



You decide

NALC filed the national level grievance on management's Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS) to address the many components and applications of the system that are inconsistent with the National Agreement, handbooks and manuals, prior settlements, etc. The system is used to try to intimidate letter carriers, as well as supervisors, into thinking that the generated reports relate in some way to reality. Beyond management's misguided attempts to increase productivity by intimidating letter carriers, the system is also designed to project staffing, scheduling, and budgetary needs based on the malignant data. The concept of DOIS being a useful tool to anyone is unlikely at best, unless the system is corrected. We will continue to pursue resolution of these issues with the Postal Service until the components and functions of DOIS are contractually sound.

While a supervisor's daily reliance on inaccurate DOIS projections can be annoying, it should be comforting to know that there is no contractual basis to feel intimidated by the numbers. The parties recognize the principle of a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. DOIS cannot be used to establish office standards or to determine if a letter carrier is making office standards. An office standard can only be determined by a mail count pursuant to Section 141.2 or Chapter 2 of the M-39 Handbook. DOIS cannot be used to establish street standards because there are none.

A route is adjusted based on the conditions and data from the week of count and inspection, but the time it takes to case and carry the route will vary throughout the year based on the daily workload and other conditions affecting the letter carrier and the route. As a letter carrier, it is your responsibility to verbally inform management when you are of the opinion that you will be unable to case all mail distributed to the route, perform other required duties, and leave on schedule or when you will be unable to complete delivery of all mail. Management will instruct you what to do. If overtime or auxiliary assistance is authorized, complete the PS Form 3996. If you have not been provided a PS Form 3996, you should request one after verbally in-

forming the supervisor of the reason for the request. The supervisor may not deny you the form, and upon your request, a duplicate of the completed form will be provided to you. Do not curtail mail unless authorized by management, and report on PS Form 1571 all mail undelivered.

Some supervisors attempt to intimidate letter carriers by indicating that the letter carrier could be disciplined based on not meeting the DOIS "projections." This is truly a stretch on their part. First of all, as I have already pointed out, whether or not a letter carrier is achieving "standards" cannot be determined by DOIS, it can only be determined by a mail count. End of story.

However, if for some reason you were given a mail count, management may not charge or impose discipline upon you merely for failing to meet the "18 and 8" casing standard. Any such charge is insufficient. No carrier shall be disciplined for failure to meet standards, except in cases of unsatisfactory effort. A charge of unsatisfactory effort must be based on documented, unacceptable conduct that led to the carrier's failure to meet office standards. In such circumstances, management has the burden of proving that the carrier was engaging in unacceptable conduct and making an unsatisfactory effort in order to establish just cause for any discipline imposed.

So the decision on whether or not you should be intimidated by the supervisor each day is really yours. If the supervisor chooses to be driven by misguided DOIS projections each day, let the chain of intimidation end there. Unless the management associations step up and protest the misuse of DOIS and its effects on service and operations, they will simply continue to perpetuate the problem.

For letter carriers, however, it is important to realize that DOIS has changed nothing contractually. We simply need to put forth a satisfactory effort, engage in acceptable conduct, apply the principle of a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, and provide an estimate and report of our daily workload as indicated above. The supervisor would like you to think that none of this matters, that you should be driven each day by the DOIS numbers alone. You decide. ☒