

St. Charles Main Post Office, St. Charles, MO: Delivery Operations

AUDIT REPORT

Report Number 25-100-3-R25 | August 11, 2025



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Transmittal Letter



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

August 11, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR: JEREMIE SIX
MANAGER, KANSAS-MISSOURI DISTRICT

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joseph E. Wolski", is centered below the memorandum header.

FROM: Joseph E. Wolski
Director, Field Operations, Atlantic & WestPac

SUBJECT: Audit Report – St. Charles Main Post Office, St. Charles, MO: Delivery
Operations (Report Number 25-100-3-R25)

This report presents the results of our audit of delivery operations and property conditions at the St. Charles Main Post Office in St. Charles, MO.

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesy provided by your staff. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Ricardo Martinez, 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

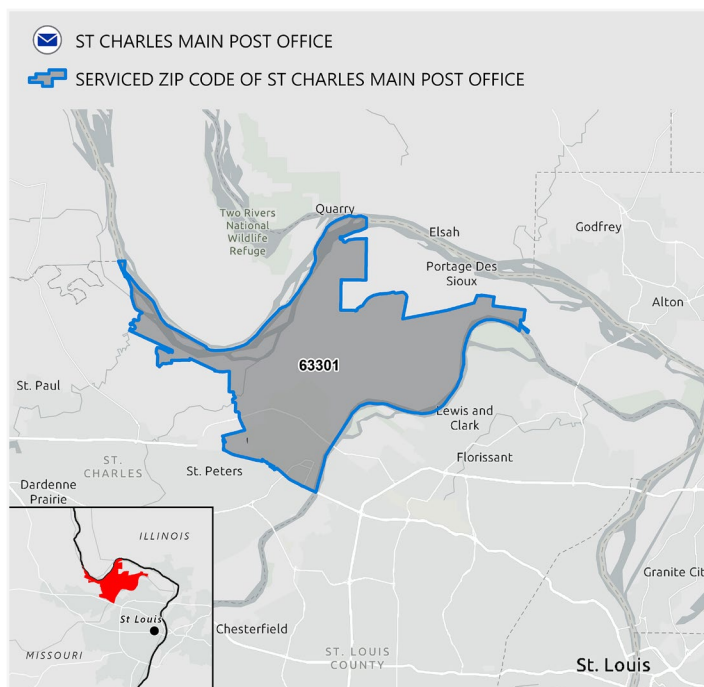
Results

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. 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 interim report presents the results of our audit of delivery operations and property conditions at the St. Charles Main Post Office (MPO) in St. Charles, MO (Project Number 25-100-3). We selected the St. Louis area based on a congressional inquiry issued April 1, 2025, from the U.S. senators and representatives from Missouri to conduct an audit of post offices and distribution centers in the St. Louis metro area. The St. Charles MPO is in the Kansas-Missouri (KS-MO) District of the Central Area and serves about 50,902 people in ZIP Code 63301, which is considered a predominantly urban area (see Figure 1). Specifically, 49,662 (98 percent) live in urban communities and 1,240 (2 percent) live in rural communities.¹ The unit also services ZIP Code 63302 for Post Office (PO) Box routes.

Figure 1. ZIP Code Serviced by the St. Charles MPO



Source: OIG analysis of ZIP Code data.

This delivery unit has 41 city routes and seven rural routes. From March 22 through April 18, 2025, the delivery unit had five supervisors assigned.² During our visit, the unit management team working at the

¹ We obtained ZIP Code information related to population and urban/rural classification from 2020 Census Bureau information.

² According to the Postal Service's Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS). TACS is the system used by the Postal Service to automate the collection of employee time and attendance information.

unit consisted of the unit manager, three supervisors, and a customer support supervisor who splits his time between the St. Charles MPO and another facility. The unit also had a relief supervisor that worked at another facility. As of May 2, 2025,³ the year-to-date employee availability rate for the St. Charles MPO was 93.9 percent, which is over the Postal Service's retail and delivery operations employee availability goal of 93.7 percent for fiscal year 2025. The St. Charles MPO is one of seven delivery units⁴ the OIG reviewed during the week of June 2, 2025, that are serviced by the St. Louis Processing and Distribution Center (P&DC) and St. Louis Network Distribution Center (NDC).

We assessed all units serviced by the St. Louis P&DC and NDC based on the number of Customer 360 (C360)⁵ delivery-related inquiries,⁶ Informed Delivery⁷ contacts, stop-the-clock (STC)⁸ scans performed away from the delivery point and at the unit, undelivered route information, and first and last mile failures⁹ between February 1 and April 30, 2025. We judgmentally selected the St. Charles MPO primarily based on the high number of scans away from delivery points and first mile failures. Between February 1 and April 30, 2025, the unit's scans performed at least 1,000 feet from the delivery point averaged 33.8 per route, which is higher than the district average of 7.9 scans per route.¹⁰

Objective, Scope, and Methodology

Our objective was to evaluate mail delivery operations and property conditions at the St. Charles MPO in St. Charles, MO.

To accomplish our objective, we focused on the following audit areas: delayed mail, package scanning, arrow keys,¹¹ carrier separations and

transfers, property safety and security conditions, and package separations. 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 June 3–5, 2025, we observed mail conditions; package scanning procedures; arrow key security procedures; carrier separation procedures; package 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. We discussed our observations and conclusions as summarized in [Table 1](#) with management on July 18, 2025, and included its comments, where appropriate.

We are issuing this interim report to provide the Postal Service with timely information regarding conditions we identified at the St. Charles MPO. We will issue a separate capping report¹² that provides the Postal Service with the overall findings and recommendations for all seven delivery units, as well as the district. The capping report will include actions taken by management to address the issues identified in this interim report. See [Appendix A](#) for additional information about our scope and methodology.

Results Summary

We identified issues affecting delivery operations and property conditions at the St. Charles MPO. Specifically, we found issues with three of the five areas we reviewed (see [Table 1](#)). We also found issues related to separation of packages.

³ The last day of Pay Period 10.

⁴ The other six units were the Creve Coeur Branch, St. Louis, MO (Project Number 25-100-1); the O'Fallon Main Post Office, O'Fallon, MO (Project Number 25-100-2); the Ballwin Main Post Office, Ballwin, MO (Project Number 25-100-4); the Maryville Gardens Station, St. Louis, MO (Project Number 25-100-5); the Southwest Station, St. Louis, MO (Project Number 25-100-6); and the Clayton Branch, St. Louis, MO (Project Number 25-100-7).

⁵ A cloud-based application that enables Postal Service employees to diagnose, resolve, and track customer inquiries.

⁶ A compilation of package inquiry, package pickup, daily mail service, and hold mail inquiries.

⁷ 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.

⁸ A scan event that indicates the Postal Service has completed its commitment to deliver or attempt to deliver the mailpiece. Examples of STC scans include "Delivered," "Available for Pickup," and "No Access."

⁹ 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 P&DC on a final processing operation and is not delivered to the customer on the day it was intended.

¹⁰ Source: OIG analysis of Postal Service's C360, Informed Delivery, and Product Tracking and Reporting (PTR) System data extracted May 8, 2025. PTR is the system of record for all delivery status information for mail and packages with trackable services and barcodes.

¹¹ 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.

¹² Project Number 25-100.

Table 1. Summary of Results

Audit Area	Deficiencies Identified	
	Yes	No
Delayed Mail	X	
Package Scanning	X	
Arrow Keys		X
Carrier Separations and Transfers		X
Property Conditions	X	
Package Separations	X	

Source: Results of our fieldwork during the week of June 2, 2025.

We analyzed employee data from March 8 through April 18, 2025. All carriers assigned to the unit either reported to work or were accounted for by management during this time, indicating no issues with employee separations and transfers.

We observed the procedures for safeguarding arrow keys at the unit. We also verified all keys included in the arrow key inventory were located at the unit; however, we found an additional key not included in the inventory. Unit management promptly added the key to the inventory list; therefore, we are not reporting on systemic arrow key issues at the unit.

Finding #1: Delayed Mail

What We Found

On the morning of June 3, 2025, we identified 255 delayed mailpieces¹³ at 15 carrier cases. Specifically, we identified 163 letters, 68 flats, and 24 packages, and unit management did not report this mail as undelivered in the Delivery Condition Visualization (DCV).¹⁴ However, management did report 628 mailpieces in the 3M cases in the DCV system that were excluded in our count of delayed mailpieces. See Figure 2 for an example of delayed mail found in carrier cases. Further, the carriers did not complete Postal Service (PS) Forms 1571, Undelivered Mail Report,¹⁵ to document undelivered mailpieces.

Figure 2. Example of Delayed Mail in the Carrier Cases



Source: OIG photo taken June 3, 2025.

Why Did It Occur

Unit management did not implement and enforce the Redline process,¹⁶ which includes carriers completing

PS Form 1571 for any undelivered mail brought back to the delivery unit. Management stated that it did not implement the Redline process or conduct a walkthrough because it relied on carriers to provide copies of PS Form 1571.

What Should Have Happened

Management should have verified that all outgoing mail was processed and delivered and that any mail returned from a route was properly identified. Postal Service policy¹⁷ states that all types of First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, and Priority Express Mail are always committed for delivery on the day of receipt. Management should have enforced the Redline process,¹⁸ which includes carriers completing a PS Form 1571 for any undelivered mail brought back to the delivery unit. Management should have also conducted a walkthrough of the facility to ensure that all outgoing mail was dispatched from the facility and delivered.

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. In addition, inaccurate reporting of delayed mail in DCV provides management at the local, district, area, and headquarters levels with an inaccurate status of mail delays and can result in improper actions taken to address issues.

Postal Service Response

The Postal Service agreed with this finding. See [Appendix B](#) for management's comments in their entirety.

¹³ Count of mail included individual piece counts and OIG estimate based on Postal Service conversion factors in Handbook M-32, Management Operating Data Systems, Appendix D.

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ PS Form 1571, *Undelivered Mail Report*, lists all mail distributed to the carrier for delivery that was left in the office or returned undelivered.

¹⁶ 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.

¹⁷ *Committed Mail & Color Code Policy for Marketing Mail* stand-up talk, February 2019.

¹⁸ Standard Operating Procedures, Redline Policy.

the workroom to identify undelivered packages with scanning or handling issues.

What Should Have Happened

Management should have monitored scan performance daily and enforced compliance. The Postal Service's goal is to ensure proper delivery attempts for mailpieces to the correct address,²⁰ which includes scanning packages at the time and location of delivery.²¹

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 can improve mail visibility, increase customer satisfaction, and enhance the customer experience and the Postal Service brand.

Postal Service Response

The Postal Service agreed with this finding.

²⁰ *Delivery Done Right the First Time* stand-up talk, March 2020.

²¹ *Carriers Delivering the Customer Experience* stand-up talk, July 2017.

Finding #3: Property Conditions

What We Found

We found property safety and security issues at the St. Charles MPO.

Property Safety:

- Ten of 11 fire extinguishers had missing annual inspections and were last inspected in January 2024. One fire extinguisher missed its monthly inspection and was last inspected in April 2025.
- One of 11 fire extinguishers in the loading dock area had no tags to determine either the monthly or annual last date of inspection.

Property Security:

- There was no sign posted on entering the employee parking area stating that vehicles may be subject to search.

Why Did It Occur

Management did not provide sufficient oversight and take the necessary actions to verify the fire extinguisher inspections were completed timely and

the parking lot sign was posted because other duties, such as getting the mail out for delivery each day and ensuring carriers returned on time, took priority over addressing safety and security issues.

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.²²

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.

Postal Service Response

The Postal Service agreed with this finding.

²² Postal Service Handbook EL-801, *Supervisor's Safety Handbook*, July 2020.

Finding #4: Separation of Packages for Dispatch

What We Found

Employees at the St. Charles MPO did not properly separate packages destined for the St. Louis plants. Specifically, on June 4, 2025, during the unit's evening operations, we observed that the carriers were not separating their incoming Ground Advantage packages²³ and Priority Mail packages²⁴ (see Figure 4). We showed the PM supervisor that Priority Mail and non-Priority Mail packages were comingled, and she separated the packages prior to dispatch.

Figure 4. Comingled Packages



Source: OIG photo taken June 4, 2025.

Why Did It Occur

Management acknowledged it did not provide oversight to ensure that employees properly separated packages for dispatch to the St. Louis plants. The PM supervisor stated that she had new carriers that were not aware of separating the packages. Unit management was aware of the requirement to separate packages; however, it had not verified carrier compliance.

What Should Have Happened

Management should have provided adequate oversight to ensure that employees properly separated packages. The Postal Service requires all level 22 units and above to separate Priority Mail from non-Priority Mail packages and use a specific placard when dispatching to the processing facility.²⁵

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.

Postal Service Response

The Postal Service agreed with this finding.

²³ A service providing an affordable and reliable way to send parcels inside the U.S. Parcels under 70 pounds arrive in two to five business days.

²⁴ An expedited service that may contain any mailable matter weighing no more than 70 pounds.

²⁵ *Learn and Grow RDC/RSC Updates*, May 2024.

Appendix A: Additional Information

We conducted this audit from May through August 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 St. Charles MPO 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 that we assessed these controls. Based on the work performed, we identified internal control deficiencies related to all three components that were significant within the context of our objectives. We will issue a separate report that provides the Postal Service with the overall findings and recommendations for the Creve Coeur Branch, O'Fallon MPO, Ballwin MPO, Maryville Gardens Station, Southwest Station, and Clayton Branch, as well as the district.

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

Appendix B: Management's Comments



July 18, 2025

VICTORIA SMITH
ACTING DIRECTOR, AUDIT SERVICES

SUBJECT: Management Response: St. Charles Main Post Office, St. Charles, MO: Delivery
Operations (Report Number 25-100-3-DRAFT)

Thank you for providing the Postal Service with an opportunity to review and comment on the findings contained in the draft audit report, *St. Charles Main Post Office, St. Charles, MO: Delivery Operations*.

Management generally agrees with the findings related to delayed mail, package scanning, property conditions and separation of packages for dispatch.

Management has begun taking steps to address the four findings.

Delayed Mail: Management will conduct a service talk on proper handling and recording of delayed mail in DCV. Management will also reiterate the requirement to use PS Form 1571 *Undelivered Mail Report* and follow the *Redline process*. Reviews will be conducted to monitor for compliance.

Package Scanning: Management will provide a service talk on proper scanning procedures and conduct reviews to monitor compliance.

Property Conditions: Management has abated the safety and security issues identified in the audit.

Separation of Packages for Dispatch: Management will provide service talks to reinforce package separation practices to ensure Priority Mail is not comingled with non-priority mail. Reviews will be conducted to monitor for compliance.

E-SIGNED by JEREMIE SIX
on 2025-07-18 17:19:40 EDT

Jeremie Six
District Manager, KS-MO District

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

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1735 North Lynn Street, Arlington, VA 22209-2020
(703) 248-2100

For media inquiries, please email press@uspsoig.gov or call (703) 248-2100