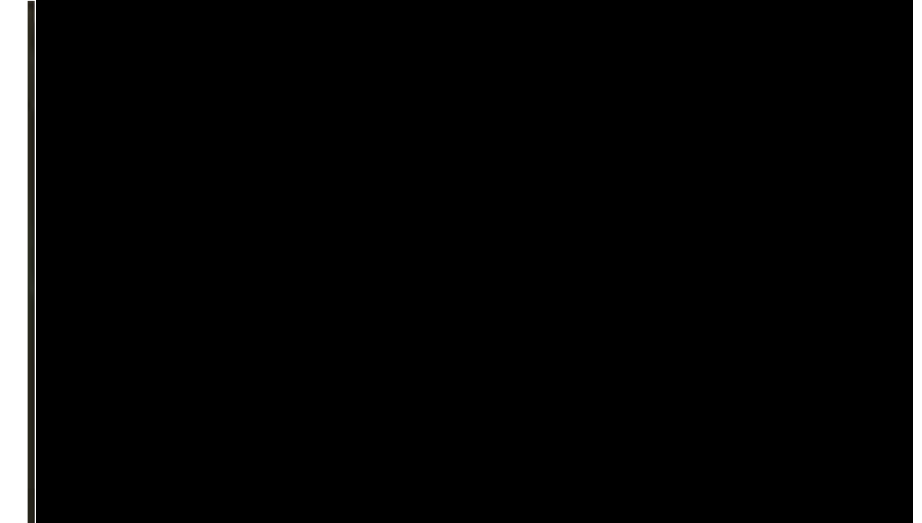
Postal Service policy states that carriers are prohibited from [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. However, we found carriers at all nine stations were [REDACTED] (see Figure 4).

Figure 3. [REDACTED]



Source: Mailbox and Key Keeper Installation Requirements for Manhattan and the Bronx.

Figure 4. [REDACTED]



Source: OIG photographs taken December 7 and 8, 2016.

³ Postal Operations Manual (POM), Section 631 Modes of Delivery.

⁴ [REDACTED]

We obtained the number of [REDACTED] used by each of the nine selected sites and found a total of 2,345 keys being used by the 150 routes (see Table 1). We found one foot route had [REDACTED] along the route. We also identified one parcel route that delivered mail for six foot routes, theoretically, this carrier would need [REDACTED] to deliver packages to all buildings along this route.

Table 1. Non-Postal Keys by Station

Delivery Unit	Total [REDACTED]	Number of Routes
Boulevard Station	272	14
Bronx General Post Office	177	19
Hub Station	356	11
Hunts Point Station	80	6
Morrisiana Station	397	29
Mott Haven Station	263	12
Soundview Station	265	20
Tremont Station	145	21
West Farms Station	390	18
Total	[REDACTED]	150

We observed broken and unsecured mailboxes in some buildings we visited, preventing mail from being delivered.

Using [REDACTED] keys to open buildings is a time consuming task, especially when the mail is being delivered by a replacement carrier who may not be as familiar [REDACTED] as the regular carrier. The situation is magnified for parcel routes because they deliver packages for multiple foot routes and would require [REDACTED] from each of the foot routes to have the same access to the buildings. In addition to the time requirements and difficulty of carrying and using [REDACTED], [REDACTED]. The use of [REDACTED], as documented in Postal Service policy, is the preferred method of entry where necessary, as [REDACTED].

Unsecure Mail Receptacles

We observed broken and unsecured mailboxes in some buildings we visited, preventing mail from being delivered. Additionally, without a secure mail receptacle, the carrier would be unable to deliver the mail and would also be unable to leave a PS Form 3849 notification. Postal Service policy⁵, as well as New York City code⁶, requires building owners or managers to provide and maintain mail receptacles in good repair to ensure safety of access and security of the mail (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Broken Mailboxes at a Building



Source: OIG photograph taken December 8, 2016.

⁵ POM, Section 632 Mail Receptacles.

⁶ New York City Administrative Code § 27-232 [ADC Title 27 Chapter 2 Sub Chapter 2 Article 12 § 27-2047](#) Mail service.

Providing timely customer service to retrieve packages and respond to complaints enhances the customer's experience and the brand.

Station management has attempted to enforce Postal Service policy by sending written communications⁷ to building owners notifying them of these deficiencies; however, many building owners or managers have not responded to these requests. Failure to follow the policy is sufficient justification for withholding mail delivery and requiring customers to call for their mail at the local post office serving the customer's address. Withholding mail penalizes the customer who has no control over building access or unsecure mail receptacles.

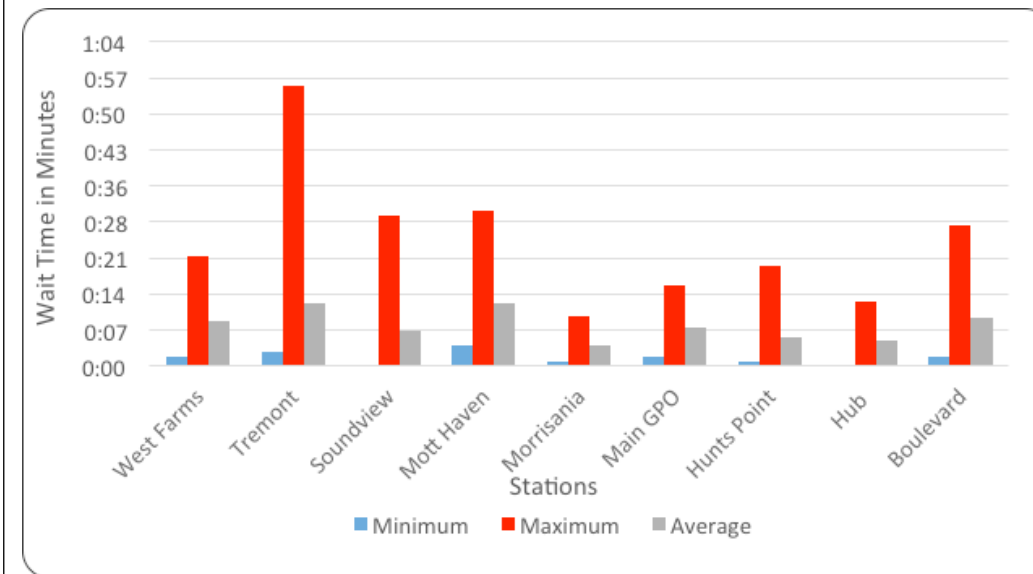
Improvements Needed In Customer Service Operations

High customer WTIL and untimely complaint resolution negatively impacted the overall customer experience at the nine selected stations. Specifically, some customers faced long wait times due to the high number of undelivered packages, inefficient package storage methods, and non-compliance with PS Form 3849 notification procedures. Further, our analysis of the Enterprise Customer Care (eCC) system complaint data showed not all customer complaints were not resolved timely. See [Appendix B](#). Providing timely customer service to retrieve packages and respond to complaints enhances the customer's experience and the brand.

Wait Time in Line

We observed WTIL for retail transactions often exceeded the five minute goal. Twenty-seven of 491 eCC complaints, at the nine locations we visited, were related to WTIL. Based on our observations, the wait time for retail transactions at six of the nine locations averaged seven minutes or more; while the maximum WTIL for retail services ranged from 10 to 56 minutes (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. OIG Observations of WTIL for Retail Services



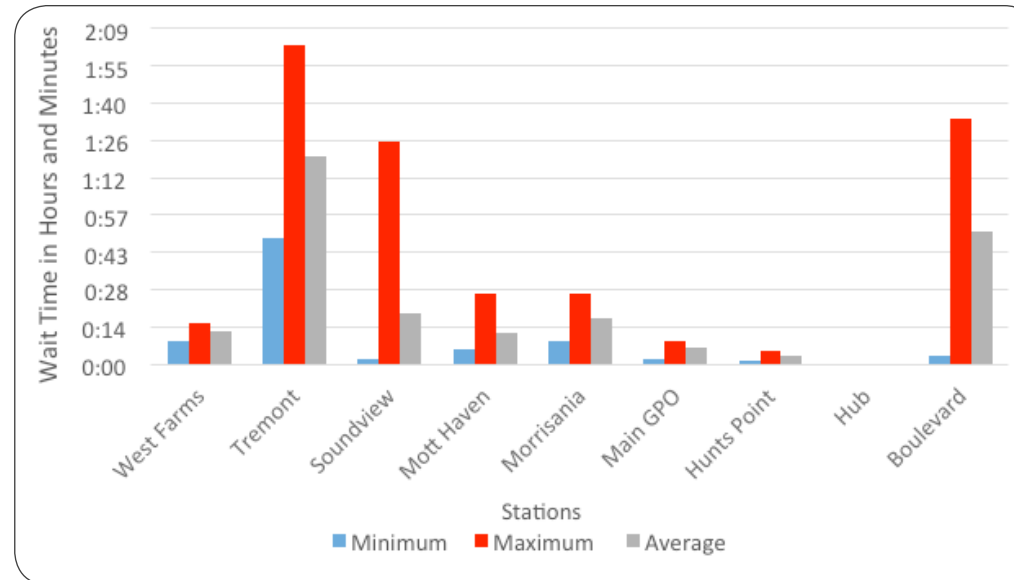
Eight⁸ of the nine stations we visited had a dedicated line for inquiry and package pick up. The wait time for inquiry and package pick up at six of the eight locations averaged 12 minutes or more, double the goal for retail services. Further, the maximum wait time ranged from five minutes to two hours for package pick up (see [Figure 7](#)).

⁷ POM, Section 623.1. Written communication included official letters requesting key keepers, or PS Form 1507, Request to Provide Mail Receptacle, to resolve access and mail receptacle issues.

⁸ The Hub Station did not have a dedicated line for inquiry and package pick up.

We observed packages in different areas behind the retail windows, stacked in different containers, and laying on the floor in no uniform order.

Figure 7. OIG Observations of WTIL for Inquiry and Package Pick Up



Our observations were performed December 5, 2016 through December 12, 2016, during the holiday peak season.

Customers experienced longer WTIL because of the high number of undelivered packages, inefficient package storage methods at some stations, and non-compliance with PS Form 3849 notification procedures.

- **Undelivered Packages:** Packages are returned to the station for customer pick up when carriers cannot deliver them due to building access or mailbox issues. Packages can also be returned for customer pick up when the carrier attempts delivery but receives no response from the customer and there is no secure location at the address to leave the package. These undelivered packages contributed to the increase in packages stored at the stations. Seven of the nine stations had high volumes of undelivered packages. For example, one station had 420 packages in storage that were not delivered or claimed by customers at the time of our observation.
- **Inefficient Package Storage:** Inefficient package storage methods at some stations contributed to the extensive WTIL. We observed packages in different areas behind the retail windows, stacked in different containers, and laying on the floor in no uniform order. In addition, at one station, we found 428 undelivered packages returned by carriers from three previous days. These packages were waiting to be filed by the station's storage method (see Figure 8).

When customers attempt to pick up their packages, or packages addressed to another person, without the PS Form 3849, or the required identification, it is difficult for employees to find the package without the date of the first attempt or the correct address. Station personnel are mandated to follow New York District policy of filing and storing packages by date of the first attempted delivery, unless

Figure 8. Packages Stored and Others Waiting to be Filed



Source: OIG photograph taken December 10, 2016.

an alternate method is approved by the district. However, Postal Service policy⁹ and a headquarters issued guide¹⁰ suggest a best practice of filing and storing packages by the last number(s) of the delivery address.

- **Notification Procedures:** The quantity of unclaimed packages stored at the station were also impacted because station personnel did not send final PS Form 3849 notices to customers. The final notice (second) is sent five days after the date of the first attempted delivery notifying the customer when the package will be returned if it is not picked up. According to Postal Service policy, mail stored at the station must have the date of the initial attempted delivery, the date the final notice was sent, and the date the package will be returned to sender¹¹ marked on the package. We observed only the date of initial attempt on packages stored at all the stations with no other dates to confirm whether a final PS Form 3849 was sent or if the item had exceeded the retention period. In addition, we found one station using PS Form 3849 imprinted with the wrong station contact information including an incorrect station and address for picking up their package and an incorrect contact phone number.

Unresolved Customer Complaints

Of the 491¹² customer complaints in the eCC system¹³ in FY 2016, management addressed all but 43 in the established goal of three business days¹⁴ (see Table 2). Station management stated some complaints took longer to resolve because it took multiple telephone calls to reach the customers for follow-up. In addition, of the 127 complaints, 53 were about unprofessional behavior by employees at the station. We did not observe unprofessional behavior by the station employees during our site visits.

Table 2. Customer Complaints Resolved After Established Timeframe

Type of Complaint	Number of Complaints Resolved One to Four Days After the Established Timeframe
Customer Service	8
Delivery	35
Total	43

Source: OIG analysis of eCC data.

Postal Service guidelines require management to record customer complaints on a control log to ensure a timely response. All information entered in eCC is held in history and is available to others. In some cases, the information may be used in legal litigations, so it is imperative that the information entered is thorough and accurate.

9 POM Section 619.251.

10 *Package and Flats Pickup and PO Box Delivery Standardization Guide* – March 2016.

11 Domestic parcels return date is 15 days from date of first attempted delivery, 30 days for international parcels.

12 The 491 complaints represented less than one percent of the 605,063 customers that visited these stations.

13 Customer complaints that cannot be immediately resolved are entered in the eCC system, which records and tracks customer complaint information for residential and small business customers.

14 Three-day resolution for complaints received by phone, letter, and email. Complaints received from the OIG have ten days for resolution.

Management Corrective Action

Postal Service management has taken, or is in the process of implementing, corrective action to address some of the issues related to delivery and customer services in the Bronx. These actions include purchasing 248 parcel lockers, with each unit equipped with eight individual locker units, for select New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) buildings¹⁵ (see Figure 9).

In addition, management is:

- Performing onsite unit reviews of delivery and customer service operations based on negative customer service surveys.
- Adding a gopost locker unit¹⁶ and researching the possibility of additional locker locations. Gopost units are automated, secured, self-service parcel lockers placed in convenient locations where customers can pick up or ship packages at their convenience (see Figure 10).

Figure 9. Sample Parcel Lockers



Source: Postal Service management.

Figure 10. Image of gopost Lockers



Source: Handbook PO-610, *Manager's Guide to Standard Operating Procedures*.

- Implementing service specific retail customer lines, such as stamps only, package pick up, and money order purchase lines.
- Adding mobile point of sale devices to improve WTIL.

¹⁵ Buildings that have sufficient space, approved method of access, and a co-located management office.

¹⁶ Gopost locker is serviced by the Cornell Station.

A joint effort by Postal Service district management, building owners, and city officials would serve to show customers that their complaints have been heard and are being addressed.

- Ordering Spanish language instruction posters to display in lobbies.
- Installing shelving at offices to store packages awaiting customer pick up, instead of using mail containers, to improve locating and retrieving packages.
- Adjusting station weekend operating hours and staffing, when needed, to better address customer needs.
- Holding “meet and greet” sessions with customers to better understand their needs.
- Monitoring WTIL using Retail Lobby Operations Center to notify station management when wait times exceed goals.
- Requiring supervisor, or higher level approval, before closing customer complaints.

Other Matters

The Postal Service could benefit from additional communication to mitigate customer complaints. During our observations and in conversations with customers and station employees, we found that additional communication efforts could be beneficial to the residents served by the nine stations we visited. A joint effort by Postal Service district management, building owners, and city officials, would serve to show customers that their complaints have been heard and are being addressed. An overview of efforts being taken to address their concerns would provide positive feedback to customers.

Recommendations

We recommend management coordinate with building owners or managers to comply with Postal Service policies, evaluate existing package storage methods, provide refresher training to staff, and conduct additional community outreach activities to enhance the customer experience.

We recommend the district manager, New York District:

1. Coordinate with building owners or managers to comply with Postal Service access and mail receptacle policies.
2. Evaluate existing package storing methods to ensure the most effective method is being utilized.
3. Provide refresher training to staff responsible for the notification procedures of packages stored at the stations.
4. Conduct additional community outreach activities to discuss actions being taken to address complaints and provide additional information to customers for enhancing the customer experience.

Management's Comments

Management agreed with the findings and recommendations. Management noted that the recommendations will improve customer satisfaction, service, and overall efficiency in the package pick up and retail operation.

For recommendation 1, Delivery and Post Office Operations has taken corrective action to coordinate with community representatives and building owners or managers to inform them of the [REDACTED] requirements for Postal Service access to buildings. Management expects to complete installation of the [REDACTED].

For recommendation 2, management stated they have determined that storage of packages by address is the most efficient storage method and instructed the locations to store packages by address. Management will implement this recommendation by May 19, 2017, and this should make it easier to locate a package without a PS Form 3849.

For recommendation 3, Operations Programs Support staff will train managers, supervisors, and craft employees. This training will stress the importance of sending second notices to customers timely. Management plans to complete the training by May 19, 2017.

For recommendation 4, the Bronx postmaster has been actively involved in community board meetings held in March 2017. The postmaster met with the Bronx borough president and his representatives from each community on March 23, 2017. In these meetings, information was shared on challenges the Postal Service faces regarding access to buildings. The goal was to emphasize the adverse impact on Postal Service customers and seek assistance with getting the building owners to [REDACTED] to increase Postal Service access, reduce customer complaints, and improve overall service to the community.

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

Evaluation of Management's Comments

The OIG considers management's comments responsive to the recommendations and corrective actions should resolve the issues identified in the report. Management actions, taken or planned, should reduce customer complaints, improve customer satisfaction and improve overall service to the community.

The OIG considers all the recommendations significant, and therefore requires OIG concurrence before closure. The OIG considers management's corrective actions to address community outreach issues completed in March 2017 to be sufficient to close recommendation 4 with the issuance of this report. The OIG requests written confirmation when corrective action is completed for the remaining recommendations. Recommendations 1, 2, and 3 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

Background

Delivering high-quality service and providing excellent customer experiences are performance outcome goals the Postal Service has established to measure corporate strategy success and continuous improvement efforts. For mail delivery, the goal is to deliver 96.5 percent¹⁷ of the mail on time. For retail services, the customer experience goal is a WTIL of five minutes or less for domestic transactions.

Mail delivery and retail services present challenges in large populous areas, such as the Bronx, where many people live in multi-family buildings and high-rise apartments. The Bronx is the northernmost of the five boroughs of New York City, within the state of New York (see Figure 11).

While the Bronx has the second smallest population of the five boroughs at 1.4 million residents, it has experienced the fastest population growth, at 9.2 percent between 2004 and 2014. If the Bronx were its own city, it would be the 8th largest in the U.S. by population.

NYCHA is the largest public housing authority in North America with 177,657 (as of March 1, 2016) apartments in 328 developments throughout New York City in 2,547 residential buildings. The Bronx has 89 developments with 44,295 apartments.

When mail cannot be delivered, carriers must complete PS Form 3849 and place it in the customer's mailbox. Carriers must endorse packages with the reason for non-delivery, date delivery was attempted, and the carrier's initials and route number. Carriers then return the package to the station for redelivery or pick up by the customer. Customers claim their mail by presenting PS Form 3849 to the retail employee at the location shown on the form (see Figure 12).

An additional attempt to deliver is made only if requested by the addressee. Customers may request redelivery on the PS Form 3849 or online through My Post Office®. If the package is not redelivered or picked up by the customer within 15 days of the initial delivery attempt, it is returned to the sender.

Figure 11. Bronx Borough of New York City



Source: nycmap360.com

Figure 12. Properly Completed PS Form 3849 – After Delivery

The top image shows the front of PS Form 3849. It includes fields for 'Item is at' (Post Office), 'Available for Pick-up After' (Date: 9/26), 'Time' (9:00 AM), and 'Sender's Name' (Jones). It also has checkboxes for 'For Redelivery' and 'For Return to Sender'. The bottom image shows the reverse side with a 'Delivery Section' containing a signature (John Doe), printed name (John Doe), and delivery address (100 Any Street #A). It also includes a USPS barcode and the number 5293 0458 8057 8389.

Source: Handbook PO-610.

17 FY 2017 Single-piece and presort First-Class Mail two-day target for corporate-wide goals.

Objective, Scope, and Methodology

Our objective was to evaluate mail delivery delays and customer retail service at selected stations in the Bronx. To accomplish our objective we:

- Conducted site visits and observed operations at nine delivery and customer service stations. Our observations were performed December 5, 2016 through December 12, 2016, which is the Postal Service's holiday peak season.
- Interviewed Postal Service Northeast Area and New York District management to gain a better understanding of mail issues related to the customer complaints.
- Discussed results of the audit with Postal Service management, including the manager, New York District, the Bronx postmaster, the manager, Delivery Programs Support, and the manager, Marketing.
- Obtained and reviewed delivery data for FY 2016 and customer service complaint data from February through September 2016.
- Reviewed criteria and procedures related to delivery and customer services.


We conducted this performance audit from November 2016 through April 2017 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. We discussed our observations and conclusions with management on March 24, 2017, and included their comments where appropriate.

We assessed the reliability of computer-generated data by reviewing source documents and interviewing agency officials knowledgeable about the data. 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
<i>City Delivery and Customer Service Operations – Red Hook Station, NY</i>	Evaluate whether mail was delivered accurately and timely and whether customer's needs were addressed at the station.	DR-AR-15-005	4/21/2015	None

**Appendix B:
Summary of Delivery and
Customer Service Issues**

 Location ¹⁸	Delivery		Customer Service				
	Limited Access	Unsecure Mailboxes	WTIL Greater Than Five Minutes	Issues That Increased WTIL			eCC Cases Not Resolved In Established Timeframe
				High Number of Unclaimed Packages	Inefficient Package Storage	PS Form 3849 Final Notifications Not Sent	
Boulevard Station	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bronx Main / General Post Office	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hub Station	X	X		X		X	X
Hunts Point Station	X	X				X	X
Morrisiana Station	X	X		X	X	X	
Mott Haven Station	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Soundview Station	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tremont Station	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
West Farms Station	X	X	X			X	

¹⁸ Hunts Point and West Farms Stations had packages stored, but had fewer packages compared to the other locations.

Appendix C: Management's Comments



April 12, 2017

LORI LAU DILLARD
DIRECTOR, AUDIT OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: Draft Audit Report
Delivery and Customer Service Operations – Bronx, New York
Report Number DR-AR-17-DRAFT

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Office of Inspector General's audit of Delivery and Customer Service Operations – Bronx, New York. The New York District agrees with the recommendations made during the audit. The recommendations will improve customer satisfaction, improve service and improve overall efficiency in the package pick-up and retail operation.

Recommendation 1

Coordinate with building owners or managers to comply with Postal Service access and mail receptacle policies.

Management Response/Action Plan:

The New York District agrees with this recommendation. The Bronx has 2,345 buildings without [REDACTED] 310 first notices were sent, 38 second notices were sent, and 19 buildings have been abated to date. The abatement process is ongoing. We will follow up with each building to ensure the [REDACTED] are installed. A meeting was held with the Bronx Borough President, his representatives of each community and with Community Board 2. During the meeting, we shared our concerns with the number of locations where we do not have access into the building for delivery. They were informed of the requirement to have a [REDACTED] installed at each location in order for the letter carrier to gain access into the building to affect delivery.

Target Implementation Date:

January 31, 2018

Responsible Official:

Lilliam Rodriguez, Postmaster, Bronx, NY

Recommendation 2

Evaluate existing package storing methods to ensure the most effective method is being utilized.

380 WEST 33RD STREET, ROOM 4056
NEW YORK, NY 10199-9996

Management Response/Action Plan:

The New York District agrees with this recommendation. An analysis was conducted with the failed first attempt percentage for each station. It has been determined that the most efficient storage system is by address. The stations will store packages by address, making it easier to locate a package without a 3849. The by address system will be implemented in the 10 locations no later than May 19, 2017.

Target Implementation Date:

May 19, 2017

Responsible Official:

Lilliam Rodriguez, Postmaster, Bronx, NY

Recommendation 3

Provide refresher training to staff responsible for the notification procedures of packages stored at the stations.

Management Response/Action Plan:

The New York District agrees with this recommendation. The Operations Programs Support staff will provide training to the managers, supervisors and craft employees at the 10 locations to ensure everyone understands the importance of achieving the timelines for sending second notices and returning the mail to the sender timely. A schedule for the training has been developed and will be completed no later than May 19, 2017.

Target Implementation Date:

May 19, 2017

Responsible Official:

Tina Gong, Manager, Operations Programs Support

Recommendation 4

Conduct additional community outreach activities to discuss actions being taken to address complaints and provide additional information to customers for enhancing the customer experience.

Management Response/Action Plan:

The New York District agrees with this recommendation. Ms. Rodriguez, Bronx Postmaster, has been actively involved in the Community Board Meetings and has attended several this fiscal year. Meetings were held with the Bronx Borough President and his representatives of each community on March 23, 2017 and with Community Board 2 on March 31, 2017. Ms. Rodriguez shared the ongoing challenges with no access and no secure location in many of the Bronx buildings and asked for assistance with getting the building owners to [REDACTED]. Ms. Rodriguez explained the adverse impacts of the letter carrier not being able to gain entry into the building to affect delivery. She explained that resolving this issue

would reduce customer complaints, improve customer satisfaction and improve overall service to the community.

Target Implementation Date:

Completed March 31, 2017

Responsible Official:

Lilliam Rodriguez, Postmaster, Bronx, NY



Lorraine G. Castellano
District Manager

cc: Corporate Audit Response Management
Vice President, Delivery Operations
Vice President, Northeast Area Operations



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