

APWU INTRODUCTION

The Postal Service evaluates operations at stations and branches during the Function Four process. Different parts of the country experience uniquely different programs. The newest program is called AWPS (Automated Workforce Projection System). This program includes a team of evaluators that view the unit for an entire week to determine the staffing needed to operate efficiently. The team is provided a ROVER (Remote Office Verification Electronic Retrieval) program. The purpose of this program is to convey data from the AWPS-F4 program to the field for verification and update as well as a means to return data to the AWPS program without having to make manual data entry.

The Window operations are analyzed by use of a process commonly called a RAP (Retail Analysis Package) survey. The new staffing models actually measure more than simply retail functions to include evaluating most all functions performed at stations and branches including "Mystery Shopper" data.

The most commonly utilized program to determine the staffing within a unit is the Function Four Review Process. Staffing is determined by workload, unlike the AWPS program, where staffing is determined by budget. Either program looks to reduce costs where possible, usually at the expense of clerk craft positions.

The following are considerations for Function Four study teams when reviewing operations, under the Function Four Review Process. Many of these considerations are included in the AWPS. The responsibilities fall with management, but the clerks are reminded to continue these practices during any review.

The Lobby

Management will review the lobby in an effort to reduce costs (work hours).

- Does the lobby present a clean, business-like appearance and include an attractive baffle screen?
- Do vending equipment locations and related signs encourage customers to use the vending equipment rather than a staffed window?
- Is vending equipment (including changer) fully stocked and operational?

- **Are procedures in place to ensure prompt repair of vending equipment?**
- **Management also evaluates whether retail and philatelic products are attractively displayed and accurately priced.**
- **Does the lobby contain at least the following items for customer convenience: a current 5-digit Zip Code Directory; return receipts; forms for registered, insured and certified mail; change of address cards; consumer service cards; Selective Service Registration forms; and Express Mail labels?**
- **Where space permits, are parcel lockers used in retail units in conjunction with post office boxes, in order to help reduce lobby traffic and customer waiting time?**

Employee Uniforms

While staffing studies rarely involve employee appearance, the RAP study did include this information in the study. The question that is completed is "when uniforms are authorized, are retail employees in proper, clean uniforms?"

Management is required to evaluate the floor plan of the window area to ensure efficiency. They must make recommendations as to whether notice left articles, hold mail, etc., stored in a location that allows window clerks to retrieve them quickly, thereby reducing time away from the window and customer waiting time.

Other considerations made by the Function Four team include:

- **Do retail clerks check the Express Mail network prior to acceptance and make appropriate notations on labels when articles are accepted after the cut off time for the next day delivery?**
- **Are window clerks' breaks and lunch periods scheduled to avoid peak window service period?**
- **Are fixed credit audits properly conducted within the time frames cited in the National Agreement?**

Management must evaluate many of the allied function at stations and branches. Most of these questions that the survey team must answer are self-explanatory.

- **Is mail properly color-coded?**
- **Are PS Forms 1639 Carrier's Report of Recurring Missorted Mail prepared, summarized and sent to the Mail Processing Unit for appropriate corrective action?**
- **As a means of alternative services, has the unit installed Vending Equipment, Contract Postal Units or placed stamps on consignment during the last year?**
- **Are all separations on distribution cases utilized and is equipment adequate to allow for efficient distribution?**
- **Is mail available for distribution when clerks report and has it been placed on case ledges or staged close to the distribution cases?**
- **Are the box and unit distribution cut off times realistic for customers and consistent with scheduled carrier leaving times?**
- **Are all preferential missorts within the delivery unit available to carrier routes or withdrawn from the 'hot case' prior to carriers leaving the office?**
- **Is at least 80% of the total daily A.M. volume at carrier cases prior to their reporting?**
- **Do rural route carriers follow proper procedures for withdrawing mail?**
- **Does the unit have potential for additional directs or segmentation?**
- **Is letter mail placed neatly on carrier ledges with stamps down and to the right and flat mail placed at carrier cases in a way that facilitates accurate volume recording and efficient handling of the mail?**

WINDOW OPERATIONS-LDC 45 (formerly LDC 42)

The following tasks are included in all staffing models. We should note that many clerks tend to work faster when being evaluated by a survey team as if they can impress the manager with their work. In reality, clerks who cut corners (not follow proper postal procedures) and work at a pace that causes errors, give the survey team results that do not fit reality.

In any event, the functions that could be evaluated by any study team are listed below. It is important to note that some of the more recent staffing models have been constructed using an average time value for each of the functions. This causes concern and usually recommendations for severe reductions in work hours but meets management's true goal in Function Four staffing studies and that is reduction of the budget.

The following examples are actual transactions and actual time to perform transactions. These examples are from the 'Function Four Review Process', the program that was utilized in the past for staffing entire units. In this process, the work hours were based on volume within the unit. The Service now utilizes the RAP survey, which is specifically designed to assist in the staffing of the window operation. The RAP process is based on walk in revenue of a unit and relies on the budget to staff the unit. The actual transaction must be recorded in order to receive credit through the RAP survey.

Sale of Postage

Window transaction.

Customer Meter Setting

Window transaction.

Passport Operation at Window

Allow reasonable time up to actual, when operation is performed at the window.

Selective Service Application at Window

Window transaction.

Stock Requisition

Large credit: 10 minutes to complete Form 17, 10 minutes to count and include in stock or actual time, if less.

Small credit (Relief, Reserve etc.): 5-7 minutes to complete Form 17, 5-7 minutes to count and include in stock.

NOTE: Window clerks should need to make only one or two requisitions a week. Flexible credits should be adjusted if there are more.

Flexible Credit Audits

Four times a year. Normally requires two hours for large credits and one hour for small credits.

Training

Actual time, for non-classroom training.

Form1412 Close Out

Individual (small) 10-15 minutes; (large) 20-30 minutes. If an IRT office, 5-15 minutes.

Consolidation (manual) 15-20 minutes; (IRT) 10-15 minutes.

Food Stamps

Window transaction.

General Delivery

Window transaction.

Caller Service

Window transaction.

Claims

Actual time.

Post Office Box Rent Notices and Maintenance

Two minutes each rented box per year.

Second Notices and Returns

Count storage items. Determine how many will be delivered over the counter before second notices are sent (generally 50-75%). Subtract this

number from the number stored, the remainder is the number to be second noticed or returned within 15 days. Divide the number by 15 and multiply by 1 minute. Example: 400 articles in storage. Determined that 60% will be delivered before second notices are sent. $(400 \times .60 = 240)$, $(400 - 240 = 160)$, $(160 - 15 = 11)$, $(11 \times 1 \text{ minute} = 11 \text{ minutes})$ 11 minutes per day allowance.

COD In Trust

About 1.5 per minute, if not counted as a window transaction.

Stamps by Mail

About 2-3 minutes for a single order or 2 minutes per order for multiple orders.

Answering Telephones

Should discourage having this duty on the window. Count as a window transaction plus a reasonable amount of time, if necessary.

Window Set-up

Allow reasonable time, normally 5-10 minutes, not 30 minutes.

UNIT DISTRIBUTION - LDC 43

Distribution: Letters and Flats

Establish unit productivity expectation. State the productivity actually observed and used to determine earned hours in the report. Presort should not be in the volume. Monitor the volume measurement system being used. If volume is over stated, identify, discuss with local management, seek agreement and adjust the volume. Identify second handlings and allow distribution time.

Distribution Parcels

Usually contain the count of SPR's. IT SHOULD NOT! Discuss with local management, seek agreement and adjust the volume.

Empty Equipment

If done on-site daily, the allowance is very little. If clerks don't do it, don't allow time.

Dock Operations

Observe it and be realistic.

Spreading Carrier Route Presort

Observe and make methods improvement suggestions. Be realistic.

Second Handlings

Identify. Will a distribution case wing eliminate a handling? If necessary, identify volume and productivity. Allow work hours. Volume is not recorded on Form 3930. See Segmentation.

POST OFFICE BOX DISTRIBUTION - LDC 44

There is very little allied work hours for box distribution.

Second handling cases.

Boxing directs.

Notice Boxes for accountables; PP time in volume.

SPR's

Box maintenance and records, when not counted in window allied. Applicable only in certain areas.

Caller Service: Actual time, if handled by box clerk.

OTHER HOURS - LDC 48

Office Work and Records

General clerk; Desk audit and establish times and duties.

Carrier Accountables

Includes checking carriers in and out: 6 minutes per route. If more time is used, why? If less time is used, allow actual time.

Answering Telephones

Who does it? How many calls a day? Is management available to answer calls? Desk audit.

ODIS

How many tests per quarter? What are they? How long does each take? Are hours actually charged to the office?

Time Keeping

Manual : 1 minute per card. PSDS: Who does it, manager or clerk? Determine time.

Trust Fund

Don't double on time allotted with General Clerk or window allied.

Bulk Mail Acceptance

Be realistic. If a large office, conduct a desk audit. Don't allow 8 hours for a four hour job. If there is specialized staff at the office, work hours are to be recorded in LDC 79. See Handbook F-2.

Quality Control

Audit duties and responsibilities. Do not allow credit for work not required.

Supply Clerk

Audit duties and frequency of processing supply requisitions and conducting inventories.

Vending SSPC

One SSPC Technician can handle 4-5 fully equipped sites. Vending equipment requires much less time. Verify Technician's records for time.

Information Clerk

Perform desk audit. Find other duties to do, if Information position requires less than 8 hours.

Special Services

Perform Desk audit.

CMU/CFS

Form 3547	1 minute each
Form 3579	1.06 minutes each
Forwards	1 minute for 4
Form 3575	1 minute each
Nixie/UBBM	1 minute for 25

Mail Preparation

Facing, canceling and dispatching outgoing mail. What is required versus what is being done? Verify preparation expectations with Mail Processing. Include narrative.

CHECK LIST

LDC 43

- Loading and unloading of trucks
- Prep and staging of mail
- Spreading of mail
- Alpha sortation
- Scheme training for changes if applicable
- SPR distribution
- DPS directs (Caller Service)
(This is mail that is DPS to the carrier and is a misthrow that must be cased by the clerk)
- VOE/OSHA/Safety training

LDC 44

- Parcel lockers
- Locker Keys log
- Del Con scanning
- BATS update
- VOE/OSHA/Safety training

LDC 45

- Lobby director for actual deliveries
- Clerk stock audits (Second audits if needed)
- Utility clerk audits (in and out)
- OJI training
- VOE/OSHA/Safety training

LDC 48

- Del Con validation
- Timekeeping adjustment
- Leave application
- Supply orders
- CFS prep
- Form retention
- VOE/OSHA/Safety training
- Hours reconciliation
- Review of EAR reports
- Address Information Search
- Dog Letters
- Express mail pickup and delivery of late Express and Priority
- Misc Typing
- Stewards Time and grievance time
- OJI training
- Change in carrier endorsed mail. Hours taken out of the carriers in the Function 2 audits but no hours added to the clerk hours

Important Tips for Accuracy of Survey (Window Services)

- 1. Every window clerk must "hit" the non-revenue key each time it is appropriate, e.g. handling certified mail, registered mail, parcels, box or hold mail, general delivery, food stamps.**
- 2. No short-cuts should be allowed at all times that jeopardizes the window clerks accountability, e.g. not locking drawer or stock when handling or retrieving certified, registered or other mail.**
- 3. Record every transaction.**
- 4. Make certain all proper forms are completed when the action occurs that demanded the use of the form e.g. requisition of stock, trading stock, CODs, Express Mail, envelope sales, "close-out 1412", etc.**
- 5. Make certain that when counting stock, the window clerk leaves the window and accurately verifies the count.**
- 6. As the window clerk has been instructed throughout training, verify proper postal regulations and complete every transaction before calling on the next customer.**

Important Tips for Accuracy of Survey (Distribution and Allied Duties)

- 1. Properly count and record all containers of parcels.**
- 2. Scan all Delivery Confirmation.**
- 3. Remain busy throughout the day. There are many functions in which clerks can continue to be productive, e.g., Mark-up mail; UBBM; Second notices.**
- 4. Removal of empty equipment to the dock area.**