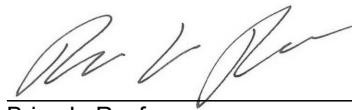


**Alternate Route Adjustment Process – Sorting and Delivery Centers (ARAP-S&DC)**

This jointly developed document provides the mutual understanding of the national parties on issues related to the Memorandum of Understanding Re: *Alternate Route Adjustment Process – Sorting and Delivery Centers (ARAP-S&DC)*. It is intended for use by the parties at all levels in properly applying the terms of the Alternate Route Adjustment Process – Sorting and Delivery Centers (ARAP-S&DC).



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Date 9/30/2024

Date 9/30/2024

## **Alternate Route Adjustment Process – Sorting and Delivery Centers (ARAP-S&DC)**

The parties will appoint joint NALC/USPS area lead teams, and route evaluation and adjustment teams who will be used to implement the methodology outlined below (with the NALC team member compensated on a no loss, no gain basis). The area lead team(s), along with the route evaluation and adjustment team(s) will be responsible for data analysis, route evaluation and adjustment, jointly conducting carrier consultations and jointly ensuring that all resulting data and unit records are updated. All NALC area lead team and route evaluation and adjustment team members will be granted “read only” access to the Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS). The access will be solely for the use of data related to evaluations and adjustments the teams are assigned. The NALC representative(s) on the team(s) will be appointed by the National NALC President while the USPS representative(s) will be selected by USPS Vice President, Delivery Operations or his/her designee. Local office contacts will also be established to assist the team(s) with the evaluation and adjustment of routes in their installation. The local office contacts for the NALC will be appointed by the National Business Agent or designee while the USPS representatives will be selected by the district manager or designee.

### **Structure**

**National Oversight Team** - The members of the national oversight team will consist of one member appointed by USPS Vice President Delivery Operations and one member appointed by the National NALC President that will oversee the process and resolve issues referred by the area lead teams. The national oversight team will provide training on the process to the area lead teams, route evaluation and adjustment teams, and all designated backup team members. The national oversight team is responsible for jointly developing/approving all training materials used in this process.

**Area Lead Teams** – There shall be four (4) area lead teams responsible for the following:

- Reading and becoming familiar with all agreements related to the process.
- Adhering to timelines for all steps of the process.
- Recommending to the national oversight team the number of route evaluation and adjustment teams and other resources needed to timely complete evaluations and adjustments.
- Ensuring route evaluation and adjustment teams and designated backup team members receive any nationally developed training on the process. No data analysis will begin until route evaluation and adjustment teams have been provided training.
- Assigning route evaluation and adjustment teams to zones for evaluation and adjustment.
- Communicating frequently and monitoring the process and progress of route evaluation and adjustment teams. Such communication should occur at least weekly.
- Communicating with the national oversight team to report progress.
- Ensure data entries that track the weekly progress of each route evaluation and adjustment team are complete in all the units selected for evaluation and adjustment. Additionally, ensuring that the results of the evaluation and adjustment process are compiled by zone, installation, and district in the Alternate Route Adjustment Process – Sorting and Delivery Centers, (ARAP-SDC) Unit Checklist weekly and forwarding this information to the national oversight team.
- Resolving issues referred by the route evaluation and adjustment teams or submitting unresolved issues by sending both parties’ position to the national oversight team within two working days.
- Designating back-up route evaluation and adjustment team representatives.

- Jointly discussing any anticipated changes to representatives on a route evaluation and adjustment team.
- Planning and facilitating completion of PS Forms 3999, *Inspection of Letter Carrier Route*.
- Ensuring that the PS Form 3999 process outlined in this document is followed.
- Assigning and overseeing Carrier Optimal Routing (COR) technicians used to facilitate and assist route evaluation and adjustment teams in territory realignment.
- Providing evaluation and adjustment schedules to the national oversight team.
- As necessary, the area lead teams will schedule zones for evaluation and adjustment to be performed themselves. In these assigned zones, the area lead team will be responsible for data analysis, route evaluation and adjustment, jointly conducting carrier consultations and jointly updating all resulting data to ensure it is properly recorded for all unit records.
- Jointly verifying that all base data entered into Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS) is correct to ensure it is an accurate reflection of the agreed adjustment.
- Immediately elevating to the national oversight team any delays in the process resulting from the unavailability of a route evaluation and adjustment team member.
- Reviewing requests from local office contacts to make simple territorial changes as necessary only for the purpose of correcting any obvious errors with the initial adjustment.
- Ensuring that all base data entered into the Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS) is an accurate reflection of the agreed to adjustment.

**Route Evaluation and Adjustment Teams** – Route evaluation and adjustment teams are responsible for the following:

- Reading and becoming familiar with all agreements related to the process.
- When assigned to a zone, establishing communication with both local office contacts and discussing their roles and responsibilities in the process prior to any data analysis. No route evaluation and adjustment team will begin data analysis in any zone until after a team communicates with both local office contacts to explain the process and make sure they understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Maintaining ongoing communications with local office contacts throughout the process to obtain information needed to evaluate and adjust the routes such as a copy of the current seniority list, current or anticipated vacancies, suggestions for replacement carriers or any potential data integrity issues.
- Ensuring issues identified by the local office contacts that would affect the evaluation or adjustment of routes in a zone are addressed prior to beginning evaluation.
- Reviewing all available information for anomalies and potential data integrity issues. All information related to that issue will be made available to the route evaluation and adjustment team upon request.
- Ensuring that representative PS Form 3999s, *Inspection of Letter Carrier Route* are completed for routes in a selected zone. Upon assignment to a zone, the route evaluation and adjustment team should immediately advise the local office contacts that it needs current representative PS Form 3999s for the purpose of moving territory, if necessary, during adjustments. Such PS Form 3999s will be completed as soon as practicable.

- Following the PS Form 3999 process when adjusting routes.
- Data analysis, route evaluation and adjustment, jointly conducting all carrier consultations and ensuring all resulting data is properly recorded and unit records are updated. Carrier consultations may be conducted in person, via video communications or telephonically.
- Ensuring the evaluation and adjustments are completed within prescribed time limits.
- Immediately referring to the area lead team any issue the route evaluation and adjustment team is unable to resolve.
- Upon implementation of route adjustments, forwarding to the area lead team copies of all data and adjustments for the purposes of record retention. Copies should be electronic when available.
- When COR is planned to be used for adjustments, ensuring data preparation is jointly reviewed by the route evaluation and adjustment team to determine whether additional data preparation is needed so there are no delays in scheduled evaluations or adjustments.

**Local Office Contacts** - Local office contacts for each zone will be selected by USPS Delivery Operations at Headquarters, in consultation with the District Manager or designee, and by the NALC National Business Agent or designee. The local office contacts will be provided information on their duties and responsibilities and will discuss these tasks with their assigned route evaluation and adjustment team prior to performing local office contact tasks. The local office contacts are responsible for providing the route evaluation and adjustment team the following information:

- Local issues relevant to route evaluation and adjustment.
- A current seniority list.
- Current or anticipated vacancies and information regarding replacement carriers.
- Potential data integrity issues regarding Management Operating Data System (MODS) code entries, modifying time clock entries in Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS), auxiliary assistance tracking, work hour transfers, etc.
- Where appropriate, reasons why the selected review periods may not be valid for evaluation.
- Notification, as far in advance as practicable, when either local office contact will not be available to perform his/her responsibilities, including the name of his/her replacement.
- All PS Form 3999 data when requested.
- Designated back-up representatives.

Local office contacts are also responsible for the following:

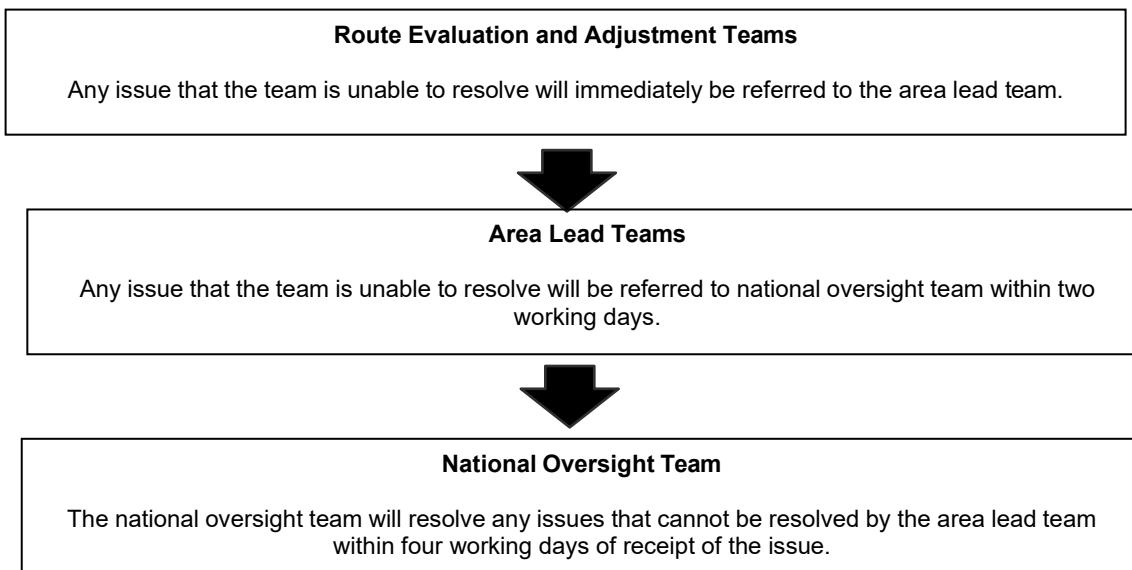
- Reading and becoming familiar with all agreements related to the process.
- Jointly providing the nationally developed standup talk to all employees in a zone scheduled for evaluation and adjustment prior to movement into a S&DC.
- Ensuring that valid and representative PS Form 3999s are conducted when requested by the route evaluation and adjustment team.
- Ensuring the PS Form 3999 process is followed at the local level.

- Assisting the route evaluation and adjustment team with territory adjustments. The local office contacts may also jointly select someone with knowledge of the territory to provide this assistance.
- Providing carriers with their route's evaluated time, prior to the adjustment consultation.
- Providing carriers with the PS Form(s) 1840 Reverse prior to the adjustment consultation.
- Providing carriers copies of any amended PS Form(s) 1840 Reverse if changes were made after the adjustment consultation by the route evaluation and adjustment team.

The area lead team or route evaluation and adjustment team may, by mutual agreement, assign additional tasks to a specific pair of local office contacts, on an individual, case-by-case basis.

### **Issue Resolution**

The issue resolution process will be used to resolve issues related to the ARAP-S&DC. Team members at all levels should consult this document prior to elevating any unresolved issue. All disputes will be documented on the nationally developed Dispute Form and jointly submitted to the next step in the process. The steps and time frames for elevating unresolved issues are as follows:



### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis period for zones within an S&DC shall be days 31 through 60 following the establishment of the S&DC or movement of the assignment into an S&DC. The parties agree and recognize that it is in the best interest of the parties that data used for this process is accurate and reliable. The national oversight team will jointly develop and make available an evaluation workbook template which uses Workhour Workload Report data to facilitate data analysis. Analysis and evaluation spreadsheet formulas are established at the national level. No changes may be made to those formulas.

- Data integrity issues will be addressed prior to any analysis and adjustments. Such issues include, but are not limited to, amended clock rings, work hour transfers, designation of work hour codes, errors discovered when reviewing PS Forms 3999.
- The local office contacts must make the route evaluation and adjustment team aware of any issues they have with the integrity of the data resulting from such things as altered time records, Management Operating Data System (MODS) code changes, or work hour transfers.

- The route evaluation and adjustment team should review relevant reports for each selected zone to determine if there are any data integrity issues. The team must review and address any such issues prior to completing any analysis or adjustment. These reports include:
  - “Flash Last 4 Weeks Report”
  - TACS LTATS – Weekly Summary Report
  - TACS Weekly Operation Summary Report
- Any known operational changes should occur prior to the beginning of the analysis period.
- On each workday during the life of this agreement, the DOIS Workhour Workload Report for the previous day, for all routes being evaluated within an S&DC, will be posted daily in a convenient location until adjustments for each zone are implemented.

### **Anomalies**

- Route evaluation and adjustment teams will review each day of the evaluation period for each route to identify any anomalies in volume, office time, or street time entries.
- Errors may have resulted from work hours that were not transferred, or erroneously transferred, from one route to another, e.g., failure to properly track auxiliary assistance.
- The team should also look for delivered volume discrepancies on the regular carrier's non-scheduled day. Additionally, there could have been an erroneous volume entry.

### **Other Routes**

- Evaluation and adjustment of collection and parcel post routes that do not include any casing and delivery of mail will be evaluated and adjusted pursuant to the relevant provisions of Handbook M-39, *Management of Delivery Services* or an alternate jointly agreed upon process.

### **PS Form 3999 Process**

This process is applied to all PS Forms 3999 performed in zones being evaluated under this process.

- The original, unedited PS Form 3999 will be printed and made available to the route evaluation and adjustment team assigned to perform adjustments.
- Within three business days (whenever possible) of performing a PS Form 3999, management will explain the examiner's comments and the reasons for any time recorded as nonrecurring street time, as well as any editing of the original PS Form 3999, to the carrier. The carrier will have the opportunity to write his/her comments on an attachment to the original unedited copy of the PS Form 3999. The carrier will be provided with a copy of the unedited and edited PS Form 3999 one day prior to discussing it with management.
- An unedited copy of each PS Form 3999 along with examiner and carrier comments and the Audit Trail Report(s) will be provided to the appropriate adjustment team.
- Route evaluation and adjustment teams must jointly review the PS Forms 3999 as well as route examiner and carrier comments and audit trail reports before any PS Form 3999 is determined to be representative for route adjustment purposes. Route evaluation and adjustment teams will identify any errors to the PS Form 3999 and work with the route examiner to correct the PS Form 3999 before it is used for route adjustment purposes and/or make corrections on the PS Form 1840 Reverse.
- Where multiple PS Forms 3999 have been conducted for a particular route, the closest PS Form 3999 to the agreed upon street time for the route will be used for adjustment purposes. New PS Forms 3999 will be performed as necessary.

- If a PS Form 3999 was changed after being downloaded into DOIS for either a Carrier Optimal Routing (COR) or non-COR site, the parties will jointly review the DOIS 3999 Audit Trail Report.

### **Volume for the Selected Period by Route**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cased Letters</li> <li>○ Cased Flats</li> <li>○ SPRs</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Parcels</li> <li>○ Sequenced and simplified mailings</li> <li>○ DPS</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

### **Office Evaluation**

The area lead team or the route evaluation and adjustment team will select from the lesser of the following for the data analysis review period when determining the evaluated office time on each route:

1. The regular carrier's (or mutually agreed upon replacement carrier's) actual average total office time (which includes any auxiliary assistance and anomaly adjustments) for the data analysis review period; or
2. The estimated standard for the route using the average cased volume (which includes any anomaly adjustments) on the route for the data analysis review period. The adjusted estimated standard is the sum of the following:
  - the average cased letters divided by 18, plus
  - the average cased flats divided by 8, plus
  - the average cased letters and flats divided by 70, plus
  - the fixed office time (FOT) (the team should review the routes base FOT and the carriers input to ensure that the FOT selected is representative of the route). If necessary, the team can request that specific elements of FOT be observed and recorded.

However, the route evaluation and adjustment team will consider feedback from the carrier's evaluation consultation regarding the route's office time, and regarding the above components used for the data analysis review period to ensure that the office time selected is representative of the route.

- If a dispute arises over any line item, the issue will be resolved by performing a PS Form 1838C, *Carrier's Count of Mail - Letter Carrier Routes Worksheet* (up to three days) to get a time value solely for the specific line item in question. FOT will not go below the base minimum of 33/43 for the line items utilized.
- It is intended that the route evaluation and adjustment team will use the resources described above to determine an evaluated office time that is representative of the route in the current mail volume environment. The route evaluation and adjustment team should immediately refer any unresolved disputes regarding the evaluated office time to the area lead team.
- It is intended that the route evaluation and adjustment team will use the resources described above to determine an evaluated office time that is representative of the route in the current mail volume environment. The route evaluation and adjustment team should immediately refer any unresolved disputes regarding the evaluated office time to the area lead team.

## **Street Evaluation**

The route evaluation and adjustment team will consider the regular carrier's (or mutually agreed upon replacement carrier's) actual average total street time (which includes any auxiliary assistance and anomaly adjustments) during the evaluation period. However, the route evaluation and adjustment team will consider feedback from the carrier's evaluation consultation regarding the route's street time to ensure that the street time selected is representative of the route.

- It is intended that the route evaluation and adjustment team will use the resources described above to determine an evaluated street time that is representative of the route in the current mail volume environment. The route evaluation and adjustment team should immediately refer any unresolved disputes regarding the evaluated street time to the area lead team.

## **Replacement Carriers**

All actual office and street time data used will be based on the performance of the regular carrier as described above. In circumstances where this is not possible (for example: vacant routes or long-term leave), the route evaluation and adjustment team must select a mutually agreed upon replacement carrier. While the carrier that worked the route the most days during the evaluation period will normally be selected, the route evaluation and adjustment team should analyze additional data and input from the local office contacts for any considered replacement carriers.

- Prior to the data analysis, local office contacts will advise the route evaluation and adjustment team of any routes that were vacant or did not have data available for the regular carrier during the data analysis review period. After discussion with the local parties, the team will decide whether data from a replacement carrier will be used.

## **Consultations**

Joint consultations will be conducted with each carrier to obtain his or her input regarding the evaluation and proposed adjustments. No adjustment will be finalized until after the carrier consultations have taken place and the regular carrier's or mutually agreed upon replacement carrier's input has been considered by the route evaluation and adjustment team. Consultations may be conducted in person, via video communications or telephonically.

- If the carrier requests a copy of the consultation form or the representative PS Form 3999 during the consultations, a copy will be provided to the carrier by the route evaluation and adjustment team as soon as practicable. If the carrier has additional comments after reviewing PS Form 3999, such comments will be immediately forwarded to the route evaluation and adjustment team for consideration in the evaluation and adjustment.
- No formal record will be made of the carrier's comments to the team during the evaluation period. The purpose of communication between the team and a carrier(s) is to help the team understand details about a route necessary to evaluate the route.

## **Adjustments**

The teams will be guided by sections 243.21.b, 243.22, & 243.23 of Handbook M-39 when adjusting routes.

A current PS Form 3999 representing the regular carrier assigned to a route, or the agreed upon replacement, from the evaluation period will be used by the route evaluation and adjustment team to determine the street value of territory transferred. The PS Form 3999 closest to the evaluated street time will be used for the purpose of adjustment. If the route evaluation and adjustment team agree that another PS Form 3999 should be used, they shall forward their request for approval to the area lead team as soon as possible.

The associated office time for the territory transferred will be jointly determined using any of the methods in Handbook M-39 Section 243.316.b.

In any unit where the route evaluation and adjustment team determines that the number of routes will be reduced, preference shall be given to selecting auxiliary routes, vacant routes, and then routes held by junior carriers, provided such selections are efficient and effective. In any unit where the route evaluation and adjustment team determines that the number of routes will be increased, consideration will be given to auxiliary route growth to full-time, available resources and the type of route to be added, and the geographic location of any additional routes to ensure that such adjustments are efficient and effective. Additionally, carrier seniority shall be considered when excessive route changes are anticipated, provided such consideration does not adversely affect the efficiency or effectiveness of the adjustments.

- Following an adjustment, management will complete a new PS Form 3999 for the route as soon as practicable.

### **Carrier Optimal Routing (COR)**

At the option of the branch president, all full-time city delivery duty assignments in a zone(s) within a facility where all routes are adjusted using Carrier Optimal Routing (COR), will be opened for expedited bidding by seniority. If multiple zones within a facility are adjusted, the branch president may choose to limit bidding to the city letter carriers holding full-time city delivery duty assignments in each impacted zone or open bidding to all city letter carriers holding full-time city delivery duty assignments in all optimized zones within a facility.

- If the expedited bidding option is chosen by the Branch President, the Postmaster or designee and the Branch President or designee will jointly oversee the expedited bidding process in advance of the adjustment implementation.
- Carriers will remain on their original assignments until the date of implementation.

When available, COR will be jointly used by the team as a tool for route adjustment, provided the data preparation has been properly completed and is current. The COR technicians assigned by the area lead team will review the data preparation and determine whether additional data preparation for the zone is needed. COR technicians will be made available to complete all COR adjustments. No adjustments will be implemented between November 15 and January 1.

- The use of COR by the route evaluation and adjustment team must be consistent with the applicable provisions of Handbook M-39, and their application of the COR process must also comply with the parties' national settlements.
- The area lead team will ensure COR technicians - one USPS member and one NALC member - will be made available in each area to complete all COR adjustments. There is no policy prohibiting an area lead team member, route evaluation and adjustment team member, or local office contact from performing adjustments while serving a dual role as a COR technician. Case-by-case objections will be processed through the issue resolution process.
- COR is considered available in any zone where the COR data preparation is completed before the adjustment and where COR technicians are available. If changes have occurred in a zone related to the data prep, updates to the data files for the zone will be made as appropriate.
- When transferring territory, the reverse of the PS Form 1840 will indicate by sector segment, any change in street credit from the actual street time used for that sector segment on PS Form 3999, including all relay, travel, allied time to include any manual adjustments made by the COR technician), etc. Any such proposed adjustment to the carrier's street time must be documented and explained by appropriate comments on the reverse of PS Form 1840.
  - For example, territory transferred from Route C002 to Route C004 would be noted, by sector/segment, in the "Relief" Column on the PS Form 1840 Reverse for Route C002. The same territory would be noted, by sector/segment, in the "Addition" Column on the PS Form 1840 Reverse for Route C004. Allied times associated with that territory will also be reviewed to determine if they should be transferred to the gaining route C004 or left on the losing Route C002.

- Old relay times from the existing PS Form 3999 (recorded as EXR) and new relay times (recorded as ADJ) for the proposed adjustment on each route are identified on the reverse of PS Form 1840 by relay as well as total relay time for the route. The difference between these two total times is noted in the relief or addition column of the PS Form 1840 Reverse. The route evaluation and adjustment team will be provided the relevant reports generated by COR to review the specifics of the proposed changes regarding relays and relay times so that they can jointly make decisions regarding the proposed changes, and then have the necessary documentation for the adjustment consultations regarding any agreed to changes.
- Travel To, Travel From, and Travel Within times must be validated, documented, and discussed during the adjustment consultation. If there is a different credit of time proposed for travel within or travel to and travel from the route other than what existed as reflected by PS Form 3999, such new time will be validated, and a decision made by the route evaluation and adjustment team regarding the proposed change prior to the adjustment consultation with the carrier. It is not necessary that the validation itself be done jointly in order to satisfy the route evaluation and adjustment team.
  - For example, all travel to, travel from, and the total of all travel within times from the 3999 (recorded as EXR) are identified on the reverse of the PS Form 1840 and new travel times are identified as an adjustment (recorded as ADJ) on the reverse of PS Form 1840. The difference between these two times will be noted in the relief or addition column on the reverse of PS Form 1840. The route evaluation and adjustment team will be provided all relevant reports generated by COR to review the specifics of the proposed changes regarding travel times so they can jointly make decisions regarding the proposed changes, and then have the necessary documentation for the adjustment consultations regarding any agreed to changes. Any change in travel times from the 3999 due to a proposed new travel pattern must be validated and then reviewed by the route evaluation and adjustment team so they can jointly make decisions regarding the proposed change. The Route Summary Report will be used as a tool to aid in the validation process.
- The evaluated office and street times selected by the route evaluation and adjustment teams will be transferred to the top left-hand corner of the PS Form 1840 Reverse. The initial proposed adjusted office and street times from the COR process will appear on the top right corner of the PS Form 1840 Reverse. The difference between these two times must be identified on the 1840 Reverse by sector segment (when applicable) for each route. The difference in these times that must be specifically identified includes items such as proposed changes in relay times, travel times, allied times, delivery times, miscellaneous times, and eliminated/added routes (eliminated/added routes can impact the total time difference due to demonstrated performance, selected street time, and fixed time such as travel to, travel from, loading time, street breaks, etc.).
- The route evaluation and adjustment team will be working with COR technicians who know the system. The COR technicians are there to make the necessary inputs and to explain any aspect of the COR program/process that the team needs to make decisions regarding the proposed adjustments. The COR technicians will conduct such duties at the joint direction of the route evaluation and adjustment team.
- All decisions regarding the evaluations and adjustments of routes, including deductions and/or changes proposed by COR, or manually, are made jointly by the route evaluation and adjustment team. Any items of disagreement will be identified and documented by the route evaluation and adjustment team and immediately referred to the area lead team.
- When transferring territory in COR and non-COR sites, the route evaluation and adjustment team may agree to change the time credit for a sector segment. Such changes will be noted on the reverse of the PS Form 1840 with the team's explanation of the time that was added or deducted and the reason.
- If a PS Form 3999 was changed after being downloaded into the Delivery Operations Information System, for either a COR, or non-COR adjustment, the parties will jointly review the Delivery Operations Information System 3999 Audit Trail Report.

Some COR Reports to be reviewed by the route evaluation and adjustment team include: Existing Route Summary, Territory Transfer Summary Report, Adjusted Route Summary, Allied Time Report, Scheme Change Report, and the Line of Travel Report.

**Adjustment Consultation**

Carriers will be provided the evaluated time for their routes as soon as practicable after the evaluation consultation and in advance of the adjustment consultation. Any changes made to the proposed adjustments after the adjustment consultation will be communicated with the carrier in advance of implementing route adjustments. The route evaluation and adjustment team will conduct the adjustment consultation either in person, via video communications or telephonically.

This agreement is without prejudice to the position of either party in this or any other matter. The procedures described in this agreement will be utilized solely for the purpose of implementing the joint route adjustment process outlined herein and may be cited only for the purpose of enforcing the terms of the agreement.

Either party may terminate this agreement by providing 30 days' written notice to the other party. However, such termination of this agreement shall not affect completion of any ongoing route evaluations or adjustments pursuant to this memorandum or invalidate any route adjustments made as a result of the process outlined herein.