



TASK TEAM 31 UPDATE: Reviewing Disaster Communication Gaps

Industry Leader: Tom Glassman
USPS Leader: Dale Kennedy

January 28, 2020



- ❑ During the recovery efforts related to restoring operations to the North Houston Processing and Distribution Center following Tropical Storm Imelda, the Industry identify several concerns related to communications during the incident.
- ❑ In reviewing the processes related to the incident, the USPS identified actions that followed the existing process and certain gaps in the USPS Disaster Communications Plan. USPS has taken actions related to all of the concerns noted.
- ❑ These gaps were related to the offload plan required to return operations to the area and to gaps in the current process. Task Team 31 was formed to specifically review:
 - Concerns identified
 - Corrective actions taken by USPS to address the concerns
 - Identify additional action items, if required

To date, TT 31 has met three times. The team reviewed each concern identified, the actions taken by the USPS, longterm actions planned by the USPS, and identified if necessary actions should be recommended. The concerns identified by the Industry and USPS are:

- ❑ Length of time it took, after the damage was identified, to inform mailers of alternate drop ship locations for mail enroute to and in the affected area.
- ❑ Length of time between the event and when instructions were issued to start taking mail to the Dallas STC and:
 - First drop ships were turned away due to communication gaps and system gaps.
 - When the North Houston plant reopened for flats and parcels, customers were advised that mixed loads (containing a mixture of flats or parcels with letters also) would be permitted, but letter volumes were subsequently rejected with instructions to tender the mail to Dallas STC
- ❑ First conference calls were held at Area level without National invitations being sent. Resulted to only a limited number of customers receiving pertinent information. National conference calls were scheduled later.

Concerns continued:

- ❑ Internal communication path to functions such as Informed Visibility (IV), Enterprise Analytics, and Informed Delivery (ID) broke down.
 - Customers needed information on how and who to contact related to requests for IV data.
 - Some ID messages were discontinued based on the movement of mail to other sites and ID team not being advised of the changes to update data flows
- ❑ The complex nature of the offload plans created issues related to which mail should be taken where.
 - Redirection files were not available in FAST
 - Redirection updates had delayed implementation, need method to update system so changes can be made faster
 - Certain facilities did not have locale keys which prevented mailers from making appointments at the offload sites
 - Potential impacts on Mailer Scorecards.
- ❑ To assist with quicker turn times through assigned distribution facilities, mailers can voluntarily use additional sorts to help network operations. (Example: breaking down SCF containers into 3-digit containers for cross-docking purposes.)
- ❑ Visibility for Pharmaceuticals, Subsistence payments (e.g., pension and Social Security), Campaign and Election Mail during such events. Can this lead to IV reporting based on identification of a disruption code for all mail impacted.

Next Steps:

- ❑ TT 31 is reviewing the concerns and actions taken document
- ❑ USPS team will introduce additional actions recommended to senior management for input
- ❑ TT 31 will review feedback from USPS review
- ❑ Final document will be presented to MTAC EC for approval