

VOLUME 3 • ISSUE 1

# The Eagle

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

MAGAZINE

## LOOKING AHEAD

We learn and adjust from the critics and go forward in achieving our objectives through the great work and commitment of the men and women that are employed here.

... to be the preferred shipping partner at every American business and residence. These are aspirations I believe we can and should achieve.



*A Conversation With Postmaster General Louis DeJoy*



# *Happier Holidays!*

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**DELIVERING  
FOR AMERICA**

Learn more about  
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10-year strategic plan  
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**It has been two and a half years since we published the Delivering for America plan. We have made strong progress on many fronts, brought greater definition to many of our key strategies and begun the transformation of our processing, transportation and delivery network. While much remains to be done to fully bring to our plan to life, I'm proud of our collective accomplishments and of the discipline with which we are following the path to service excellence and financial sustainability.**



I'm also proud to have done my first interview in *The Eagle* magazine. Although I create videos and frequently travel the country to visit our facilities and meet with employees, I am a big believer in our internal communications efforts and I enjoyed the opportunity in this issue to share additional perspective on our organizational progress.

Much work has been done and is still underway in designing our future operating model. We look at some of this design work through the theme of "Purpose Built," which describes the renewal of the Postal Service, based on a fresh operational approach designed to meet the current and future needs of the nation — rather than trying to get by without fundamentally changing the legacy network designed 70 years ago. Change is necessary to become the high-performing organization our customers expect and deserve, and we explore some aspects of this transformation.

We also examine one of the outgrowths of our transformation: environmental sustainability improvements. As our network becomes more efficient, as we reduce truck trips, as we continue to modernize our buildings and technology, and our vehicle fleet, the Postal Service will make impressive gains in greenhouse gas reduction and waste minimization. The Postal Service will become an increasingly greener part of customers' supply chains. I am excited to be a part of the environmental sustainability progress we will achieve in the coming years.

With these and future topics, *The Eagle* magazine will capture our progress and provide context for the strategies and initiatives that are guiding us forward.

I hope you find this magazine useful and engaging.

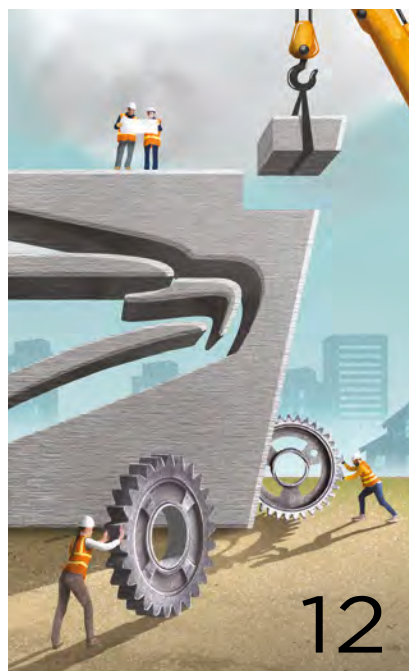
As always, thank you for the great work you do every day.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Louis DeJoy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Louis" and last name "DeJoy" clearly legible.

**Louis DeJoy**

Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer  
United States Postal Service

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## SPOTLIGHT SEARCH >

*Know a postal employee who is making a difference through volunteer work or community service?*  
Please send Spotlight nominations to [The\\_Eagle@usps.gov](mailto:The_Eagle@usps.gov).

# Hope on the Horizon

In his volunteer court role, USPS employee Vince Cortez is a voice for children.

**Every child deserves a safe and loving home — but that is not the reality for many children.** In cases of abuse or neglect, Child Protective Services may be called in. Court appointed special advocates (CASAs) — like Vince Cortez, a USPS employee development specialist — are part of that support network.

“Although we would like every case to get a CASA — the judge selects the ones that might need a little more help,” Cortez noted. With high caseloads, the child welfare system is overburdened, and CASAs play a crucial role in ensuring that each child gets individual attention and sees a familiar, trusted face while in the system. “My job is to look out for the best interests of the child,” Cortez said.

CASA volunteers are everyday people from the community. They undergo background checks and 40 hours of training at the outset, then 10 to 15 hours of annual instruction. A CASA is authorized to review case records and speak to lawyers, social workers, counselors, teachers, psychologists, doctors — anyone who might help them form an assessment of the child’s needs. It’s an incredible amount of access. “Without the court order, these people would not be allowed to talk to me and give out sensitive information,” Cortez explained. “I took an oath of confidentiality.”

A CASA will spend 10 to 15 hours a month on a case. That includes time spent getting to know the child and building rapport. “It may take a few visits before

they warm up to me and I can ask more difficult questions,” Cortez said. Usually, conversations take place at a playground, fast-food eatery or while walking along the pier at Cole Park, a spot beloved by Corpus Christi, TX, locals of all ages. “I write a two-page report of what I’ve read through, what I’ve seen, and what I heard. At the court hearing, the child has a lawyer, and the parents are there with their lawyers. We all have our say about what we think is the best placement for that child and what home is good for them. I give my recommendation — and the judge makes the decision.”

CASAs typically commit to serving at least one year; Cortez has been doing this for 30 years — though most of his family, friends and co-workers are unaware of his involvement with the program. “I don’t need recognition,” he said. But he hopes to inspire others to volunteer — “as a CASA or to whatever is your passion, your purpose.”

“I have a role here,” he said. “Sometimes it is difficult; it’s hard to see kids who are at risk,” he acknowledged.

“But what I do matters to the children. It’s always been about the kids and making a difference in a child’s life.”

*“It’s always been about the kids and making a difference in a child’s life.”*

## VINCE CORTEZ

Employee Development Specialist  
Corpus Christi, TX





SPECIAL  
INTERVIEW

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“We are now driving out our bad operating practices and capitalizing on our strengths – which, quite frankly, have always been there. ...”

# Looking Ahead

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A Conversation With Postmaster General  
**Louis DeJoy**



**T**he Eagle Managing Editor Yvonne Yoerger sat down with Postmaster General Louis DeJoy to talk about progress with the Delivering for America plan, the state of the Postal Service and what's in store for the coming year.

**Louis, we are two and half years into a very substantial transformation and modernization of the Postal Service, which is all articulated in the Delivering for America plan. How do you assess this journey so far, given where we started and where we are today?**

Well, Yvonne, you have been right here with me, and I think you would agree that initiating this magazine when we released the plan represented our intentions to accomplish a great deal and the importance we place on informing our employees about everything we are going to do.

As you know, when I first arrived, we were going to run out of cash in 60 days and were burdened with a defective pricing model and

burdensome legislation that was crushing us financially. We had over \$20 billion in deferred maintenance in our facilities infrastructure and a majority of our vehicle fleet was over 30 years old. Most consequential, we were engaging in an organizational, operational and market strategy that was not effectively dealing with the many challenges we faced. Our projected cumulative losses for the next 10 years exceeded \$160 billion. We were in crisis. Our existence as we knew it was in jeopardy




and there was not a plan inside the organization or amongst our stakeholders to deal with it.

On March 23, 2021, we launched Delivering for America, identifying strategies to put us on a path to financial sustainability and service excellence. The plan committed to delivering six days a week, achieving financial sustainability and creating a vibrant Postal Service for decades to come. I am proud to say that everyone is involved in it. While some criticize the strategy, we have had overwhelming support and participation in accomplishing the successes we aspire to achieve. We learn and adjust from the critics and push forward in achieving our objectives through the great work and commitment of the men and women that are employed here.

**Pushing forward to achieve our objectives has led to good progress on Delivering for America strategies. What are some of the differences we see today compared with two years ago?**

As a result of many of our actions, our current financial condition has improved as well as our financial





projections for the future. We worked with various stakeholders to pass helpful legislation, and our pricing authority has been raised, and we are using it to produce needed revenue. We are beginning to invest in new vehicles, modernize our facilities and equipment, and focus on the careers of our employees, and we have deployed new operating and marketing strategies that will reduce cost and grow revenue.

One of the first and most important things we did was to reorganize the whole Postal Service into a more flattened structure, creating functional expertise and inspiring great collaboration. We are learning how to excel in executing our operating strategies, engage in the competitive marketplace for new customers and profitable revenue, manage the requirements of our transformation and inspire our people to work with us to accomplish the change needed.

While we have had missteps, we have had great accomplishments and I know we are creating a learning organization that will achieve its objectives for its future. Everyone participating should be very proud of their role in our journey.

### **What are some of the most important things already achieved under Delivering for America?**

The most important change that has manifested at the Postal Service is the focus, collaboration and energy of the organization to improve our service to the American people, to execute on our commitment of achieving efficient operations, and to inspire the excitement of everyone to aspire to a better future.

As I said when I first arrived here, it is the women and men of the Postal Service who can reverse years of deteriorating conditions and put us on a positive path forward. I travel the country, visit plants and Post Offices, attend meetings and conferences and lead and engage in our work. I witness all the progress we are making and the adjustments we make when we stumble. I am impressed with what I see developing.

Other more specific accomplishments have been working effectively with our union leadership, stakeholders and congressional leadership on both sides of the aisle to finally pass postal reform legislation; our collaborative work with Health and Human Services, the Defense Logistics Agency and the White House COVID team to accomplish the nationwide distribution of COVID test kits; very successful performance in multiple elections and peak seasons; the conversion of more than 150,000 people to full-time career status; and the improvements in our service, so that 98 percent of the nation's people receive mail and package deliveries within three days.

**That's a comprehensive and impressive list. What accomplishments under Delivering for America would you say you are most proud of?**

While accomplishing what I mention above, we have also developed and begun to implement new strategies to reduce our cost and grow our revenue. These are long-term continuous plans that will create a vibrant organization that will recover from, and avoid in the future, the unfortunate circumstances of our past.

I am proud of how my teammates across the organization are preparing for and engaging in the activities necessary to achieve a bright future for our Postal Service.



**“... We have had great accomplishments. ... Everyone participating should be very proud of their role in our journey.”**

**A lot of planning has been done on the design of the new network, and now implementation is underway. What are the big developments employees will see going forward?**

For starters: modern and equipped facilities, improved management practices, technology-enabled logistics operations, well-trained and motivated employees, efficient operations, fully loaded trucks and improved service. Also, new products that gain market share in the package delivery business; growing revenue; reduced expenses; and enough cash generation to cover our cost, invest in keeping our infrastructure operable and pay all our liabilities — including those that fund our employee retirement plans.

That's it!

This is all I am looking to accomplish. This is what our network changes are about. We have a dysfunctional network that increases cost, creates chaos and restricts the greatness we can achieve in serving the nation. We need to perform daily herculean efforts to accomplish the simplest of tasks that our competitors have mastered over three decades ago.

**I've heard the new network described as an "ecosystem." Can you explain what we mean by that term in relation to our infrastructure?**

We are building a new future network. It will have a streamlined mail and package flow, occurring

in a logical, integrated and cost-effective manner. We will transform our processing facilities into Regional Processing and Distribution Centers (RPDCs) and Local Processing Centers (LPCs).

RPDCs are combined mail and package powerhouses and will sort all originating and destinating mail and packages. RPDCs will serve as the backbone of our future network, connecting to one another. Designs for 12 RPDCs are underway, with six of those opening in 2023. We aim to open approximately 60 RPDCs nationwide, mostly by converting existing facilities.

Within a region, Local Processing Centers (LPCs) will sort mail to the final destination and connect RPDCs to delivery operations. By the end of 2024, 31 LPCs will be open, supporting 11 RPDCs. A total of 190 LPCs will support our future network.

This is a major undertaking, and we are making significant investments to correct years of deferred maintenance. Since Delivering for America launched, we have committed nearly \$11.4 billion of the plan's \$40 billion in self-funded investments to create our new network.

Amid this transformation, we will continue to meet our mission of delivering six and sometimes seven days a week to nearly 165 million addresses — all while making necessary middle-mile improvements, so we will deliver service excellence and compete better in the marketplace.

**First and foremost, the Postal Service is an organization of people. How do you see the evolution of the postal workforce?**



**“The well-being of our 630,000 employees is intrinsic to Delivering for America.”**



We are building a stable and empowered workforce. That means transforming the employee experience every step of the way. One of our greatest achievements in our plan's first couple years is stabilizing our workforce. Our conversions now total 150,000 precareers to career status since Oct. 1, 2020, to help retain people by giving them the promise of a career. Through our hiring efforts, we have reduced the supervisor vacancy from 15 percent down to 8 percent by filling open roles.

Recently, we started piloting our Supervisor Apprenticeship Program, a new training course that allows supervisors-in-training to fully learn and experience the role before assuming it. It is at six sites with nearly 1,000 applicants. We also

created a new relief supervisor role to better fill and staff operational supervisor positions while eliminating the need for temporary 204B staffing hours.

Empowering our employees — including our precareers — to succeed is very important. To support their development, we now offer more professional growth opportunities than ever. For example, we have hosted approximately 55 career conferences for more than 6,000 attendees nationwide — with many more planned. We have better-defined career paths, improved succession planning, and added more trainings, too.

The well-being of our 630,000 employees is intrinsic to Delivering for America. Our success depends

on it. Our goal is to improve the employee experience through better facilities, equipment and technology; and improved training and collaboration from top to bottom. We want to create a winning attitude and have it experienced by everyone.

**You recently stood up an Environmental Council. What are your expectations regarding sustainability?**

We are stewards of the largest mailing operations in the world. We are one of the country's biggest organizations, so we do have an environmental impact on local communities. Given that fact, we are strengthening our commitment to reduce emissions, fuel consumption, and waste at every level of our



“The most important change... is the focus, collaboration and energy of the organization to improve our service to the American people. ...”

operations to ensure we are the most environmentally friendly way to mail and ship to the nation's 165 million addresses.

To that end, we are becoming more sustainable. Our newly established Environmental Council, created March 28, 2023, guides our approach.

Our primary focus by statute is to reduce our cost of operations, improve our service and grow our revenue. I believe we can do that in alignment with reducing greenhouse gas emissions by operationalizing the attainment of our environmental targets. This means incorporating processes and goals into our operating strategies of specific groups and leaders within the organization. The Environmental Council set out on a several-month review and made the required adjustments to our initiatives to include how we were pursuing our environmental goals.

As we proceed with Delivering for America, the environmental benefits will occur on pace with our

operational improvements to be aligned in both action and measure. Every improvement to our operations — from better transportation utilization and delivery route refinements to new facilities and vehicles — helps us reduce emissions. Sustainability is a big part of our transformation, and it's a big part of what our customers expect from us.

**Two years ago, we launched USPS Connect. This past summer, we launched USPS Ground Advantage. How do you see our trajectory for revenue growth and product development?**

We need products that empower us to actually compete in the marketplace and be a player. As our new network and delivery strategies begin to take shape, we need to sell into the competitive advantage we are creating. That means a reset of our product and pricing strategies to align with our more cost-effective operating practices and offering differentiated services than our competitors.

In my opinion, the Postal Service has always had opportunities to differentiate itself in a way to reduce cost and grow revenue. We are now driving out our bad operating practices and capitalizing on our strengths — which, quite frankly, have always been there and hidden beneath a veil of confusion and inaction.

Ground Advantage is one example of us capitalizing on changes that we launched July 9. It has simplified three product offerings into one and served as a first step to better differentiate our product profiles. It has incredible reach and convenient entry points at an affordable rate with reliable service — a game-changer for our customers, the industry and the Postal Service alike.

**You recently announced a reorganization of the Sales and Marketing functions. How does that restructuring reflect what's happening in the marketplace as we strive to continue to meet evolving customer needs?**

Beyond products, we need a better way of interacting with customers. We are embarking on initiatives to equip our sales and marketing teams with new and upgraded solutions to rival any competitive organization. The restructuring was a step in that direction. We will have a new energy and new ways of penetrating the market.

We will also leverage past successes to breed new revenue, like the COVID test kits program — that has opened doors to new possibilities to work with other government agencies and businesses. We have made progress across all these efforts, and I expect significant improvements over the next year for our sales and marketing groups. I expect them to generate meaningful revenue growth in our package business.

As for mail revenue, we will continue to recommend increases of our prices on Market Dominant products to offset inflation and our growing number of delivery points, and to correct for almost 15 years of a defective pricing model. At the same time, we are advancing new and old concepts more aggressively in terms of promotions and discounts that mailers may find helpful. Keep in mind — we are and we will remain among the most affordable mail carriers in the world.

**Louis, I think a strength of the Delivering for America plan is how it sets ambitious but achievable goals, while being flexible about the strategies to achieve them. Are there still big strategic elements yet to be determined?**



We have more to develop to address our retail strategy. Tangentially, we are rolling out new Sorting and Delivery Centers (S&DCs) by investing in existing underutilized facilities to accommodate mail and package transfer operations and more carriers. These new centers provide greater reach for our customers, and they accommodate electric vehicles and sortation equipment. Customers will see no changes to their local Post Office retail operations; no Post Offices will be closed and PO Box service will not be changed with the opening of the S&DCs.

We have the most expansive retail network in the world, with 31,000 Post Offices easily accessed by over 330 million Americans across our nation and its territories.

Unfortunately, over the years, revenue generation from these retail centers has declined. It is time to come up with new ways to generate revenue that complement the services we perform for the nation today, while enabling our retail centers to be financially self-sustaining.

With the rollout of the S&DC concept, these retail centers will be efficiently connected, both in terms of physical distribution and digitally, enabling fast and reliable movement of goods, services and information between every community in the nation.

With the nationwide connectivity we are enabling, we must turn many of these centers into more vibrant assets than they are today. I see them as future centers of local commerce and national assistance, with postmasters becoming valuable leaders of commerce and support within their communities. We are now working on strategies to make this a reality, and so much opportunity lies ahead.

**I think I know your answer, but if you could distill your vision of the future state of the Postal service into one sentence, what would that sentence be?**

I would like the public to see us as an engine of American commerce, to earn a reputation beyond being seen as the most trusted government agency to also being considered one of the most competent government agencies, and to be the preferred shipping partner at every American business and residence. These are aspirations I believe we can and should achieve. ★

# PURPOSE BUILT

With a focus on the future and an eye toward success, the Postal Service is redesigning its network.



**The phrase “It’s not really designed to do that” is often spoken before something unfortunate happens. For many years, the operational model of the Postal Service provided a case in point. And in fact, something unfortunate did happen: The Postal Service over many years tried to excel at mail and package delivery — but with an ill-fitting operational model designed many decades ago just for mail delivery, the result was long-term declines in service and competitiveness, and financial distress.**

With the implementation of the Delivering for America plan, the Postal Service is now methodically removing the compromises of the past and putting in place an operational network purposefully redesigned — not retrofitted — to create a more unified, powerful and responsive national mail and package delivery capability. In other words, the Postal Service is building a modern, best-in-class network designed for success.

### New vision, new design

The key element in this approach is a system of 60 Regional Processing and Distribution Centers (RPDCs) that operate as regional transportation nodes. These facilities enable the unified movement of mail and packages together, on the same trucks, across the country. Supported by Local Processing Centers (LPCs), Sorting and Delivery Centers (S&DCs) and Delivery Units — the processing and transportation ecosystem under each RPDC — the result is a massive reduction in nodes and, thereby, fewer truck trips daily, achieving much greater reach and reliability within each region.

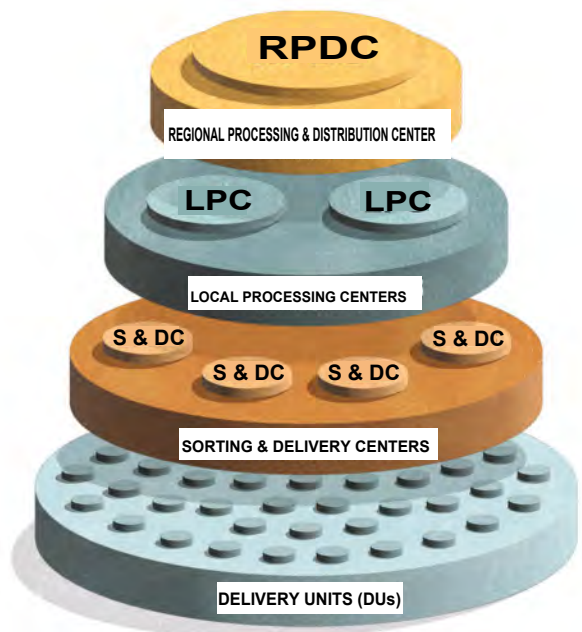
Based on the commitment to deliver to homes and businesses six days per week and service

standards designed to enable the unified flow of mail and packages, the Postal Service’s new operational model is being methodically installed on a rolling schedule from region to region, based on intensive planning with local teams.

As operations are reoriented in each region in redesigned facilities, performance all across core metrics — especially on-time performance — will improve substantially.

### The Regional Processing and Transportation Ecosystem

Within each of the 60 regions in the United States served by a Regional Processing and Distribution Center (RPDC), there will be an ecosystem of Local Processing Centers (LPCs), Sorting and Delivery Centers (S&DCs) and Delivery Units (DUs).



### Synchronized movement

Like a well-made precision watch that keeps excellent time, the operations of the Postal Service are being transformed into a model defined by continuous synchronized motion — with processing, transportation, delivery and retail functions operating as highly coordinated and interlocking components. The movement of mail and packages through the postal network is designed to flow smoothly and on time throughout the journey from sender to receiver. Accomplishing this goal requires meticulous



coordination between operations at every facility, function and leg of transportation.

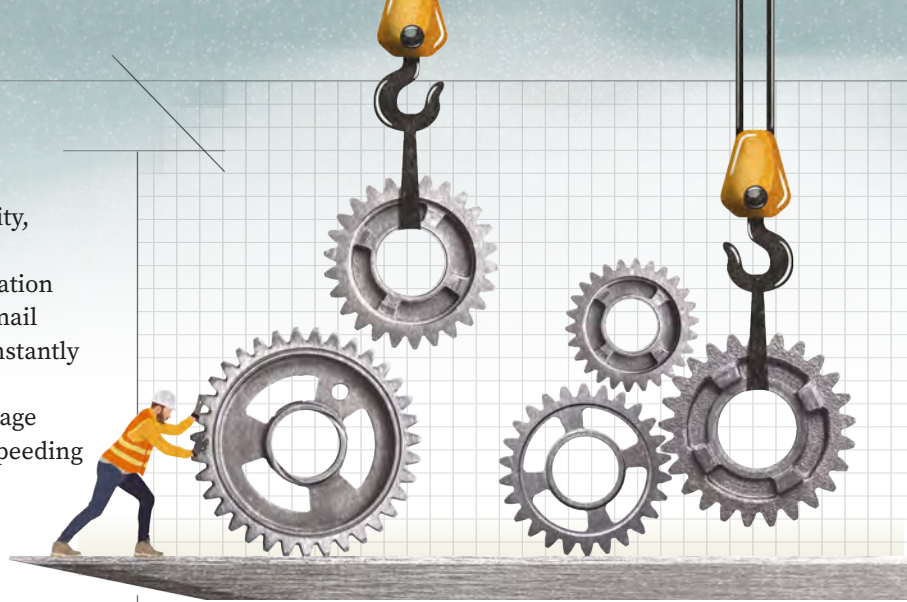
Heavy investment in automation and information systems is enabling more detailed tracking of mail and package movement and allows USPS to constantly determine whether processes are on time and performing as they should be. Automated package sorting and handling is especially effective at speeding up processing and enabling USPS information systems to align operating windows with its transportation system. Shifting volume from air transport to more reliable ground transport also helps ensure the entire postal network can achieve higher throughput with fewer handlings and more rational movement patterns. The result is more reliable timing throughout the Postal Service and greater timeliness and consistency for the customer.

### Consistent and repeatable

When the Postal Service's transformation is completed, every processing facility will have a common set of engineered layouts and the same portfolio of state-of-the-art sortation machines and integrated technologies. A person visiting these facilities should find the daily processes, schedules, machines, footprint, workforce roles and workflows to be nearly identical. The integration of processes with transportation operations will be the same from facility to facility and from day to day.

With precision as an outcome of standardization and disciplined repetition, the consistency of structure — together with robust measurement and analytics — will help improve operational reliability and significantly reduce deviations from daily plans. Logical workflows and layouts, supported by investments in automation, will speed operations and expand processing capacity.

The Postal Service is purchasing machines capable of processing **40,000-60,000 packages per hour.**



**“One of the most powerful aspects of our new network design is that we tie the logical sequencing of workflows within a facility to the on-time transportation supporting that facility. It’s designed to be one seamless workflow, with precision timing producing exceptional service performance.”**

— Isaac Cronkhite, Chief Processing and Distribution Officer

Many of the machines being deployed are several times faster than the fastest sorters now used by the Postal Service. Advanced material handling equipment is being integrated so that the process from the loading dock to the machine — and from the machine to the loading dock — is fluid and fast. These investments in automation will create an enormous jump in processing capacity, free up a lot of time, improve schedule discipline and double operational throughput.

### Flexible and fluid

The constant, coordinated movement of mail and packages throughout the country requires an operational model with a high degree of flexibility and fluidity to overcome the peaks and valleys of high and low volumes, weather issues and other disruptions. The true test of a





## 70 million – today's maximum daily package processing capacity – represents nearly a three-fold improvement over the 25 million daily maximum capacity during the 2020-21 holiday season.

great operational model is whether it can withstand unusual pressures and readily adapt to new demands, while keeping on-time performance on target.

Expanded capacity provides flexibility. Although 41 million is the most packages the Postal Service has ever received in one day, the network can now handle 70 million – nearly three times higher than several years ago. The network is also being designed to flex and adapt to challenges by being configurable geographically, so that volumes and resources can be shifted as needed from one facility to another without disrupting service performance.

Another factor is the stabilization of the postal workforce. With 150,000 precareer employees converted to career status, and larger facilities having greater staffing interchangeability, there is more intrinsic stability and capability at each processing location. The fact that the Postal Service will hire only 10,000 seasonal workers in the upcoming holiday season instead of the 40,000 usually required is an example of this growth in capacity – and flexibility and fluidity.

### Precise and efficient

Nearly 40 percent of First-Class Mail is currently delivered by the Postal Service a day before the service standard indicates. While on the surface this may seem to be a good thing – after all, who wouldn't want their delivery a day early? – this points to an

efficiency problem. The issue is that resources are being misallocated if the network is providing such a high percentage of early deliveries – and some senders are displeased, as this may contradict delivery date information provided to the recipient.

The ideal scenario – what the new operational model is designed to accomplish – is for each package or piece of mail to arrive only on the day specified by its service standard, not early or late. If it is meant to arrive in three days, it should be delivered in three days. Delivery precision requires a high level of operational performance at processing facilities and low error rates at every phase of the journey from sender to recipient. Achieving this goal will lead to large increases in efficiency and reliability throughout the postal network.

### Conveyor belt for the nation

Designed to fit its purpose, like a giant, well-designed and well-maintained conveyor belt connecting every home and business to one another, the new operational model of the Postal Service – with interlinking processing, transportation, delivery and retail functions – is meant to be in continuous motion, delivering the nation's mail and packages with fluidity, synchronicity, precision, efficiency and reliability. As it installs RPDCs, LPCs and S&DCs, and redesigns its transportation system to connect and support these operations, the Postal Service will become the competitive, cost-effective delivery system the nation needs to prosper and grow in the decades ahead.



*We Go Everywhere!*

# ZIP Codes™

# 71854 AND 75501

Have you ever wished you could be in two places at once? In the Texarkana Post Office on State Line Avenue, you can stand in Arkansas (ZIP Code 71854) and Texas (ZIP Code 75501) at the same time.



Photo Credit: Photographs in the Carol M. Highsmith Archive, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

## Texarkana, AR & TX

Texarkana, AR, and Texarkana, TX, are separate cities with a shared identity. State Line Avenue joins the two municipalities through the heart of town and up to the United States Post Office and Courthouse, which straddles the border. The state line continues into the Post Office lobby — drawn across the floor.

The office is still a single delivery unit, although operationally, the staff runs two mail sort plans — one for Texas and one for Arkansas.

No other federal office building in the country, on record, is situated in two states.



*Opposite left:* Mailboxes at the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in Texarkana.

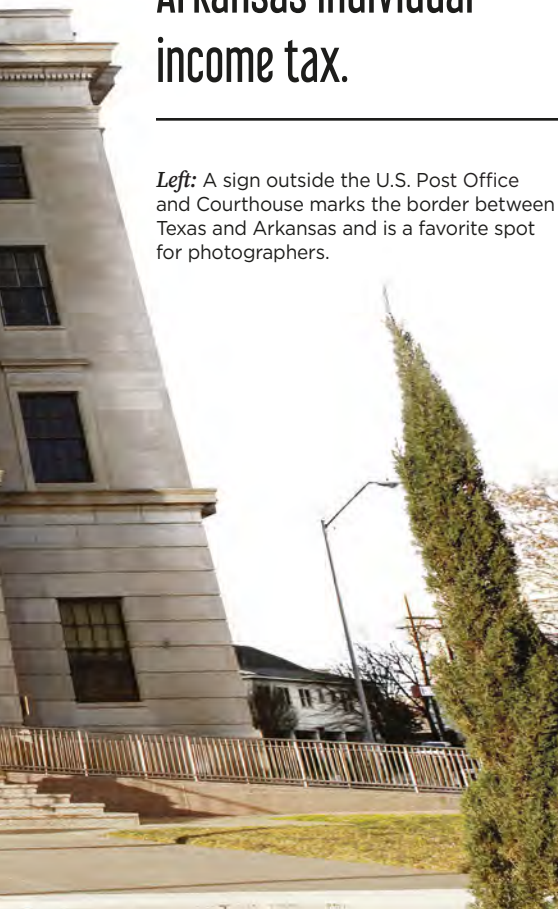
The structure was completed in 1933. Streets were rerouted and at least a dozen buildings were removed to make way for the five-story edifice. The base is faced with Texas pink granite and the upper walls are Arkansas limestone. Its architectural style is described as

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## Texas has no state income tax — but Arkansas does. Lest everyone move to the Texas side of town, Texarkana, AR, residents are exempted from Arkansas individual income tax.

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*Left:* A sign outside the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse marks the border between Texas and Arkansas and is a favorite spot for photographers.



*Above:* Barrel racing is just one of the many events at the Four States Fair and Rodeo, held annually in Texarkana.

beaux-arts, though there are some art deco features. The interior is lavishly appointed with marble walls, wood wainscotting and gilded coffered ceilings. The Post Office's original bronze writing tables are still in use.

“Texarkana” is actually a combination of three state names. Origin stories vary, but according to one version, Col. Gus Knobel, while surveying the region for a new railroad, wrote “TEX-ARK-ANA” on a board and nailed it to a tree — believing Louisiana met Texas and Arkansas at this point. He was almost correct — the Louisiana border is about 30 miles away.

Texarkana has historically been a point of convergence. Both cities were founded in 1873, with a street grid based on the layout of the railroad tracks — which explains some of the oddly shaped lots and angled roads. The railroad's influence declined as highway systems were built, but Texarkana still serves as a gateway to the Southwest and is the junction of multiple rail lines and highways. Texarkana also has a regional airport.

The twin cities share a chamber of commerce and water department, but each has its own mayor, police department, fire department and high school (their teams compete).

Laws vary across the jurisdictions. Criminals used to take advantage of that and “escape” across the street, but now the cities have a mutual-aid agreement that allows pursuit across the state line.

You may want to schedule a visit to Texarkana to coincide with the Four States Fair and Rodeo, a 10-day event in early April that includes monster trucks and a demolition derby. Car buffs of a less destructive nature can appreciate the Four States Auto Museum's rotating collection of vintage cars.

Texarkana bills itself as a place with “life so large it takes two states” — but it is one nice place to visit. If you go, be sure to get a picture at the Post Office.



*Above:* Straddling the state line between Texas and Arkansas.

# DELIVERING A GREENER FUTURE



**SUSTAINABILITY IS A DRIVING FORCE OF THE POSTAL SERVICE'S TRANSFORMATION.** With modern, practical strategies backed by \$40 billion in spending, USPS is investing significantly in employees, facilities, vehicles and technologies. What's emerging is a more competitive and self-sufficient operation that incorporates meaningful and lasting environmental gains to become a cleaner, greener and more environmentally sustainable organization.

**A** more efficient Postal Service is inherently more sustainable. Under the Delivering for America 10-year strategic plan, USPS is creating a modern, high-performing processing and distribution network, an integrated transportation system and a better work environment that uses less energy, reduces waste and emits fewer greenhouse gases (GHGs) than today's legacy network. With Delivering for America, environmental excellence can be achieved alongside operational excellence, and both gains are being equally embraced.

The Postal Service's new Environmental Council, chaired by Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, is the driving force behind the organization's sustainability

*At top:* Larger USPS facilities can be powerhouses of renewable energy through projects like this one at the Los Angeles Processing and Distribution Center, which has more than 28,000 solar panels installed on its roof.

commitment. Formed in March 2023, the council has been working to develop a long-term environmental strategy focused on three core areas — climate action, circular economy and environmental awareness — to reduce emissions, increase recycling and reuse of materials, and improve the environmental awareness of employees and partners.

## **Green last mile**

The Postal Service's fleet electrification program is the most visible aspect of its commitment to reducing GHG emissions. As the largest mail carrier in the world, USPS operates a massive fleet of vehicles that currently produces the second-highest emissions footprint of any U.S. government agency. A substantial amount of these emissions comes from the more than 129,000 long life vehicles (LLVs) that serve the Postal Service's last-mile customers.

Replacing this aging fleet has been a priority for USPS leaders for years, but decades of financial hardship



made such a sizable investment untenable. It was not until Delivering for America provided a blueprint for stabilizing postal operations and fiscal self-sufficiency that a concrete decision on the next generation delivery vehicle (NGDV) could be made.

Delivering for America's focus on sustainability and building consensus with White House and congressional leaders also brought a fresh perspective to the NGDV decision, one that enabled USPS to make a \$9.6 billion sustainability commitment — including \$3 billion in congressional funding for infrastructure investments — that will see the organization deploy the federal government's largest fleet of battery-electric vehicles, starting in early 2024.

### Air to ground

The inefficiencies and duplication inherent in the Postal Service's legacy network, combined with impractical service commitments, forced the organization to rely on a costly, complex and emissions-heavy air transportation system to move mail and packages over long distances, even though inherent deficiencies in air transportation often affected reliability and service performance.

Delivering for America identified this problem and placed a priority on resolving it quickly. With a new, realistic service standard, increased automation and a renewed focus on using its more reliable and sustainable ground transportation system — all measures adopted in the early phases of Delivering for America — USPS is now able to assign mail or packages that can be transported across the country by road within five days to its more effective and fuel-efficient ground network.

The impact of this decision illustrates how sustainability is good for business. Today, the Postal Service has reduced by more than 90 percent the amount of First-Class Mail and package shipments assigned



## USPS Battery-Electric Vehicles Will Reduce GHG Footprint

The Postal Service's decision to take a leading role in sustainability will result in fewer greenhouse gas-emitting delivery vehicles on America's roads by 2028. This is an essential component of the Environmental Council's soon-to-be announced long-term strategy.

**"Our internal Environmental Council's new strategy gives us the mandate and the foundation to continuously improve the sustainability of our operations and ensure we are able to compete as a strong environmental steward and a green link in our customers' supply chains."**

— **Louis DeJoy**, Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer

to air transportation, an achievement that removes unnecessary aircraft emissions and, with the additional focus of the Environmental Council strategy, puts USPS on course to save about \$1 billion in air transportation costs.

### Fewer trips

The efficiency of a new processing and distribution network designed to be quick and nimble gives USPS more clarity on how to best serve each market. With duplication and repetition eliminated, trucks no longer need to be dispatched partially full, and the new node-to-node transportation system brings simplicity to a network that for years has been plagued with workarounds and random fleet dispatch — practices that create unnecessary GHG emissions.

By analyzing individual movements within its transportation system, USPS is gaining fresh insights into the cost and fuel consumption of every mile traveled — as well as the environmental impact of long-distance trips and the effect each journey has on service performance and reliability.

**By reducing its reliance on air transportation, the Postal Service has eliminated approximately**

**454,759 metric tons of GHG emissions.\***

\*Measured from October 2021 to July 2023





### Climate Action

#### STRATEGY

Reduce dependency on fossil fuels, decrease water usage and increase climate resiliency

#### INITIATIVES



Reduce GHG emissions



Less energy consumption



Lower water usage



### Circular Economy

#### STRATEGY

Prioritize recycling and reuse to keep products, components and materials in circulation

#### INITIATIVES



Sustainable acquisitions



Recycling



Sustainable packaging



### Environmental Awareness

#### STRATEGY

Deliver environmental communications to employees, communities and partners

#### INITIATIVES



Communication



Policies and standard work instructions



Training

Unnecessary and underutilized trips are being eliminated from a highway contract route (HCR) network that currently logs more than 4 million miles each day. Removing even a small percentage of these miles will have a dramatic impact on the Postal Service's annual GHG emissions — simply by ensuring that each trip needs to be taken. Progress from October 2020 to July 2023 includes 226,480 HCR network miles reduced per day.

**“As a daily presence in communities across America, the Postal Service is as much a neighbor to its customers as it is a service provider. And as a good neighbor, we embrace the responsibility to support and improve the communities we call home through sustainability initiatives that limit our impact on the environment.”**

— Jennifer Beiro-Réveillé, Chief Sustainability Officer

#### Route optimization

Route optimization elevates transportation planning to a higher level. Using the most up-to-date technologies and software, the Postal Service can now determine the most sustainable, cost-effective and timely routes for every truck in its fleet.

Using factors like fuel consumption, idling time, the number of left-hand turns a vehicle will make, the number of intersections it will cross, weather, congestion, traffic accidents and driver availability, route optimization is a competitive tool that can reduce GHG emissions, cut delivery times, reduce maintenance and downtime, and put an end to empty return trips.

Route optimization is a proven technology that is already aiding Postal Service rivals. Beyond the inherent cost savings of a more efficient transportation system, route optimization reduces emissions on a grand scale by lowering mileage, increasing fleet utilization and expanding the lifespan of each vehicle.

#### Taking ownership and responsibility

The Postal Service is committed to continuously improving its environmental performance. With environmental excellence as a core goal of Delivering for America, USPS will increasingly operate as a leader in sustainability — championing and supporting the green aspirations of its partners and proving that environmentally conscious practices create a stronger and more competitive business. *The Eagle* will have in-depth coverage of the long-term

environmental strategy once the announcement is made.



*Left:* A carport canopy with solar panels has the added benefit of lowering temperatures underneath by as much as 7 degrees compared with the open air.



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