

Sorting & Delivery Center Questions and Answers

(Industry submitted)

Sorting & Delivery Center (S&DC)

Questions

- 1. Will mail dropped at the S&DC get Destination Delivery Units (DDU) rates as if it were dropped at an DDU?**

Yes, all discounts will stay the same. Customers can reference Customer Support Ruling PS-353 on pe.usps.com for more information.

- 2. Will USPS unload trucks in the same manner as at a Sectional Center Facility (SCF)?**
No.

- 3. Will S&DCs accept double stacked pallets?**

No. Mailers can continue to drop mail at the S&DC, in the same manner as they were entering mail at a DDU. But the S&DC will not have access to a forklift to unstack double stacked pallets. DDU preparation requirements are available in the DMM at pe.usps.com.

- a. Does the USPS ever see a change in that procedure and is there consideration given to the fact that mailers would like to have the benefit of a forklift.**

At this time there are no plans to change this procedure.

- 4. Does mail preparation remain the same, when a mailer delivers to a single location?**

Yes. All the mail must be prepped according to the Destination Delivery Unit requirements and be separated according to the 5 Digit sort in Label List 601.

- 5. Will pallet placard procedures remain the same?**

Yes. Detailed specifications for Intelligent Mail container barcodes and labels are available at <http://postalpro.usps.gov> for DMM reference 204.3.4 for more information.

- a. Will 5-digit pallets be rolled to that ZIP Code location inside the S&DC facility – still segregated and not mixed with other 5-digit in the location?**

Yes, per Label List 601.

- b. Can there be mixed ZIP Codes on a pallet?**

No mixed 5 Digit ZIP Codes.

- c. For “residual” 5-Digit schemed pallets, can they have numerous ZIP Codes on a single pallet?**

Yes, if allowed by Label List 601.

- 6. How do customers know when the next S&DC sites will be onboarded and the locations?**

Local BMEU employees will communicate information with their permit customers, who formerly dropped mail at all DDUs now rolled into the S&DC. Additionally, USPS Accounts Reps will provide notifications of next S&DC launch to their impacted accounts.

- 7. Where can mailers find the information to identify the S&DC sites, activation dates, addresses, phone number and supporting Zip Codes?**

At present there is no outward facing list such as described in the question.

- 8. Will there be a grace period for changes after the effective date? Today, mailers are given notice of a change/direction 30 days in advance then they have another 30-day grace period to make the change without assessment or refusal of mail. In some cases, their jobs lock down 5-6 weeks in advance and so does their transportation plan so when mailers are given limited notice, it is difficult and costly to make changes. The 30-day notice is helpful, but mailers prefer more time, if feasible.**

The label list update process remains as it is currently structured including the established grace period.

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- 9. When a mailer calls an S&DC for delivery verification, will the one number be for all ZIP Codes serviced or will there be separate numbers for each former DDU?**

The S&DC phone number can be used for verification of delivery ZIP Codes processed at that site.

- 10. What does the term “hubbing” mean, which can be found on S&DC spreadsheets?**

“Hubbing” = Transfer Hub; The Transfer Hubs will be an USPS internal transportation method used for transporting mail to smaller offices by postal transportation. They are different than Service/Destination Hubs where mailers/shippers can drop Periodicals/Newspapers and Parcel Select to reach smaller offices (Label List 014). Mailers/Shippers will not be able to insert volumes for inclusion through Transfer Hub.

- 11. Is there a possibility of dropping mail to S&DCs that will be transport to other Post Offices within their transfer hub service area downstream?**

No.

- 12. Are S&DCs fully operations when they open or are there “soft openings?”**

S&DCs will be fully operational when activation occurs.

- a. How will mailers know the difference between the two?**

Mailers can expect the S&DC to be fully operational on its go-live date for label list changes.

Prior to opening an S&DC, the Postal Service launches a full logistics plan with customer, employee, and logistic work-streams to anticipate needs and concerns ahead of an S&DC opening.

- b. If soft, how will mailers know when they will have the equipment necessary for unloading?**

The site will be fully operational when mailers start entering mail at the site.

- 13. How far in advance will mailers be notified that the S&DCs are fully operational with equipment?**

Our intent is to provide 30 to 60 days advance notice going forward.

- 14. Is the verification of S&DC addresses and phone numbers part of the opening checklist? Mailers assume that USPS has created a checklist or identified tasks that must be done for each opening of a S&DC site. Mailers need to know where to bring their loads (ADDRESS) and what back-office phone number we call to get delivery information, as well as the DDUs that will be consolidated into the site.**

The Postal Service will issue an Industry Alert prior to activation which will include the site address and the ZIP Codes serviced by the SDC. This alert will be released prior to the Label List update sequence. Availability of the phone number information will be investigated.

- 15. How does the Postal Service decide where to launch new S&DC’s?**

The Postal Service targets key markets where it is beneficial to aggregate delivery units into fewer, larger, centrally located S&DCs — leveraging both repurposed and new facilities — to simplify the entire network and create a more reliable and efficient infrastructure.

- 16. How do customers know where to drop their flat bundles and packages?**

Commercial customers should continue to utilize the Label Lists and Mail Direction Files in FAST and available on pe.usps.com along with relevant Errata Files to identify the correct location to drop flat bundles and packages.

- 17. Where are the latest S&DC’s launching?**

The Postal Service has launched seven new sorting and delivery centers in September 2023. They are in Chula Vista, California; Huntington Station, New York; Palo Alto California; Stewart NY in Newburg, New York; Terra Haute, Indiana; Waco, Texas; North Atlanta in Brookhaven, Georgia.

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18. Will the opening of new S&DCs affect retail & PO Box services?

No, the opening of new S&DCs will not impose Post Office closures or cause customers to experience changes to the local Post Office retail and PO Box delivery services.

Facility Access and Shipment Tracking (FAST)

Questions

19. Will mailers be asked to make dropship appointments/FAST?

Not at this time. Mailers and Shippers will be notified when this becomes available or required.

20. Can you confirm that S&DC and LPC (Local Processing Center) information such as address, phone numbers are NOT being included in weekly Contract Delivery Service (CDS) files? Could they be added?

CDS files do not include address and phone information for S&DC and LPC facilities. This information can be found under the Dropship Product Download File located in FAST under Address File. As information, CDS information can be found <https://postalpro.usps.com/address-quality/cds>.

(Mailers get a CDS file weekly from USPS with any changes and 4 base files per year. Mailers assumed that the new “back office” number and address would be included in the changes, but it doesn’t appear to be the case. The mailers have had to modify the “back office” number on their files and addresses.)

21. How does USPS update the “back office” phone number in the CDS file provided to mailers weekly?

CDS files only contains data related to delivery point serviced by our carriers. They have no information related to Postal facilities.

22. Where will mailers find changes:

a. When FAST is updated?

FAST is updated prior to any label list changes or MDF changes are made effective. Communications are sent to all FAST users as well as Industry Alerts.

b. When mail direction files are updated?

FAST is updated prior to any label list changes or MDF changes are made effective. Communications are sent to all FAST users as well as Industry Alerts. Label Lists and the MDF are updated monthly. The Errata file is updated as needed.

- **Who gets the updates and frequency?**

FAST User, Label List subscribers, and Industry Alert subscribers receive the information monthly or more often as needed.

- **Do the changes show up on our weekly CDS/Address Management System (AMS) file?**

Since CDS files only deal with delivery points, it is not involved in the MDF process.

c. What are the triggers for these sources?

Notification by Delivery Operations, Processing Operations, and Logistics.

23. Does USPS identify/communicate changes made in the mail direction file?

No.

Informed Visibility Mail Tracking & Reporting (IV-MTR)

Question

24. IV-MTR report – Will mailers receive individual scans by ZIP Code or just one scan event for all DDU's that go into that S&DC?

Mailers receive Distributed Scan through IV-MTR. Since placards are generated for the destine zip code, then multiple scan events will occur if multiple zones exist within that Delivery Units/S&DC. All of this will occur accurately for each zone with the procedurally correct nesting, placard generating and distributed scan.

System Integration Support

Questions

25. When will labeling lists be updated?

The L001 and L606 are updated when Delivery notifies SIS at HQLabelList of scheme changes for these facilities.

26. What are the triggers for these sources?

When scheme information is updated, the entries are put in EELLS. The following month they are published in the Postal Bulletin and on Postal Pro. The next month the changes become effective. (ex. Published in May for a June effective date) The definition of a scheme requires 2 or more 5-digits that may be combined in one sack or pallet for a delivery unit. There may be more than one scheme to a delivery unit.

27. Does USPS identify changes made to Labeling lists?

The Labeling Lists to the Mailers are published once a month. The Label Lists are sent to NCSC, CDAS, FAST, and other downstream systems.

On the first of the month, the large mailers receive the labeling Lists to update in their software. This is the cadence we have followed for many years. Smaller Mailers may take their labeling Lists from Postal Pro or the Postal Bulletin.