UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®

Mail Transport Equipment

Handbook PO-502   June 2017
                                                            Transmittal Letter

A. **Introduction.** This handbook is a complete revision of the September 1992 edition of Handbook PO-502, *Container Methods.*

B. **Explanation.** This handbook provides information about the following:

1. Postal Service Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) policies and procedures.

2. MTE and all mail transport containers.

3. Use of mail transport containers.

4. Mail Transport Equipment Service Centers (MTESCs).

C. **Availability.** This handbook is available for Postal Service employees on the Postal Service PolicyNet Web site at *http://blue.usps.gov* — in the left-hand column under "Essential Links," click on *PolicyNet*, and then in the tabs across the top, click on *HBKs*. A link to this handbook is also available from the Network Operations Management Web site at *http://blue.usps.gov/network-operations*.

D. **Comments and Questions.** Submit any comments or questions regarding the content of this handbook to the following address:

    MANAGER MAIL TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT
    UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
    475 L'ENFANT PLZ SW RM 7142
    WASHINGTON DC 20260-7132

E. **Effective Date.** This is effective June 2017. All previous editions are rescinded and obsolete.
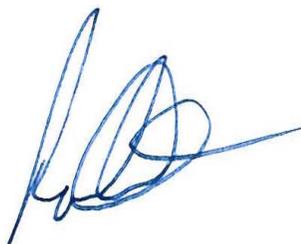
Robert Cintron
Vice President
Network Operations

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1 Introduction

1-1   Purpose

This handbook establishes the policy, functional responsibilities, and organizational relationships required to manage the operations, transportation, distribution, inventory storage, and reporting of Postal Service Mail Transport Equipment (MTE). It states the broad principles related to the need for efficient containerization, defines the ways those principles serve to meet organizational goals, and describes MTE and the administration of the program.

1-2   Scope

This handbook is designed for use by USPS operation managers. It is not designed for use by administrative managers; therefore, it does not define procurement, maintenance, and reporting procedures. This handbook is the definitive authority on all categories and types of MTE, including containers used in mail processing operations and authorized MTE (sacks, pouches, trays, pallets, and other specific MTE items). Instructions in this handbook supersede any other currently in force. When conflicts arise regarding MTE policies and procedures, this handbook takes precedence.

1-3   General Principles

MTE consists of containers used to stage mail for processing or to transport mail within USPS plants, between USPS facilities, or between USPS plants, customers, and contractors. The design and use of each item requires service-wide implementation of concepts that help achieve the safe, secure, and timely movement of mail with minimal handling and effort. It is Postal Service policy to containerize, to the maximum extent possible, all classes of mail for transport. Containerization increases operational efficiency and reduces damage to the mail and injuries to employees. Proper use of MTE has a positive impact on the areas of safety, energy conservation, and increased productivity.

1-4   Safety

Safety is a primary concern of the Postal Service. The MTE described in this handbook represents the most efficient containers that offer the following benefits:

a.   Reduce the need for bending and lifting accomplished by elevating mail (i.e., raised container bottoms or use of load-leveling equipment).

b.   Allow employees to move large amounts of mail easily.

c.   Provide greater stability.

d.   Provide compatibility with automated equipment.

e.   Support the Postal Service's obligation to ensure that employees have a safe working environment.

Local managers must ensure that employees have received safety training before working with MTE equipment.

Keep MTE in good repair, especially wheels/casters and any employee interface structure used for manual pushing or maneuvering.

2 Policies

2-1 General Use of MTE

MTE is used to transport mail. Any other use of MTE (e.g., storing forms, records, equipment, or waste) is specifically prohibited. No employee may use or allow the use of Postal Service MTE, directly or indirectly, for other than officially approved activities.

2-2 Foreign-owned MTE

Do not use foreign-owned MTE to transport U.S. Mail or to store Postal Service MTE. Return foreign-owned MTE to the foreign postal administration through the international service centers (ISCs), or recycle them per Universal Postal Union (UPU) agreements. See *Postal Operations Manual* (POM), Subchapter 58, "Mail Transport Equipment Handling Policy."

2-3 Safeguarding MTE

All facility managers must ensure that containers are used properly, efficiently, and safely. All USPS employees have a responsibility to protect MTE from misuse or destruction. Store MTE inside buildings to protect it from theft and weather. Avoid storing MTE on docks or inside USPS facilities where the public can access it without USPS approval and oversight.

2-4 Rolling Stock

According to Headquarters MTE policy, the Postal Service does not loan rolling stock (wheeled containers) to mailers. However, local plant and district managers may authorize the loan of rolling stock to mailers *if it is advantageous to the Postal Service* — nevertheless, the Postal Service strongly discourages this practice. A mailer who receives loaned rolling stock may use it only for transporting mail between the mailer's plant and the acceptance facility. The plant manager must establish a written agreement with the mailer to keep rolling stock within a closed-loop environment, and

the plant manager must submit all proposed agreements to the area office for review and final approval. Local USPS management must ensure strict compliance with this requirement.

2-5 MTE Crossing U.S. Borders

Mailers may not use MTE to transport mail from foreign countries when such mail is not intended for entry into the U.S. postal system. In addition, mailers must not remove MTE from the United States for any purpose (e.g., transporting items from outside the United States for entry as domestic mail in the United States) without a written agreement between the customer and the MTE manager. Under no circumstances may the MTE manager grant approval for MTE to be out of the United States for more than 14 days.

Before local Postal Service authorities may authorize a company to remove MTE from the United States for use in presort or other preparation operations in foreign countries, the local Business Service Network (BSN) representative must coordinate the agreement with the MTE manager.

2-6 Military and Diplomatic Mail

Military and diplomatic mail is mail to and from overseas and domestic Army or Air Force Post Offices (APOs), Navy Fleet Post Offices (FPOs), and Diplomatic Post Offices (DPOs). The military and diplomatic postal systems are an extension of the U.S. domestic postal system with regard to postage rates, mail acceptance, handling, and transportation.

Mail dispatched to APOs, FPOs, and DPOs moves via sacks, trays, pallets, and tri-wall containers. These facilities reuse this same MTE for returning mail to the United States. Overseas contingency locations return large volumes of excess empty MTE via maritime shipping on scheduled frequent-return cycles for acceptance at designated Mail Transport Equipment Service Centers (MTESCs). Such locations may also return small volumes of excess empty MTE directly to the serving ISC for reuse.

2-7 Retrieval of MTE

Many large organizations and government agencies receive their mail in hampers, sacks, trays, or other containers from local Post Office facilities and plants. Establish procedures to retrieve this MTE on a scheduled basis from those organizations that do not generate a like quantity of outgoing mail.

2-8   Excess MTE (Hoarding)

MTE is a valuable and essential USPS resource. It is imperative that facility managers retain only that quantity of MTE that their facilities and customers need for 1 week of normal operations. This ensures that all facilities and customers have enough MTE on hand to meet their needs. Limit supplies on hand to 7 days for USPS plants and 14 days for mailers.

For detailed instructions on returning MTE to the MTESCs for redistribution, see the following two links on the MTE Web site at *http://blue.usps.gov/ network-operations/mte/welcome.htm*:

a.   "SOP Processing - Standard Operating Policy (SOP) for reuse of Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) at plants."

b.   "SOP Post Offices - Standard Operating Policy (SOP) for reuse of Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) at Post Offices and Delivery Units."

For more information about the MTE Web site, see chapter 9.

2-9   MTE Guidelines Clearance

Headquarters MTE provides MTE guidelines and policies. Headquarters MTE must review and clear any local publication, handbook, user's guide, SOP, or other information regarding MTE.

2-10 Proper Identification of Damaged Rolling Stock

Use PS Form 4707, *Out of Order (tag),* to "red tag" and isolate damaged or defective wheeled containers. Promptly remove damaged rolling stock from service and place it in a holding area for repair by maintenance or for return to the servicing MTESC for repair.

Although all MTE items passing through the MTESCs are scanned for obvious defects, using PS Form 4707 ensures that the Postal Service identifies broken rolling stock and schedules it for repair.

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3 Functional Responsibilities

3-1 Headquarters Roles and Responsibilities

3-1.1 Vice President of Network Operations

The vice president of Network Operations establishes policy for managing all aspects of MTE through the manager of Processing Operations.

3-1.2 Headquarters Mail Transport Equipment

The Headquarters Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) organization is led by the manager of Mail Transport Equipment, who reports to the manager of Processing Operations. This group is responsible for day-to-day MTE policy, MTESC management, national inventory levels, MTE purchasing, recycling, repairing, re-distribution, and supply to major mailers.

3-1.2.1 Planning and Control

Headquarters MTE monitors and manages all MTESC inventory and is responsive to the needs of both internal and external customers. Headquarters MTE plans national inventory based on supply and demand for commercial mailers and USPS facilities. Headquarters MTE uses forecasting tools in long-range planning to determine the appropriate levels of MTE to purchase or redistribute, and it uses daily reports and systems to monitor and manage inventory at various network levels (i.e., mailer, USPS plant, and nationwide).

3-1.2.2 Modification of MTE

Headquarters MTE establishes requirements for the design, development, testing, and procurement of new and modified MTE. Areas or districts are not authorized to modify MTE without the approval of Headquarters MTE.

3-1.2.3 Distribution

Headquarters MTE determines each MTESC's service area and is responsible for ensuring that adequate MTE is available to meet mailer and USPS demand. Headquarters MTE accomplishes this by redistributing existing inventory between MTESCs and purchasing new equipment as needed. Distribution of MTE depends on equipment balance-on-hand and supply and demand for each MTESC. Headquarters MTE coordinates distribution across the network by the using dedicated intermodal and highway transportation providers to reposition MTE from surplus to deficit locations.

3-1.2.4 **Reporting MTE Inventory**

Headquarters MTE and Processing Operations establish the procedures for reporting MTE and determine which USPS facilities and mailers submit MTE inventory reports. All designated plants must submit an inventory report using the established reporting process. Headquarters MTE shares consolidated inventory reports with area offices for action. Balancing inventory and maintaining costs is challenging, as the Postal Service is often forced to spend additional investment dollars for new purchases of MTE while existing inventories continue to be underreported or underutilized. Therefore, it is critically important that all designated plants and mailers report their MTE inventory accurately and consistently. Return underutilized MTE to the MTESCs for continuous national circulation.

3-1.2.5 **Transportation**

Headquarters MTE is responsible for coordinating and monitoring inter-MTESC transportation to balance the network. Intra-MTESC transportation utilizes a fleet of leased trailers to serve USPS plants and mailers within the MTESC service area. Intra-MTESC transportation is funded at the area level. The Postal Services leases MTE trailers for the sole purpose of moving MTE — never use them to move mail.

3-1.2.6 **Audits**

Headquarters MTE establishes the guidelines for MTE audits at USPS facilities, MTESCs, and mailer sites.

3-1.2.7 **Recycling and Disposal**

Headquarters MTE is responsible for designing and enforcing adherence to the guidelines for handling MTE that is determined to be unserviceable. USPS plants or mailers must not destroy unserviceable authorized MTE but instead must send such MTE to an MTESC for recycling.

3-1.3 **Mail Transport Equipment Service Centers**

Headquarters MTE is responsible for the operation of Mail Transport Equipment Service Centers (MTESCs). The following describes the MTESC network (operated by contractors):

a. The MTESC network is dedicated exclusively to processing, repairing, storing, and distributing MTE.

b. The network allows Headquarters MTE staff to continuously and efficiently balance MTE inventories throughout the USPS network.

Headquarters MTE contracting officer representatives (CORs) manage the MTESC contracts.

MTESCs supply USPS plants and designated large mailers with MTE and receive excess MTE from USPS plants and mailers for processing and redistribution within the network.

MTESCs process and repair MTE and are the only sites authorized to dispose of damaged MTE. Plants and other USPS organizations must return damaged MTE to the MTESCs for disposition.

3-1.4 **Quality Examiners**

MTE Quality Examiners are domiciled at each MTESC to serve as technical representatives and perform quality audits. MTE Quality Examiners ensure contractor compliance with contract specifications and requirements regarding equipment processing, repair, and condemnation.

MTE Quality Examiners may assist Headquarters MTE to manage and oversee MTE order fulfillment by placing and approving order requests, monitoring mailer and USPS plant ordering activity, and interfacing with other functional areas to mitigate any MTE ordering issues.

3-2 Area Roles and Responsibilities

3-2.1 **Area Office**

Area offices oversee planning, control, distribution, reporting, and transportation of MTE to supply large commercial mailers and USPS plants as necessary. Planning includes the following:

a. Ensure that MTE for mailers and plants is available.

b. Maintain a consistent flow of excess MTE back to the MTESCs.

For detailed instructions on returning MTE to the MTESCs for redistribution, see the following two links on the MTE Web site at *http://blue.usps.gov/ network-operations/mte/welcome.htm*:

a. "SOP Processing - Standard Operating Policy (SOP) for reuse of Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) at plants."

b. "SOP Post Offices - Standard Operating Policy (SOP) for reuse of Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) at Post Offices and Delivery Units."

For more information about the MTE Web site, see chapter 9.

3-2.1.1 **Planning and Control**

Area offices assist Headquarters MTE in determining the appropriate levels of MTE for the area plants and for mailers. They use daily reports and systems to monitor and manage inventory at various network levels (i.e., mailers and USPS facilities).

3-2.1.2 **Distribution**

Each area office is responsible for the redistribution of MTE within the area, based on MTE operating/supply plans, inventory reports, equipment requirements, and internal emergency equipment requests. Areas must contact Headquarters MTE for authorization to transport MTE outside the servicing MTESC area.

3-2.1.3 **Reporting MTE Inventory**

Each area office works with plant and district MTE coordinators to ensure that both plants and districts perform consistent and accurate inventory reporting.

3-2.1.4 **Transportation**

Each area office is responsible for establishing, coordinating, and monitoring MTE transportation to and from the servicing MTESC. Area offices are also responsible for ensuring that district offices and plants adhere to policies and procedures for transporting MTE.

Each MTESC has a dedicated fleet of leased trailers to support the MTESC network. Each area office is responsible for MTE fleet trailer leasing and maintenance, for maintaining right-sized trailer fleets, and for ensuring that an adequate supply of trailers is available for filling customer orders at the MTESCs.

MTE fleet trailers are for transportation only — do not use them to store MTE or non-MTE items. Area offices must ensure that MTE fleet trailers are cycled back to their servicing MTESC within 3 days after departing from that MTESC. In order to accomplish this, USPS facilities must unload and dispatch trailers within 24 hours of receipt.

3-2.1.5 **Audits**

Headquarters MTE establishes the guidelines for all MTE audits at USPS plants, MTESCs, and mailer sites. Areas are responsible for following established Headquarter MTE audit guidelines.

3-2.1.6 **Recycling and Disposal**

Area offices are responsible for ensuring that no USPS or mailer plant recycles or disposes of MTE.

3-2.2 **Area MTE Coordinator**

Each area designates an area MTE coordinator, who is responsible for the following tasks:

a. Interface with other functional groups (including In-Plant Support, the Business Service Network, and Delivery and Network Operations) to resolve complex or systemic issues to ensure that plants and customers have adequate MTE to operate efficiently.

b. Implement and monitor compliance with national MTE policy and procedures.

c. Ensure that all designated facilities report MTE inventory accurately and promptly.

d. Ensure that plants and mailers are not holding excess equipment.

e. Monitor plant compliance for returning MTE to the MTESCs for redistribution — see the following two links on the MTE Web site at *http://blue.usps.gov/network-operations/mte/welcome.htm*:

   (1) "SOP Processing - Standard Operating Policy (SOP) for reuse of Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) at plants."

   (2) "SOP Post Offices - Standard Operating Policy (SOP) for reuse of Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) at Post Offices and Delivery Units."

f. Coordinate movement of excess MTE to a deficit plant, mailer, or MTESC.

g.   Monitor canceled orders.

h.   Monitor MTE trailers.

3-3   District Roles and Responsibilities

3-3.1   District Office

The district manager must provide management oversight of the MTE program and direct all facilities to reuse MTE or distribute it to local mailers and other USPS plants. Mail processing and delivery service managers must ensure that containers are used properly, efficiently, and safely.

The district manager must appoint a district MTE coordinator to manage the distribution, flow, security, accountability, and inventory of MTE assets. The district manager coordinates with facility managers to ensure that they prepare delivery and retail unit MTE equipment in accordance with the following link on the MTE Web site at *http://blue.usps.gov/network-operations/mte/welcome.htm*: "SOP Post Offices - Standard Operating Policy (SOP) for reuse of Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) at Post Offices and Delivery Units."

3-3.1.1   Distribution

Each district office is responsible for the redistribution of MTE within the district based on MTE supply plans, inventory reports, equipment requirements, and internal emergency equipment requests. All retail and delivery unit managers are responsible for ensuring that employees adhere to proper procedures outlined in the following link on the MTE Web site at *http://blue.usps.gov/network-operations/mte/welcome.htm*: "SOP Post Offices - Standard Operating Policy (SOP) for reuse of Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) at Post Offices and Delivery Units." The purpose of this SOP is to demonstrate the prescribed methods of preparing MTE for return to the servicing processing plant or for reuse internally and/or by local mailers. Use MTE internally and for local mailers before sending it to the servicing MTESC. If MTE is excess to your operation, follow the procedures outlined in the SOP.

3-3.1.2   Reporting Inventory

Each district office is responsible for ensuring that plants complete weekly inventory reports in webMCRS. Inventory reports are due every Wednesday by close of business. These reports assist Headquarters MTE as it compares and contrasts customer needs with customer demands and to adjust equipment inventories appropriately.

3-3.1.3   Transportation

District offices assist area offices in enforcing transportation and trailer policies throughout the district and at USPS plants.

3-3.1.4 Audits

District offices are responsible for conducting regular comprehensive audits of USPS facilities and major mailers to maintain management control, ensure compliance with appropriate directives, and assist in identifying and solving problems.

3-3.1.5 Recycling and Disposal

District offices are responsible for enforcing Headquarters MTE policy regarding unserviceable authorized MTE. Processing and Distribution Centers (P&DCs), Network Distribution Centers (NDCs), Associate Offices (AOs), and all other USPS-owned facilities are required to send unserviceable authorized MTE to the closest MTESC for recycling or disposal.

3-3.2 District MTE Coordinator

District management is responsible for identifying the district MTE coordinator, who is responsible for the following tasks:

a.   Ensure that plants and customers have adequate equipment to operate efficiently.

b.   Act as the liaison for escalating unresolved issues to area offices.

c.   Implement new or modified national MTE policy and procedures.

d.   Ensure that all designated facilities report MTE inventory accurately and promptly.

e.   Ensure that plants and mailers are not hoarding excess equipment.

3-4 Plant Roles and Responsibilities

3-4.1 Plant Manager

The plant manager must provide management oversight to the MTE program and coordinate with the district manager to ensure the proper preparation and redistribution of delivery and retail unit equipment. The plant manager focuses on distribution, flow, security, accountability, and inventory management for MTE assets.

For detailed instructions on returning MTE to the MTESCs for redistribution, see the following two links on the MTE Web site at *http://blue.usps.gov/ network-operations/mte/welcome.htm*:

a.   "SOP Processing - Standard Operating Policy (SOP) for reuse of Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) at plants."

b.   "SOP Post Offices - Standard Operating Policy (SOP) for reuse of Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) at Post Offices and Delivery Units."

For more information about the MTE Web site, see chapter 9.

3-4.1.1 **Planning and Control**

The plant manager is responsible for using MTE appropriately for mail processing, for forecasting and managing inventory levels, and for supplying local mailers with requested MTE.

The plant manager determines who performs the plant MTE roles and provides training for employees on the appropriate handling of MTE.

In addition, the plant manager is responsible for the following tasks:

a.   Maintain a list of known mailers to whom MTE is provided.

b.   Require mailers to place advance requests for MTE in the Mail Transport Equipment Ordering (MTEOR) system.

c.   Require drivers to show photo identification, such as a driver's license or work identification, before picking up MTE.

d.   Determine each mailer's weekly equipment requirements (not automatically supplying what the mailer desires).

e.   Maintain a daily electronic record of all MTE provided to mailers.

f.   Monitor mailer's on-hand MTE inventory to control excess.

g.   Ensure that the plant maintains no more than a 7-day on-hand inventory.

3-4.1.2 **Distribution**

The plant manager is responsible for redistribution of MTE based on MTE operating/supply plans, inventory reports, equipment requirements, and internal emergency equipment requests. The plant manager is also responsible for establishing procedures for retrieving MTE from customers and monitoring customer compliance.

Notify Headquarters MTE and area MTE coordinators when mailers who use large quantities of MTE relocate to the area, move from the area, or significantly change distribution patterns.

NDCs are the primary users of over-the-road (OTR) containers and Postal Paks. However, do not include these types of equipment with mail processing MTE that is returned to the MTESCs for mailer use. For this reason, the NDC plant manager must plan the redistribution of OTRs and Postal Paks between NDCs. Send only damaged OTRs to the MTESCs for repair. Do not send Postal Paks and/or OTRs to the MTESCs for storage and/or redistribution.

3-4.1.3 **Reporting Inventory**

The plant manager must ensure that all MTE (empty equipment only) is counted and recorded accurately and promptly. Plants are required to submit an inventory report in webMCRS every Wednesday by 9:00 a.m. local time. The plant manager must account for all MTE on USPS property including MTE that is within the facility, prepared for operation, staged for mailer needs, and stored for future use.

3-4.1.4 **Transportation**

The plant manager is responsible for MTE transportation serving local customers and USPS facilities. MTE fleet trailers are available for the sole purpose of transporting MTE to and from internal and external customers and MTESCs. Do not use MTE fleet trailers to store MTE or non-MTE equipment. Never use MTE fleet trailers to transport mail.

MTESC trips must operate as scheduled. If a trip must be cancelled, the administrative official must notify the Quality Examiner and the transportation supplier at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled dispatch time. In order to keep MTE trailers in balance and run transportation on schedule, all facilities must have MTE trailers ready for dispatch.

In addition, the plant manager is responsible for the following tasks:

a. Ensure that no trip is cancelled without communicating with the Quality Examiner in advance.

b. Ensure that each trip dispatched to the MTESC includes a trailer, whether or not the trailer is loaded — i.e., do not "bobtail" MTESC trips (do not send a tractor unit without a trailer attached).

c. Avoid dispatching common fleet trailers to the MTESC — use only assigned MTE trailers for dispatches to the MTESC.

d. Ensure that all trips operate as scheduled in accordance with Highway Contract Route (HCR) or Postal Vehicle Service (PVS) schedules. Drivers cannot pick up trips early or late.

e. Ensure that intermodal suppliers provide trailers with load restraints. Some USPS plants transport excess MTE to their servicing MTESC using one-way intermodal (rail) transportation and supplier trailers — in such cases, intermodal suppliers must provide trailers with load restraints. Trailers, containers, or other OTR units are required to have suitable tracks or other devices installed on inside walls. These devices permit the load to be restrained with fastening straps, bars, netting, plastic ties, or other tie-down devices to prevent load shifting. Examples of such sidewall devices are E-track, H-track, and S-hooks.

3-4.1.5 **Audits**

Plant managers must support and cooperate with Headquarters MTE and area and district management during an MTE audit.

3-4.1.6 **Recycling and Disposal**

The plant manager is responsible for enforcing Headquarters MTE policy on handling unserviceable MTE. Promptly identify, tag, and return damaged MTE to an MTESC. Do not use damaged MTE in the transportation of mail. Do not unsafely stack or load damaged MTE when returning it to an MTESC.

3-4.2 **Plant MTE Coordinator**

The plant manager designates a plant MTE coordinator, who is responsible for the following tasks:

a. Manage the distribution, flow, security, accountability, and inventory of MTE assets.

b. Determine the quantity required for each equipment type used by the facility, AOs, branches, and mailers to support operations for a 7-day period.

c. Work with the operations unit supervisors when planning facility equipment needs. The supervisors must understand their individual needs and other information, including the following:

(1) Weekly operational equipment needs.

(2) Floor layout.

(3) Sources of MTE resupply.

(4) Location to stage excess equipment for dispatch.

3-5 CIC/BSN Roles and Responsibilities

Two groups that work with business customers are the Consumer and Industry Contact (CIC) group and the Business Service Network (BSN) group. The CIC manager supervises BSN specialists.

CIC/BSN serves as the point of contact for large mailers and assists Quality Examiners in ensuring that large mailers receive the correct types and sufficient quantities of MTE. This responsibility is critically important at facilities where mail processing operations have been removed and only a BMEU operation remains.

CIC/BSN works with the district and plant MTE coordinators to ensure that MTE equipment is available, is properly used, and is not excessive to the mailer's needs. The CIC/BSN ensures that customers approved for MTEOR have access to the system and abide by system requirements. The district CIC/BSN, working with the Headquarters MTE team, the Quality Examiners, and the MTEOR Help Desk, provides support to resolve customer issues regarding transportation and available MTE, change existing MTE orders, and establish new MTE orders. The BSN representative serves as the first point of contact as described in the MTE Escalation process (see Exhibit 3-5).

The BSN representative ensures that each mailer's facility receiving MTE directly from an MTESC reports its on-hand inventory. The mailer must complete its report by close of business each Wednesday through the MTEOR system on the Inventory Report module, in accordance with the MTEOR User Agreement. The MTEOR User Agreement and BSA Agreement are available on the MTEOR RIBBS Web page as follows:

a. The MTEOR User Agreement is available at *https://ribbs.usps.gov/ mteor/documents/tech_guides/learninglab/ MTEOR_User_Agreement.pdf*.

b. The MTEOR BSA Agreement is available at *https://ribbs.usps.gov/ mteor/documents/tech_guides/learninglab/ MTEOR_BSA_Agreement.pdf*.

Exhibit 3-5
BSN Escalation Process
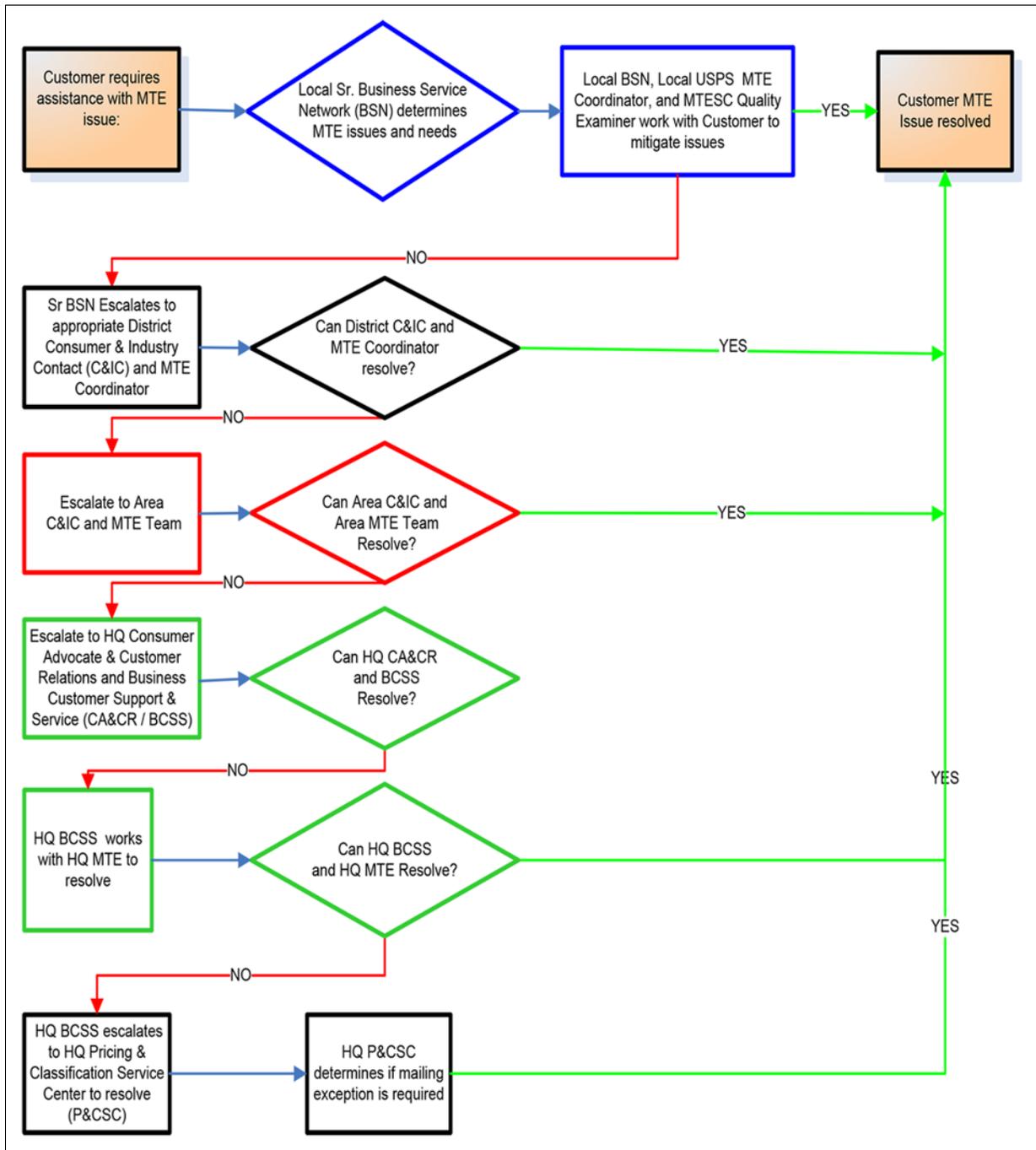
4 Types of Authorized MTE

4-1 Authorized MTE and Primary Use

This chapter covers all of the authorized MTE that is available from an MTESC. Return all these items to the MTESC for repair or reuse.

Exhibit 4-1 provides a list of authorized MTE, each item's number in the Equipment Inventory Reporting System (EIRS), and each item's primary use.

Exhibit 4-1
Authorized MTE and Primary Use

MTE Type	EIRS No.	Primary Use
Multi-Purpose Mail Containers		
General Purpose Mail Container	66	Used for transport, staging, distributing, and organizing mail, both in-plant and between USPS facilities.
Eastern Region Mail Container	68	
Universal Mail Container	68U	
Hampers		
Hamper, Canvas, Larger	61	Used to transport bulk, bundled, and sacked mail between USPS operations.
Hamper, Plastic (Old and New Style)	61P	
Special Purpose Containers		
Wire Container, Rigid	84	Used in automated processing systems and to transport parcels and bulk mail.
Wire Container, Collapsible	84C	
CON-CON Container, Small	90	Restricted Use: Used to transport Registered Mails items between authorized facilities.
CON-CON Container, Medium	91	
CON-CON Container, Large	92	
BMC/OTR Containers		
Heavy Duty OTR Container	69H	Used in automated processing systems and to transport parcel and bulk mail between USPS facilities.
Pallets		
Nestable Pallet, Press wood	65	Used to facilitate the bulk movement of mails between mailers and USPS facilities.
Nestable Pallet, Plastic	65P	
Nestable Pallet, Lightweight Plastic	65PL	
Wood Slat Pallet	65W	
Postal Pak and Miscellaneous Cardboard		
Postal Pak	82	Used to transport sacks, parcels, and trayed mail.
Miscellaneous Cardboard	99BS, 99BI, 99BL	

Exhibit 4-1
Authorized MTE and Primary Use (Continued)

MTE Type	EIRS No.	Primary Use
Letter Trays, Flats Trays, Sleeves, and Lids		
Managed Mail (MM) Cardboard Tray	74C	Used to transport letter-size mail.
Managed Mail (MM) Plastic Tray	74P	Used to transport letter-size mail.
Managed Mail (MM) Sleeve	75	Used to enclose MM tray.
Extended Managed Mail (EMM) Tray	74EC	Used to transport letter-size mail.
Extended Managed Mail (EMM) Plastic Tray	74E	Used to transport letter-size mail.
Extended Managed Mail (EMM) Sleeve	75E	Used to enclose EMM tray.
Half-size Managed Mail (MM) Tray	74H	Used to transport letter-size mail.
Half-size Managed Mail (MM) Plastic Tray	74HP	Used to transport letter-size mail.
Half-size Managed Mail (MM) Sleeve	75H	Used to enclose half-size MM tray.
Plastic Flats Tray	78P	Used to transport flats mail.
Four-Sided Plastic Flats Lid	79P	Used to close the plastic flats tray.
Sacks and Pouches		
No. 1 Sack, Plastic, Semi-Clear	01VM	Used to transport domestic mail and small parcels.
No. 2 Pouch, Cordura Nylon, White	09CN	Used to transport domestic mail and small parcels.
Priority Mail Pouch, Nylon, Orange	12M	Used to transport Priority Mail items.
First-Class Mail Pouch, Nylon, Green	13	Used to transport First-Class Mail items.
Security Pouch Liner, Nylon, Green or Red or Grey	18G	Used to transport Registered Mail items.
Express Mail Pouch, Nylon, Orange and Blue	20M	Used to transport Priority Mail Express items. ***Note:*** These pouches are still called "Express Mail" pouches because, even though the service name has changed from "Express Mail" to "Priority Mail Express," the former name is printed on them (having been created and printed before the change). However, as these pouches deteriorate, the Postal Service is replacing them with the No. 1 Sack (01VM).
International Mail Sacks, Plastic, Grey and Blue	01VF	Used to transport First-Class Mail International and First-Class Package International Service items
International Priority Sacks, Plastic, Orange and Blue	01FE	Used to transport Priority Mail Express International and Priority Mail International items.

4-2   Multi-purpose Mail Containers

4-2.1 General Purpose Mail Containers and Eastern Regional Mail Containers

4-2.1.1 Description

See Exhibit 4-2.1.1a for an image of a General Purpose Mail Container (GPMC), and see Exhibit 4-2.1.1b for an image of an Eastern Regional Mail Container (ERMC).

Exhibit 4-2.1.1a
General Purpose Mail Container (GPMC)

Exhibit 4-2.1.1b
Eastern Regional Mail Container (ERMC)

The following describes the GPMC (EIRS 66) and ERMC (EIRS 68):

a.   The GPMC and ERMC are wheeled transportation and distribution
     containers used to transport all types of mail, sacks, trays, and
     bundles.

b.   These containers are equipped with four casters (two fixed and two
     swivel) for easy maneuvering. One of the swivel casters is equipped
     with a brake system operated with the foot. The EIRS 66 has two fold-
     up, locking shelves (one on the bottom and one halfway up). The EIRS
     68 has one fold-up shelf at the bottom.

c.   The GPMC has retractable doors. The two doors, when closed and
     secured with the S hooks, make the GPMC a full container protecting
     the mail and preventing the mail from falling from the GPMC while in
     transit. When not in use, the doors slide under the top and bottom
     shelves, locking in place. Latches hold the shelves in the up position to
     prevent them from falling. The container is equipped with an orange
     safety latch — engage the latch whenever the center shelf is in the
     stowed position and the container is either being moved or loaded with
     mail.

> d. The ERMC is equipped with an interior lining that allows it to be used with smaller bulk-loaded items and to be mechanically loaded and unloaded as a unit. It is equipped with a full-height nylon web door that can be set open, one-quarter closed, half closed, three-quarters closed, or fully closed. The ERMC can be equipped with a center shelf that can be completely removed or set in a fold-back position independent of the web door operation.
>
> e. The containers are easily folded into an L shape when empty to minimize storage space.
>
> f. The containers are equipped with two towbar sockets. For safety reasons, tow no more than three GPMCs or ERMCs (whether loaded or empty) at one time (see Handbook EL-801, *Supervisor's Safety Handbook,* for further information). Place containers not equipped with the integral towbar at the front of the train when mixed with GPMCs and ERMCs equipped with the integral towbar.

4-2.1.2 Dimensions/Capacity

The GPMC is 42 inches long by 29 inches wide by 70 inches high, and it weighs 239 pounds empty. The usable capacity of the container is 36.4 cubic feet, and it has a maximum cargo load of 1,200 pounds.

The ERMC is 42 inches long by 29 inches wide by 70 inches high. The usable capacity is 38.75 cubic feet. The ERMC weighs 235 pounds empty. It has a maximum cargo load of 1,200 pounds.

4-2.1.3 Folding for Storage

Employees must do the following tasks:

> a. Position GPMCs and ERMCs against a wall or column — if not placed against a wall or column, containers stored in an L configuration can be knocked over by other equipment.
>
>   ***Note:*** Always stand immediately in front of a container when unfolding, positioning shelves, etc. — never work from the sides of a container.
>
> b. Unlatch the top door and slide it under the shelf until it locks into the stored position (see Exhibit 4-2.1.3). Ensure that the hinge restrainer is properly engaged.
>
> c. Unlatch and slide the bottom door in the same manner.
>
> d. Grasp the front of the middle main shelf and raise it to the back of the container. Hold the shelf up in the vertical position, engage the spring pin latch, and manually engage the orange safety latch on the right side of the shelf.
>
> e. Grasp the front of the bottom main shelf, raise it to the back of the container, and secure the shelf. Never leave containers in this U-shape with shelves up. Proceed immediately to the next step.

f.   Swing the left side toward the back of container until it meets the folded shelves. The container is now in an L position and can be safely positioned out of the working area.

Note: Never attempt to fold both sides for storage — the GPMC and ERMC are very unstable in this position. When folding, leave it in an L configuration. Check that hinge restrainers are operational and engaged to prevent folding into less than L configuration. Fold both sides of the GPMC or ERMC only when necessary for transport as part of a "nested" load.

Exhibit 4-2.1.3
GPMCs in Stored Position

4-2.1.4   Preparation for Use

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Pull the folded side forward to form a U shape with shelves up. Never leave a container in this position. At least one main shelf must be down to provide stability.

b.   Grasp the center front of the bottom shelf with your left hand and push it to the rear of container. With your right hand, release the spring latch, allowing the shelf to be lowered. Lower the shelf into a U-shape retainer on both sides of the container. Visually check to ensure proper positioning. Ensure that all latches are properly set in retaining holes.

c.   Grasp the bottom door with both hands, lift up slightly, and pull forward as far as possible. Raise the door until it is latched on both sides. Visually inspect the latches to ensure that they are properly closed. For safety purposes, pass the S hook through the hole in the gate latch. If the S hook is not present, "red-tag" the container for repair.

d.   Lower the middle main shelf by disengaging the spring pin latches and lower the shelf until it snaps in place.

e.   Close the top door in the same manner as the bottom when the container is fully loaded.

4-2.1.5   Manual Maneuvering

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Place both hands on the handle on the left (or swivel-wheel) side of the GPMC or ERMC. Push forward at a walking pace.

b.   Never pull the GPMC or ERMC when manually moving it, except as necessary to reposition the GPMC or ERMC away from equipment, walls, etc. and to gain access to the swivel caster end.

c.   Check the clearance on either side of the container as you are pushing it.

4-2.1.6 **Towing**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Position the GPMC or ERMC behind towing equipment with the swivel wheels closest to the towing equipment.

b.   Place the three-pronged towbar in position with the two prongs in the GPMC or ERMC tow pin sockets and the other prong in the tow hitch of the powered industrial truck (PIT).

c.   Position additional containers in the same manner behind the first container.

d.   When using the integral towbar on a container, join the leading container to the PIT with a three-pronged towbar. Position the integral towbar so that the coupler pin on the succeeding container is directly above the end of the towbar. Allow the spring to raise the towbar with its ring around the coupler pin on the succeeding container.

e.   Never use your hands to hold equipment while it is being towed behind a PIT.

f.   For safety reasons, tow no more than three GPMCs or ERMCs (whether loaded or empty) at one time (see Handbook EL-801 for further information).

Note: Place containers not equipped with the integral towbar at the front of the train when mixed with GPMCs or ERMCs equipped with the integral towbar.

4-2.1.7 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Always double check to ensure that door latches are securely engaged.

b.   Always hold restraining bars, doors, and shelves with one hand when releasing the latches to prevent them from falling.

c.   Never store the GPMC or ERMC with both shelves in the upright position at the same time unless folded into the L configuration for storage.

d.   When moving an ERMC, ensure that the center shelf (if so equipped) is in the "down" position. Check the web latch and shelf latch before loading or moving a container.

e.   Never throw mail or equipment into the GPMC or ERMC.

f.   Engage the caster brake before loading or unloading the container to prevent the container from moving.

g. On the ERMC, make sure that restraining bars are securely positioned. Also ensure that the intermediate bars are placed behind the restraint clips to properly contain a load.

h. Stack loads carefully to prevent the load from toppling against the mesh door of the ERMC.

i. If the load has toppled against the mesh door of an ERMC, never attempt to remove the restraining bar without assistance.

Note: The restraining bar can be extremely dangerous because of a spring-like action when released.

j. Always pay close attention to the web door of the ERMC when it is placed on the floor to ensure that no one slips or trips on the webbing.

k. Be aware of pinch points. Always keep your hands free of the latches when securing the web door of the ERMC to the container.

l. Use PS Form 4707, *Out of Order (tag),* promptly to "red tag" and isolate damaged or defective wheeled MTE containers. Note the following:

(1) When red tagging a defective container, ensure that the tag contains the following information: office, date, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

(2) Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the red-tagged item could be injured.

4-2.2 Universal Mail Container

4-2.2.1 Description

The Universal Mail Container (UMC) (EIRS 68U) is a wheeled container made of polyethylene plastic that can transport all types of mail in sacks, trays, and bundles. See Exhibit 4-2.2.1.

Exhibit 4-2.2.1
Universal Mail Container

4-2.2.2 Dimensions/Capacity

The container is equipped with four casters (two fixed and two swivel) for easy maneuvering. One of the swivel casters is equipped with a brake system operated with the foot. The UMC exterior dimensions are 42 inches long by 29 inches wide by 70 inches high, and it weighs 260 pounds empty.

The UMC has a capacity of approximately 1,200 pounds and may be unloaded mechanically.

4-2.2.3   **Trailer Load**

Always secure the container's movements in the vehicle with shoring straps. For a single container, attach one strap on the lower E-track.

For more information about securing trailer loads, see the following item at *http://blue.usps.gov/network_operations/lop_and_sops.htm*:
"LO SOP201101 - Properly Restraining Mail Containers."

4-2.2.4   **Manual Maneuvering**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Put both hands on the handle on the left (or swivel-wheel) side of the UMC.

b.   Push the UMC forward at a walking pace.

c.   Never pull the UMC when manually moving it, except as necessary to reposition the UMC away from equipment, walls, etc. and gain access to the swivel caster end.

d.   Check the clearance on either side of the UMC as you are pushing it.

4-2.2.5   **Towing**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Position the UMC behind towing equipment with the swivel wheels closest to the towing equipment.

b.   Place the three-pronged towbar in position with the two prongs in the UMC sleeves and the other prong in the tow hitch of the PIT.

c.   Position additional containers in the same manner behind the first container.

d.   Join the leading container to the PIT with a three-pronged towbar. Position the integral towbar so that the coupler pin on the succeeding UMC is directly above the end of the towbar. Allow the spring to raise the towbar with its ring around the coupler pin on the succeeding container.

e.   Never use your hands to hold equipment while it is being towed behind a PIT.

f.   For safety reasons, tow no more than three UMCs (whether loaded or empty) at one time (see Handbook EL-801 for further information).

Note: Place containers not equipped with the integral towbar at the front of the train when mixed with UMCs equipped with the integral towbar.

4-2.2.6   **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Stack loads carefully to prevent the load from toppling against the mesh door.

b.   Never store empty containers or stage full containers in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

     c.   If the load has toppled against the mesh door, never attempt to remove the restraining bar without assistance.

          Note: The restraining bar can be extremely dangerous because of a spring-like action when released.

     d.   Always hold restraining bars, doors, and shelves with one hand to prevent them from falling when released. When moving a UMC, ensure that the center shelf (if so equipped) is in the "down" position. Check the web latch and shelf latch before loading or moving a container.

     e.   To prevent the containers from moving, engage the caster brake before loading or unloading the UMC.

     f.   Always pay close attention to the web door when it is placed on the floor to ensure that no one slips or trips on the webbing.

     g.   Be aware of pinch points. Always keep your hands free of the latches when securing the web door to the container.

     h.   Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

          (1)   When red tagging a defective container, ensure that the tag contains the following information: office, date, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

          (2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the red-tagged item could be injured.

4-3   Hampers

4-3.1 Canvas Hamper, Large

4-3.1.1 Description

See Exhibit 4-3.1.1 for an image of a large canvas hamper (EIRS 61).

Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury.

Exhibit 4-3.1.1
Large Canvas Hamper

The following describes the large canvas hamper:

a.   The frame is made of heavy gauge circular steel mounted on a wooden base. It is mounted on two casters that are in a fixed position in the center of the hamper sides. A swivel-type caster is mounted on each of the four corners of the wooden base for easy maneuverability.

b.   The canvas is replaceable, and limited repairs may be made to the frame.

4-3.1.2 Dimensions/Capacity

The large canvas hamper is rectangular, is 44 inches long by 32 inches wide by 36 inches high, and weighs approximately 75 pounds empty. Canvas hampers are weighed when liners are serviced. The actual weight is marked on the side to the nearest pound.

The large canvas hamper has a design capacity to hold 21 cubic feet of mail or approximately 800 pounds.

Because of the properties of the container and the relative flexibility of the steel framing, it might be difficult to maneuver the container when it is overloaded. For maximum visibility when transporting a load, do not stack mail higher than the top of the hamper, and to ensure ease of movement, do not load the hamper with more than 800 pounds.

4-3.1.3 Storage and Transportation

With their tapered design, hampers can be nested or stacked for storage when empty. Because of the difficulties associated with stacking and unstacking hampers and related safety hazards, two USPS employees must do the stacking and must not nest more than three high.

Exception: When stacking hampers with a hamper stacker, USPS employees may stack them five high.

Because of the weight of the hampers and the height at which they must be stacked, stacking hampers may become a safety hazard for employees. Local managers must ensure that employees have received safety training before assigning them to this task.

Employees must do the following:

a.   Never attempt to stack or unstack hampers without the assistance of another employee. Ensure that there is enough space to perform the task safely and without danger of striking objects or fellow employees. Before stacking hampers, always ensure that the hampers are empty and free of mail or debris. Turn nested hampers over on their side before unstacking them.

b.   Never use hampers as storage containers or trash containers, or for any other purpose except transporting mail.

c.   Ensure that vehicles carrying hampers are equipped with nylon web strapping or other restraining devices to restrain the hampers while in transit.

d.   Load and unload hampers onto vehicles only with the assistance of the appropriate ramps, reciprocating dock levelers, scissors lifts, etc.

4-3.1.4 **Manual Maneuvering**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Move large canvas hampers manually. When moving them manually, never pull them but rather push them from either end to avoid potential injuries.

b.   Use extreme caution when maneuvering hampers up or down ramps. Maintain control of the hamper at all times. Do not leave canvas hampers on sloped surfaces.

4-3.1.5 **Safety**

Hampers are relatively difficult to maneuver because of their small wheels and flexible steel framing. Local managers must ensure that hampers are not filled beyond capacity. For maximum visibility when transporting a load, do not stack mail higher than the top of the hamper, and to ensure ease of movement, do not load the hamper with more than 800 pounds.

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Never tow equipment that is not equipped with the tow pockets.

b.   Never tow equipment by placing the towbar or coupler over the top of the canvas hamper or while holding the top of the canvas hamper and operating a PIT.

c.   Never store empty hampers or stage full hampers in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

d.   When manually unloading hampers, never bend at the waist without also bending at the knees. When necessary, empty only half the hamper, and then tip the hamper over to unload the rest. Do not place heavy objects in hampers because employees cannot properly lift them out (see Handbook PO-413, *Platform Operations,* part 313).

e.   Never use hampers to store hazardous, toxic, flammable, or leaking material. Being canvas, hampers are neither waterproof nor fireproof.

f.   Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

(1)   When red tagging a defective container, ensure that the tag contains the following information: office, date, time, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

(2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the red-tagged item could be injured.

4-3.2 **Plastic Hamper — Old and New Style**

4-3.2.1 **Description**

See Exhibit 4-3.2.1 for an image of the plastic hamper (EIRS 61P).

Exhibit 4-3.2.1
Plastic Hamper

The plastic hamper is similar in design to the canvas hamper with the following exceptions:

a. The tub is made of distinctive USPS recyclable high-density polyethylene (HDPE) plastic using double-wall construction.

b. The tub is bolted to a lightweight metal frame supported by four casters (two fixed, two swivel) for easy maneuvering.

c. There is a contoured opening covered by a web door with a removable elastic cord on each side.

d. The plastic hamper incorporates tow pockets into the tub design.

e. The plastic hamper is waterproof.

4-3.2.2 **Dimensions/Capacity**

The plastic hamper is rectangular, is 48 inches long by 31 inches wide by 37 inches high, and weighs approximately 100 pounds when empty. The plastic hamper has a design capacity to hold 21 cubic feet of mail or approximately 600 pounds.

4-3.2.3 **Storage and Transporting**

With their tapered design, plastic hampers are nested or stacked for storage and when transported empty. Because of the difficulties associated with stacking plastic hampers and related safety hazards, two USPS employees must do the stacking and must not manually nest more than three high.

Exception: USPS employees may stack plastic hampers five high when stacking them with a hamper stacker.

Because of the weight of the plastic hampers and the height at which they must be stacked, stacking plastic hampers may become a safety hazard for employees. Local managers must ensure that employees have received safety training before assigning them to this task.

Employees must do the following:

a. Never attempt to stack or unstack plastic hampers without assistance from another employee. Ensure that there is enough space to perform the task safely and without danger of striking objects or fellow employees. Before stacking plastic hampers, always ensure that the

plastic hampers are empty and free of mail or debris. Turn nested plastic hampers over on their side before unstacking.

b.   Never use plastic hampers as storage containers or trash containers, or for any other purpose except transporting mail.

c.   Ensure that vehicles carrying plastic hampers are equipped with nylon web strapping or other restraining devices to restrain the plastic hampers while in transit.

d.   Load and unload plastic hampers onto vehicles only with the assistance of the appropriate ramps, reciprocating dock levelers, scissor lifts, etc.

4-3.2.4   **General Use**

To unload the contents of a plastic hamper, use appropriate mechanical container unloaders. To reduce any extended reaches, use container tilters and appropriate tools (e.g., a shepherd's hook or another retrieving tool).

It is necessary to locally verify that the plastic hamper is compatible with local dumping and unloading equipment — this plastic hamper is not compatible with all dumpers and unloaders. Such a local verification may include the load capacity of mechanical unloaders and dumpers, the feasibility of the plastic hamper fitting inside, safe retention means, process time, etc.

4-3.2.5   **Manual Maneuvering**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   When moving plastic hampers manually, never pull them but rather push them from the swivel caster end to avoid potential injuries.

b.   Use extreme caution when maneuvering plastic hampers up or down ramps. Maintain control of the plastic hamper at all times. Do not leave plastic hampers on sloped surfaces.

4-3.2.6   **Towing**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Position the plastic hamper behind towing equipment with the swivel wheels closest to the towing equipment.

b.   Place the three-pronged towbar in position with the two prongs in the plastic hamper sleeves and the other prong in the tow hitch of the PIT. Position additional containers behind the first container in this same manner.

c.   Never tow equipment by placing the towbar or coupler over the top of the plastic hamper.

d.   Never use your hands to hold equipment while it is being towed behind a PIT.

e.   For safety reasons, tow no more than three plastic hampers (whether loaded or empty) at one time (see Handbook EL-801 for further information).

Note: Place containers not equipped with the integral towbar at the front of the train when mixed with UMCs equipped with the integral towbar.

4-3.2.7   **Safety**

Plastic hampers are relatively easy to maneuver because of their wheel arrangement. Local managers must ensure that plastic hampers are not filled beyond capacity. For maximum visibility when transporting a load, do not stack mail higher than the top of the plastic hamper, and to ensure ease of movement, do not load the plastic hamper with more than 600 pounds.

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Never store empty plastic hampers or stage full plastic hampers in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

b.   Never pull the plastic hamper when manually moving it, except as necessary to reposition the plastic hamper away from equipment, walls, etc. and to gain access to the swivel caster end.

c.   Never tow a plastic hamper using a coupler or a similar device across the top of the plastic hamper.

d.   Never attempt to tow plastic hampers by holding them with your hands while driving a PIT.

e.   Never use plastic hampers to store hazardous, toxic, flammable, or leaking material.

f.   Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

(1)   When red tagging a defective container, ensure that the tag contains the following information: office, date, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

(2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the defect could be injured.

4-4   Special Purpose Containers

4-4.1   **Rigid Wire Container**

4-4.1.1   **Description**

The rigid wire container (EIRS 84) (see Exhibit 4-4.1.1) is constructed of sturdy wire mesh with a post at each corner for stability. It has either a stacking saddle or a metal foot on the bottom for stacking purposes. The container is mounted on four casters with polyurethane tread. The two rear casters are fixed, while the two front casters swivel for easy maneuvering. The rigid wire container has a built-in tow pin for use at NDCs on the automatic tow conveyor system. The tow pin assembly and routing cardholder are mounted on the front of the container (on the swivel wheel end). Located on the front of the container is a metal information board used for routing information.

Exhibit 4-4.1.1
Rigid Wire Container

4-4.1.2   **Dimensions/Capacity**

The rigid wire container is 48 inches long by 40 inches wide by 41.5 inches high, and it weighs 320 pounds empty. It has a usable capacity of 34.4 cubic feet, and the maximum load capacity is 2,000 pounds.

4-4.1.3   **General Use**

With a rigid wire container, the type of mail (weight, density, bulk, etc.) dictates the volume of mail that can be loaded. When loading nonmachinable outsides (NMOs), sacks, or bundles of circulars, never load the containers more than three-fourths full because of the weight of these types of mail.

To unload the contents of a wire container, use appropriate mechanical container unloaders. To reduce any extended reaches, use container tilters and appropriate tools (e.g., a shepherd's hook or another retrieving tool).

Chock trailers used to load or unload collapsible wire containers as soon as they are spotted at the dock. This enables the PIT to load and unload the wire container in a safe and efficient manner.

It is necessary to locally verify that the wire container is compatible with local dumping and unloading equipment — this wire container is not compatible with all dumpers and unloaders. Such a local verification may include the load capacity of mechanical unloaders and dumpers, the feasibility of the wire container fitting inside, safe retention means, process time, etc. The wire container does not fit all USPS hamper dumpers.

4-4.1.4   **Storage and Transportation**

Store rigid wire containers in stacks of two to minimize storage space.

A 48-foot trailer can accommodate 48 wire containers in stacks of two. This is more efficient than the using hampers to transport mail. Always secure container movements in the vehicle with a shoring strap on the nose of the truck bed and with an additional shoring strap at the tail of the truck or trailer.

4-4.1.5   **Manual Maneuvering**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Always push the container from the front or swivel-wheel side.

b.   Only pull the container when maneuvering into a tow conveyor system, when hooking up to a mechanical tow device, or when positioning for operations.

c.   Never attempt to manually move double stacked wire containers.

d.   When placing the container on the tow conveyor at the NDC, first lower the tow pin into place by lowering the lever attached to it to release the tow pin into the floor, clear of the towline.

e.   After the pin drops into the towline, step aside. The pin engages automatically.

f.   Never walk away until the tow pin is properly engaged and the container is safely on its way.

4-4.1.6   **Towing**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Tow the wire container only with the integral tow pockets. Never attempt to tow a wire container using a coupler or a similar device across the top of the wire container or inserted through the wires on the side of the wire container.

b.   Position it behind the towing equipment with the swivel wheels closest to the towing equipment.

c.   Never attempt to tow wire containers by holding them with your hands while driving a PIT.

d.   Never tow double stacked wire containers.

e.   Place a three-pronged towbar in position with the two prongs in the tow pin sockets and the other prong in the tow hitch of the PIT.

f.   Never tow more than three wire containers (whether loaded or empty) at one time with a PIT. Ensure that there is sufficient clearance when towing the wire container mechanically (see Handbook EL-801 for further information).

4-4.1.7   **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Never store empty wire containers or stage full wire containers in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

b.   Always secure containers in the vehicle with shoring straps.

c.   Always ensure that all drop doors are closed and properly latched before moving a full container, either manually or mechanically. This prevents spillage that could cause personal injury or damage to the mail.

d.   When double stacking these containers, for either transport or storage, ensure that the corners are evenly in line, that the stacking saddles of the top container are squarely resting on the fixed ends of the wire mesh material of the bottom container, and that the contents do not extend above the top of the sides of the container. Do not intermingle wire container types when stacking.

e.   When unloading double stacked wire containers from a truck, use a pallet jack or forklift.

f.   Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

(1)   When red tagging a defective container, ensure that the tag contains the following information: office, date, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

(2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the red-tagged item could be injured.

4-4.2 Collapsible Wire Container

4-4.2.1 Description

The collapsible wire container (EIRS 84C) (Exhibit 4-4.2.1) is constructed of sturdy wire mesh with a post at each corner for stability. It has a metal foot on the bottom for stacking purposes. The collapsible wire container is mounted on four casters with polyurethane tread — the two rear casters are fixed, while the two front casters swivel for easy maneuvering. All four collapsible panels fold in — the end panels fold in and out, while the side panels only fold in. Located on the front of the container is a metal information board used to display routing information. The container is equipped with tow pockets attached to the base frame on the outside of the container.

Exhibit 4-4.2.1
Collapsible Wire Container

4-4.2.2 Dimensions/Capacity

The collapsible wire container is 49 inches long by 44 inches wide by 41.6 inches high, and it weighs 392 pounds empty. It has a usable capacity of 32.5 cubic feet and a maximum load capacity of 2,000 pounds. When in a collapsed state, the container is 23.5 inches high.

4-4.2.3 General Use

The Postal Service authorizes the collapsible wire container for use in all areas.

To unload the contents of a collapsible wire container, use appropriate mechanical container unloaders. To reduce any extended reaches, use container tilters and appropriate tools (e.g., a shepherd's hook or another retrieving tool).

It is necessary to locally verify that the collapsible wire container is compatible with local dumping and unloading equipment — this container is not compatible with all dumpers and unloaders. Such a local verification may include the load capacity of mechanical unloaders and dumpers, the feasibility of the container fitting inside, safe retention means, process time, etc. The collapsible wire container does not fit all USPS hamper dumpers.

When collapsed, these containers may be stacked three high for storage or transport.

4-4.2.4 Trailer Load

A 48-foot trailer can accommodate 48 fully opened collapsible wire containers in stacks of two, or 72 collapsed wire containers in stacks of three.

Employees must do the following:

a.   If the bottom container is collapsed for transport in a trailer, then one of the following is allowed on top of it:

(1)   One to two empty collapsed units.

(2)   One collapsed unit or uncollapsed unit with mail in it.

(3)   One pallet with a floor to top loaded height, not to exceed 40 inches.

b.   If the bottom container is uncollapsed for transport in a trailer, then one of the following is allowed on top of it:

(1)   One collapsed unit with or without mail.

(2)   One uncollapsed unit with mail.

c.   Always secure the container's movements in the vehicle with shoring straps. For a single container, attach one strap on the lower E-track. If there is another container or load on top of the first container, attach a second strap utilizing the upper E-track.

d.   Any of the above stacked combinations has a maximum 4,000 pounds gross capacity.

e.   The total height must be sufficiently less than the trailer height for the container to safely fit within the trailer and the door opening.

For more information about securing trailer loads, see the following item at *http://blue.usps.gov/network_operations/lop_and_sops.htm*:
"LO SOP201101 - Properly Restraining Mail Containers."

4-4.2.5 Manual Maneuvering

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Be aware of the pinch points when lifting and lowering the sides or the end loading doors. Always use two hands and keep your hands away from the edges of the ends or sides when lowering or raising them.

b.   Before moving a full container, either manually or mechanically, always ensure that the loading doors (end) and sides are closed and properly latched.

c.   When moving a container manually, always push or maneuver it from the swivel caster end for better control.

    d.   Never pull the container manually except as necessary to reposition the container away from equipment, walls, etc. and to gain access to the swivel caster end.

4-4.2.6   **PIT Towing**

For better visibility by others, tow containers uncollapsed (i.e., sides in the up position). Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Never attempt to tow wire containers by holding them with your hands while driving a PIT.

b.   Never attempt to tow a wire container using a coupler or a similar device across the top of the wire container or inserted through the wires on the side of the wire container.

c.   Never tow more than three collapsible wire containers (whether loaded or empty) at one time with a PIT.

d.   Never tow stacked uncollapsed containers.

e.   Place heavier containers closer to the towing vehicle, and place lighter containers behind heavier ones.

f.   Tow only with swivel casters towards the direction of travel and with the fixed casters at the rear. This provides better control of the container's path and reduces side-to-side movement. This may require the use of towing adaptor bars on the PIT.

The collapsible wire container has a built-in tow pin for use at NDCs on the automatic tow conveyor system. The tow pin assembly and routing cardholder are mounted on the front (the swivel wheel end) of the container.

4-4.2.7   **Loading**

For a collapsible wire container, the type of mail (weight, density, bulk, etc.) dictates the volume of mail that can be loaded. When loading NMOs, sacks, or bundles of circulars, never load the containers more than three-fourths full because of the weight of these types of mail. If a collapsible wire container is not overloaded, you can handle it more efficiently and with less risk of personal injury.

Another feature of a collapsible wire container is you can stack palletized mail on top of the container while it is in the collapsed state.

The collapsible wire container has the following features:

a.   The two end sections fold in or out to allow loading or access to container contents.

b.   The side panels only fold inward. They are activated by pulling a coated cable assembly that disengages two spring-loaded slam latches that are installed in either end of the container's steel structure.

4-4.2.8   **Unloading**

To unload the contents of a container, use appropriate mechanical container unloaders. To reduce any extended reaches, use container tilters and appropriate tools (e.g., a shepherd's hook or another retrieving tool).

4-4.2.9 **Unloading With Forklift**

Chock trailers used to load or unload collapsible wire containers as soon as they are spotted at the dock. This enables the PIT to load and unload the collapsible wire container in a safe and efficient manner.

4-4.2.10 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a. Never store empty wire containers or stage full wire containers in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

b. Ensure that the corners are evenly in line, that the foot of the top container is squarely resting within the corner supports provided on the bottom container, and that the contents do not extend above the top of the sides of the container when stacking container, for either over-the-road transport or storage.

c. Never mingle wire container types when stacking — i.e., do not stack or place a rigid wire container on top of a collapsible wire container, and do not place a collapsible wire container on top of a rigid wire container.

d. When stacking containers with mail or other contents for placement into trailers, stack collapsed containers no more than three high, and stack uncollapsed containers no more than two high. For the safety of individuals when moving double- or triple-stacked container's while loading or unloading a trailer, use a pallet jack or a forklift.

e. Never move double- or triple-stacked containers throughout the facility using a pallet jack or PIT.

f. Never move full or partially filled multiple-stacked containers by hand. Other than as necessary (e.g., on the docks where the units are being placed into trailers or two stacked collapsed containers with no mail), do not manually move containers that have additional units or pallets stacked on top.

g. Use caution when stacking the containers. Use a forklift or other appropriate equipment to stack and unstack containers.

h. Never stack a container on top of any other types of MTE.

i. Before manually or mechanically moving a full container, always ensure that the end and side panels are in the fully upright or fully collapsed position. This prevents spillage that could cause personal injury or damage to the mail.

j. Tow the container only with the integral tow pockets. Never attempt to tow a container using a coupler or a similar device across the top of the wire container or inserted through the wires on the side of the container.

k. Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

   (1) When red tagging a defective container, ensure the tag contains the following information: office, date, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

(2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the red-tagged item could be injured.

4-4.3   ## CON-CON Containers

4-4.3.1   ### Description

"CON-CON" stands for "concentration and convoy." The CON-CON Registered Mail container is rectangular and made of heavy-duty plastic. The base is blue and the door or lid is red. The words "U.S. Mail" are stenciled or molded on all four sides.

The riveted hardware securing the lid to the base consists of hinges on the back side and nonremovable metal fasteners on all other sides. An aluminum label holder is on the top, and steel handles are on each end.

4-4.3.2   ### Dimensions/Capacity

See Exhibit 4-4.3.2a, Exhibit 4-4.3.2b, and Exhibit 4-4.3.2c for images of small, medium, and large CON-CON containers.

Exhibit 4-4.3.2a
Small CON-CON Container

Exhibit 4-4.3.2b
Medium CON-CON Container

Exhibit 4-4.3.2c
Large CON-CON Container

The following describes the CON-CON containers:

a.   The small container (EIRS 90) ([Exhibit 4-4.3.2a](#)) is 25 inches long by 19 inches wide by 14 inches high. It weighs 20 pounds and has a 4 cubic-foot capacity.

b.   The medium container (EIRS 91) ([Exhibit 4-4.3.2b](#)) is 26 inches long by 24 inches wide by 17 inches high. It weighs 26 pounds and has a 4.3 cubic-foot capacity.

c.   The large container (EIRS 92) ([Exhibit 4-4.3.2c](#)) is 37 inches long by 27 inches wide by 19 inches high. It weighs 35 pounds and has an 8.5 cubic-foot capacity.

4-4.3.3 Characteristics

CON-CON containers have the following characteristics:

a.   Security: An interlocking hasp and tongue lock is affixed to the lid of the container, and the body allows a rotary lock to secure the CON-CON container in the closed position. Models procured in 1981 and later have affixed to the lid a short piece of aircraft cable, with a loop on the end. The loop fits over the hasp before you insert the rotary lock. However, CON-CON containers are not tamper-proof, so take all reasonable precautions when using them. Report any depredation to the Postal Inspection Service immediately.

b.   High Visibility: With their high visibility, rigid construction, and larger size, the CON-CON containers provide greater security for Registered Mail shipments than do sacks and pouches.

c.   Stackability and storage: You can conserve space by stacking CON-CON containers one on top of the other, either manually or mechanically. Additionally, when empty, a smaller container fits inside a larger container, allowing for greater storage capacity.

4-4.3.4 Authorized Use

Do not use CON-CON containers for any other class of mail besides Registered Mail. Never use CON-CON containers as storage containers or trash containers, or for any other purpose except transporting mail.

Use CON-CON containers for the following:

a.   Transport of Registered Mail: The CON-CON container is designed to be used as a transport container to move Registered Mail shipments originating at a CON-CON point. Use CON-CON containers according to the current Restricted Information on CON-CON and coded shipments instructions. The Postal Service authorizes the use of CON-CON containers to dispatch Registered Mail between CON-CON points or to dispatch mail from a CON-CON point of origin to a destination that is not a CON-CON point. The Postal Service does not authorize the use of CON-CON containers for surface transportation of Registered Mail between associate offices and P&DCs.

b.   Air Transport of Registered Mail: Use CON-CON containers for air transport of Registered Mail — do not use sacks or pouches to dispatch Registered Mail to the airlines or terminal handling sites.

c.   Return of CON-CON containers: Non–CON-CON points may originate a Registered Mail dispatch in CON-CON containers only when dispatch is required to return the container to the nearest CON-CON point. Non–CON-CON points may not use CON-CON containers for the dispatch of Registered Mail to other non–CON-CON points.

4-4.3.5   **Additional Applications**

Security: CON-CON is a highly specialized USPS program, designed to provide security for Registered Mail articles when a sack is insufficient. Detailed information is restricted and is available only to local managers who are actively working with the program and who have a legitimate need to know. Before using this container, local managers must refer to the current Restricted Information on CON-CON and coded shipment instructions.

Limited International Use: The international CON-CON program is presently used on a very limited basis. Only a limited number of countries are receiving international CON-CONs. Only Headquarters can approve the disposal of international CON-CONs.

4-4.3.6   **Damage**

Return to the local MTESC any CON-CON container that has been damaged in transit or that is in such condition that it cannot be sealed to prevent possible loss of Registered Mail.

4-5   Heavy Duty Over-the-Road Container

4-5.1   **Description**

See Exhibit 4-5.1 for an image of a heavy-duty over-the-road (HD OTR) container (EIRS 69H).

Exhibit 4-5.1
Heavy Duty Over-the-Road Container

The HD OTR container is described as follows:

a.   The HD OTR is a heavy-duty aluminum container mounted on four metal wheels with polyurethane tread. The two rear wheels are fixed, while the two front wheels swivel for easy maneuvering.

b.   The HD OTR has two side doors. The door on the left side is an unloading door that opens from the bottom. Although you may use the HD OTR for manual unloading, its primary function is for mechanical loaders and unloaders. The door on the right side is a half door that opens from the top and is used for manual loading and/or unloading.

c.   The HD OTR has a metal information board for routing information, located above the tow pin on the front side of the container.

d.   The HD OTR is equipped with a hand-operated brake located on the tow pin side of the container. You can adjust the Brake by rotating the end of handle to increase or reduce brake tension.

e.   The HD OTR is equipped with a bar across the front so you can maneuver the container manually.

4-5.2   **Dimensions/Capacity**

The HD OTR container is 63.5 inches long by 43 inches wide by 70 inches high. The usable capacity is 69.4 cubic feet. The HD OTR weighs 472–485 pounds and has a maximum cargo load of 2,000 pounds.

Note: See the marked tare weight of a specific container for actual weight in determining revenue.

4-5.3   **Trailer Load**

After placing an HD OTR in the trailer and setting the tow pin, apply the hand brake to further stabilize the load. Shoring bars and/or shoring straps are necessary both in the nose and at the rear of the load in the trailer to prevent shifting during transport.

It usually takes only one employee to unload an HD OTR from trucks or trailers. In some cases, if the container is overloaded unloading might require two employees or a PIT.

For more information about securing trailer loads, see the following item at *http://blue.usps.gov/network_operations/lop_and_sops.htm:*
"LO SOP201101 - Properly Restraining Mail Containers."

4-5.4 **Manual Maneuvering**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Always stand to the side and push the HD OTR from the front or swivel-wheel side for better control — be especially careful because of HD OTR's bulk and how it can limit visibility.

b.   Never pull the HD OTR manually except as necessary to reposition it away from equipment, walls, etc., and to gain access to the swivel caster end. When maneuvering it into a tow conveyor system or hooking it up to a mechanical tow device, use the bar located on the front as a handhold.

c.   Never use the handle of the brake to move the HD OTR because the handle could bend or break off.

d.   When necessary, use two employees or a PIT to maneuver an HD OTR.

e.   When placing the container on the tow conveyor at the NDC, do the following:

   (1)   First lower the tow pin into place by lowering the lever attached to it to release the tow pin into the floor, clear of the towline.

   (2)   When there is no danger of being struck by a container on the towline, and when there is enough space in towline traffic to enter an additional container, pull it across the towline at a 90-degree angle.

   (3)   After the pin drops into the towline, step aside. The pin engages automatically.

   (4)   Never walk away until the tow pin is properly engaged and the HD OTR is safely on its way.

4-5.5 **Towing**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Position the HD OTR behind the towing equipment with the swivel wheels closest to the towing equipment.

b.   Place a three-pronged towbar in position with the two prongs in the HD OTR sleeves and the other prong in the tow hitch of the PIT.

c.   Never tow more than three HD OTRs (whether loaded or empty) at one time with a PIT. HD OTRs were designed specifically for use in the NDC automatic tow conveyor system. When towed mechanically by PITs, they tend to make an ever-decreasing arc. Sufficient clearance is required when towing the HD OTRs mechanically (see Handbook EL-801 for further information).

4-5.6 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Never load a HD OTR higher than the top of the container.

b.   Never store empty HD OTRs or stage full HD OTRs in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

c.   Ensure that the hand brake is on to prevent the container from moving when manually loading or unloading it.

d. To eliminate bending and lifting when unloading manually, unload it halfway and then use the half door to unload the rest of the container.

e. When using the unloading door, always ensure that the safety clip is inserted in the door cylinder to keep the door in the upright position.

f. Never use the unloading door in a congested area. Never park the container in a blind spot with the door open. Keep the unloading door closed at all times, except when used for unloading purposes.

g. Visually check the unloading door to ensure that both corners are latched securely. These doors sometimes bend or warp if not properly handled. Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

    (1) When red tagging a defective container, ensure that the tag contains the following information: office, date, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

    (2) Never load into a container anything that has been red tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the red-tagged item could be injured.

h. When placing an HD OTR on the tow conveyor, stand to the side while waiting for the pin to engage — never stand directly over the towline to avoid being struck.

i. Never use your hands to hold equipment while it is being towed behind a PIT.

Towing is the preferred method for moving HD OTRs. Do not use forklifting for normal HD OTR movement because it can damage the casters, tow pins, or brake mechanism. Use forklifts only when an HD OTR is damaged to the point of preventing normal towing, and lift it from the full-door side to maintain the closed position.

4-6   Towbars and Couplers

4-6.1   Types of Towbars and Couplers

See Exhibit 4-6.1a, Exhibit 4-6.1b, and Exhibit 4-6.1c for images of the three types of equipment used to tow rolling stock.

Exhibit 4-6.1a
Folding Towbar

Exhibit 4-6.1b
Three-Pronged Coupler

Exhibit 4-6.1c
Spring-loaded Integral Towbar

The three types of equipment are described as follows:

a. The folding towbar (see Exhibit 4-6.1a) is used to connect wheeled equipment to a PIT for towing. It was designed to fit all towable containers and has movable arms to adjust to different distances between the tow pin sockets. The folding towbar is available from the Material Distribution Center in Topeka (NSN 3920-17-000-1199).

b. The three-pronged coupler (see Exhibit 4-6.1b) is in general use to connect rolling stock for towing. The three-pronged coupler does not fit the bulk mail center over-the-road (BMC-OTR) container because of the fixed distance between the prongs.

c. The spring-loaded integral tow bar (see Exhibit 4-6.1c) is installed on some USPS rolling stock (GPMC, ERMC, CASTR, and dollies). Use the spring-loaded integral tow bar when connecting the second and third containers in a train.

4-6.2 **Towing**

Use the folding towbar or the three-pronged coupler when using a PIT to tow up to three wheeled containers following these steps:

a. Place a folding towbar or three-pronged coupler in position with the two prongs in the tow pin sockets and the other prong in the tow hitch of the PIT.

  b. Use the spring-loaded integral towbar (if available) to attach the second and third containers in the train. Note the following:

     (1) When using the integral towbar, position it so that the coupler pin on the succeeding container is directly above the end of the towbar.

     (2) Allow the spring to raise the towbar with its ring around the coupler pin on the succeeding container.

  c. Use up to three folding towbars or couplers when towing wheeled containers not equipped with the spring-loaded integral towbar or coupler pin under the swivel end of the container.

4-6.3 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

  a. Ensure that operators towing wheeled equipment follow the safety procedures and operating rules.

  b. Follow the safety procedures and operating rules found in Handbook EL-801 and the specific instructions in this handbook.

  c. Use only towbars designed for towing USPS wheeled equipment.

  d. Receive proper training from authorized personal before towing rolling stock.

  e. Tow only rolling stock that is equipped with tow pin sockets. Never tow from the lip or edge of the equipment.

  f. Attach the heaviest container first so that it is closest to the PIT.

  g. Never use hands to hold equipment while it is being towed behind a PIT.

4-7   Pallets, Postal Paks, and Miscellaneous Cardboard

4-7.1 **Pallets**

4-7.1.1 **General Description**

The Postal Service recognizes four pallets for the distribution of mail — the presswood pallet, the plastic pallet, the plastic lightweight pallet, and the wood slat pallet. The Postal Service procures and owns all four types of pallets. Private mailers sometimes supply with their mailings wooden pallets (hardwood and softwood, disposable and reusable). The Postal Service has no obligation to return empty pallets to mailers. Mailers must not retain USPS-owned pallets for their own operating use or personal convenience. The Postal Service provides pallets as a courtesy to convey mail to and from USPS installations. Any other use is prohibited by law.

4-7.1.2   **Types of Pallets**

See Exhibit 4-7.1.2a, Exhibit 4-7.1.2b, Exhibit 4-7.1.2c, and Exhibit 4-7.1.2d for images of the four types of pallets.

Exhibit 4-7.1.2a
Presswood Pallet

Exhibit 4-7.1.2b
Plastic Pallet

Exhibit 4-7.1.2c
Plastic Lightweight Pallet

Exhibit 4-7.1.2d
Wood Slat Pallet

The four types of pallets are described as follows:

a.   The presswood pallet (EIRS 65) (see Exhibit 4-7.1.2a) is a wood-based, recycled product made from wooden chips. The pallet is 48 inches long by 40 inches wide by 6 inches high, has a capacity of 2,000 pounds, and provides four-way entry for forklifts and pallet jacks.

b.   The plastic pallet (EIRS 65P) (see Exhibit 4-7.1.2b) is made from high-density polyethylene (HDPE) plastic that is 100-percent recyclable. It is 48 inches long by 40 inches wide by 6 inches high, has a capacity of 2,000 pounds, and provides four-way entry for forklifts and pallet jacks. It weighs approximately 19 pounds and is a nestable pallet.

c.   The plastic lightweight pallet (EIRS 65PL) (see Exhibit 4-7.1.2c) is made from HDPE plastic that is 100-percent recyclable. It is 48 inches long by 40 inches wide by 6 inches high, has a capacity of 2,000 pounds, and provides four-way entry for forklifts and pallet jacks. It weighs approximately 16 pounds and is a nestable pallet.

d.   The wood slat pallet (EIRS 65W) (see Exhibit 4-7.1.2d) is an economical alternative to a plastic pallet. It has a tough, durable construction comprised of choice maple, oak, and birch hardwoods. It can hold 2,000 pounds and provides four-way entry for forklifts and pallet jacks.

4-7.1.3 Use

Use pallets to transport mail as a single unit within the mail stream.

4-7.1.4 Loading

Use forklifts and pallet jacks to load and unload pallets into and from trailers for in-plant movement of the pallets.

Properly secure pallets to ensure stability en route. To secure bundles on pallets, use shrinkwrap or stretchwrap and/or strapping with a top cap.

4-7.1.5 Unloading

Sometimes, pallets in a vehicle are "pin wheeled" — i.e., pallets are loaded in a pinwheel pattern with the stringers of one pallet perpendicular to the stringers of the adjacent pallet. When using a forklift to unload pin wheeled pallets, it is easier to first remove the pallet with the notches showing. This prevents the fork tines from sliding on and possibly damaging the underside of the dock boards when the pallets are removed.

4-7.1.6 Safety

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Ensure that the wheels of the vehicle are chocked and that the dock leveler or dock board is in a secure position when using forklift trucks to load or unload pallets.

b.   Never attempt to transport a loaded pallet that is not securely wrapped and/or strapped.

c.   Never accept double-stacked pallets unless the pallets have a wooden top cap and the cap is secured to the pallet with strapping. (Never use another USPS pallet as a top cap.)

d.   Never store empty pallets or stage pallets of mail in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

e.   When handling presswood pallets or wood slat pallets, be aware of splintering wood and protruding nails.

f.   Never stack and then store more than 20 empty wooden pallets without strapping them in both directions. Nest molded wood fiber and plastic pallets in stacks of 45.

4-7.1.7 **Inspection for Reuse**

All USPS units are required to return all usable, surplus USPS pallets to the MTESC unless otherwise instructed by Processing Operations.

4-7.2 **Postal Pak**

4-7.2.1 **Description**

The Postal Pak (EIRS 82) (see Exhibit 4-7.2.1) is a reusable corrugated fiberboard container constructed from triple wall material. Use it only with the USPS plastic pallet (EIRS 65P/65PL). It is collapsible and is intended to transport sacks, parcels, and trayed mail between NDCs and select P&DCs that are equipped with appropriate loading and unloading equipment.

Exhibit 4-7.2.1
Postal Pak

4-7.2.2 **Dimensions/Capacity**

The Postal Pak is 48 inches long by 40 inches wide by 69 inches high, with an open top and four 14-inch flaps on the bottom. It weighs 51 pounds empty, has a maximum load of 2,000 pounds, and has a capacity of 72 cubic feet.

A 48-foot trailer can accommodate 24 Postal Paks. Using such a trailer for the transport of mail is more efficient than using an HD OTR.

4-7.2.3 **Use**

The Postal Service authorizes the Postal Pak for use in NDCs and select P&DCs that are equipped with appropriate mechanized loading and unloading equipment.

4-7.2.4 **Loading**

For a Postal Pak, the type of mail (weight, density, bulk, etc.) dictates the volume of mail that can be loaded. When loading NMOs, sacks, or bundles of circulars, never load the containers more than three-fourths full because of the weight of these types of mail.

4-7.2.5 **Unloading**

Chock trailers used to load or unload Postal Paks as soon as they are spotted at the dock. This enables the forklift or mechanical lift to load and unload the Postal Pak in a safe and efficient manner.

4-7.2.6 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Always secure Postal Paks in the vehicle with shoring straps.

b.   Use a pallet jack or forklift to move a Postal Pak.

c.   Never attempt to manually unload a Postal Pak.

4-7.2.7 **Inspection for Reuse**

Designate an open area on the shop floor where work is performed. Place one empty nonserviceable pallet for stacking condemned Postal Paks. Place one pair of serviceable pallets side by side for serviceable Postal Paks.

4-7.3 **Miscellaneous Cardboard**

4-7.3.1 **General Description**

The Headquarters MTE group does not purchase new cardboard. Local facilities purchase cardboard for mail processing and transport. Use it to return unprocessed sacks/sleeves to the MTESCs. Check with your local MTESC before requesting funding approval or ordering new cardboard through eBuy. The MTESCs have a large inventory of slightly used small and large cardboard available to the field at no charge. This is an opportunity to save your funds for other priorities. Reuse cardboard as many times as possible. Do not cut cardboard.

4-7.3.2 **Types of Miscellaneous Cardboard**

See Exhibit 4-7.3.2a and Exhibit 4-7.3.2b for images of small cardboard and intermediate and large cardboard.

Exhibit 4-7.3.2a
Small Cardboard

Exhibit 4-7.3.2b
Intermediate and Large Cardboard

The three types of cardboard are described as follows:

a. The small cardboard (EIRS 99BS) (see Exhibit 4-7.3.2a) is a corrugated single or double wall fiberboard sleeve. It has an open top and four 14-inch flaps on the bottom. It is 39 inches long by 47 inches wide by 26–30 inches high.

b. The intermediate cardboard (EIRS 99BI) as well as the large cardboard (EIRS 99BL) (see Exhibit 4-7.3.2b) is a corrugated single or double wall fiberboard sleeve. Each has an open top and four 14-inch flaps on the bottom. Each is 39 inches long by 47 inches wide — the intermediate cardboard is 31–47 inches high, and the large cardboard is 48–69 inches high.

4-7.3.3 **Use**

Use miscellaneous cardboard only with the USPS plastic pallet (EIRS 65P). It is collapsible and is intended to transport sacks, parcels, and trayed mail between NDCs and USPS plants.

The Postal Service authorizes miscellaneous cardboard for use in all areas. A 48-foot trailer can accommodate 24 pallets of any size cardboard.

4-7.3.4 **Loading**

For cardboard, the type of mail (weight, density, bulk, etc.) dictates the volume of mail that can be loaded. When loading NMOs, sacks, or bundles of circulars, never load the containers more than three-fourths full because of the weight of these types of mail.

4-7.3.5 **Unloading**

Chock trailers used to load or unload cardboard as soon as they are spotted at the dock. This enables the forklift or mechanical lift to load and unload the cardboard in a safe and efficient manner.

4-7.3.6 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a. Always secure cardboard in the vehicle with shoring straps.

b. Use a pallet jack or forklift to move cardboard.

c. Never attempt to manually unload cardboard.

4-8   Trays, Sacks, and Pouches

4-8.1 **Letter Trays, Flats Trays, Sleeves, and Lids**

4-8.1.1 **General Description**

Trays (also called "tubs") are manufactured from two distinct material categories: corrugated plastic and corrugated fiberboard (cardboard):

a.   Corrugated plastic: Corrugated plastic trays are made from HDPE for additional strength. They are white or natural in color with an exterior coating that facilitates de-stacking of trays for automated equipment.

b.   Corrugated fiberboard (cardboard): Corrugated fiberboard trays are made from corrugated fiberboard-coated material and have four tapered corners with reinforced handhold cutouts on either end.

Each tray has a corresponding lid or sleeve. All trays have a label holder pocket affixed on one end of the tray. Immediately replace defective or missing label holder pockets. Quantities are available from the Material Distribution Center as PSIN O9930 and NSN 9905-01-365-2125.

4-8.1.2 **Types of Letter Trays and Sleeves**

4-8.1.2.1 **Managed Mail Trays**

A managed mail (MM) tray has four tapered corners with reinforced handhold cutouts on either end of the tray. The outside dimensions of the tray are 24.5 inches by 11.5 inches by 5.25 inches.

There are two types of MM trays: the corrugated plastic tray (EIRS 74P) (see Exhibit 4-8.1.2.1a), and the corrugated fiberboard-coated tray (EIRS 74C) (see Exhibit 4-8.1.2.1b). The corrugated plastic tray (but not the corrugated fiberboard-coated tray) features reinforced handholds and an exterior coating that increases friction to improve transport of full trays on inclined conveyors.

Exhibit 4-8.1.2.1a
Corrugated Plastic Managed Mail Tray

Exhibit 4-8.1.2.1b
Corrugated Fiberboard Managed Mail Tray

For both corrugated fiberboard-coated and plastic trays, the corresponding sleeve is EIRS 75.

4-8.1.2.2 **Managed Mail Sleeve**

The MM sleeve (EIRS 75) (see Exhibit 4-8.1.2.2) is made of corrugated fiberboard. Although it ships flat, the manufacturer has pre-assembled the sleeve, so you need to simply open it for use. Sleeves are flat but form a rectangle when unfolded so trays slide into the sleeves. Like the tray, the sleeve has tapered corners that match the slope of the corner of the MM tray. The outside dimensions of the sleeve are 24.5 inches by 11.5 inches by 5.25 inches.

Exhibit 4-8.1.2.2
Managed Mail Sleeve

4-8.1.2.3 **Extended Managed Mail Trays**

The extended managed mail (EMM) tray has four tapered corners with reinforced handhold cutouts on either end of the tray. The outside dimensions of the tray are 23-3/4 inches by 12 inches by 5-3/8 inches.

There are two types of EMM trays: the plastic tray (EIRS 74E) (see Exhibit 4-8.1.2.3a), and the corrugated fiberboard-coated tray (EIRS 74EC) (see Exhibit 4-8.1.2.3b).

Exhibit 4-8.1.2.3a
Corrugated Plastic Extended Managed Mail Tray

Exhibit 4-8.1.2.3b
Corrugated Fiberboard Extended Managed Mail Tray

For both corrugated fiberboard and plastic trays, the corresponding sleeve is EIRS 75E.

4-8.1.2.4   **Extended Managed Mail Sleeve**

The EMM sleeve (EIRS 75E) (see Exhibit 4-8.1.2.4) is made of corrugated fiberboard. Although it is also shipped flat, the manufacturer has pre-assembled the sleeve, so you need to simply open it for use. Sleeves are flat but form a rectangle when unfolded so trays slide into the sleeves.

Like the tray, the sleeve has tapered corners that match the slope of the corners of the EMM tray. The outside dimensions of the sleeve are 25 inches by 11.75 inches by 6 inches.

Exhibit 4-8.1.2.4
Extended Managed Mail Sleeve

4-8.1.2.5   **Half-size Managed Mail Trays**

The half-size MM tray has outside dimensions of 13.8 inches by 11.5 inches by 5.25 inches.

There are two types of half-size MM trays: the corrugated plastic tray (EIRS 74HP) (see Exhibit 4-8.1.2.5a), and the corrugated fiberboard tray (EIRS 74H) (see Exhibit 4-8.1.2.5b). The corrugated plastic tray (but not the corrugated fiberboard tray) features reinforced handholds and an exterior coating that facilitates de-stacking of trays for automated equipment.

Exhibit 4-8.1.2.5a
Corrugated Plastic Half-size Managed Mail Tray

Exhibit 4-8.1.2.5b
Corrugated Fiberboard Half-size Managed Mail Tray

4-8.1.2.6   **Half-size Managed Mail Sleeve**

The half-size MM sleeve (EIRS 75H) (see Exhibit 4-8.1.2.6) is made of corrugated fiberboard. Although it is also shipped flat, the manufacturer has pre-assembled the sleeve, so you need to simply open it for use. Sleeves are flat but form a rectangle when unfolded so trays slide into sleeves. Like the tray, the sleeve has tapered corners that match the slope of the MM half-size

tray. The outside dimensions of the sleeve are 13.8 inches by 11.5 inches by 5.25 inches.

Exhibit 4-8.1.2.6
Half-size Managed Mail Sleeve

4-8.1.2.7   **Plastic Flats Tray**

The corrugated plastic flats tray (EIRS 78P) (see Exhibit 4-8.1.2.7) has a rectangular shape with wire reinforcement at the top of the tray, tapered sides, and reinforced handholds to facilitate manual handling. The outside dimensions of the flats tray (also called a "flats tub") are 18 inches by 13 inches by 11 inches. The corresponding plastic, two-tone lid is EIRS 79P.

Exhibit 4-8.1.2.7
Plastic Flats Tray

4-8.1.2.8   **Four-sided Plastic Flats Lid**

A four-sided plastic two-tone lid (EIRS 79P) is designed to be used with the corrugated plastic flats tray. The lid's dimensions are 19 inches by 27 inches.

The lid has two colors — one side of the lid is white/natural, and the reverse side of the lid is green. The exposed color of the lid identifies the contents of a sealed tray — when used to dispatch First-Class Mail, the green side is exposed (see Exhibit 4-8.1.2.8), and when used to dispatch bulk business mail, the white/natural side is exposed.

Exhibit 4-8.1.2.8
Plastic Flats Lid

To position the lid properly, place the end flaps on the inside of the tray and fold the side flaps over the outside of the tray. Secure the tray and lid by banding twice across the width of the tray and lid.

4-8.1.3   **Use**

The use of trays prevents nonempty equipment from being used in machines. Because of the open construction of the tray, the possibility of mail being left in is greatly reduced.

Because trays are of standard types and sizes and are designed to nest in like containers, there is little chance of missorting empty equipment.

The tray and sleeve are primarily for dispatching and transporting letter-sized mail. Dispatching facilities that use MM trays are those that can generate letter volumes equal to at least 75 per cent of a full tray per dispatch to any destination. The Postal Service does not authorize facilities to mix different classes and types of mail to accomplish full or 75 percent full trays. Letter volumes of less than 75 percent are placed in half-sized MM trays, or are bundled and pouched.

4-8.1.4 **Strapping**

For security purposes, strap trays and sleeves that are dispatched by contract carrier (air and surface). Trays transported by USPS-owned-and-operated transportation need not be sleeved or strapped depending on the type of wheeled transport container used.

To properly strap a tray with a sleeve, use one strap positioned lengthwise around the open ends of the sleeve.

Properly strapped, the tray and sleeve unit is sufficiently secured so that any tampering with the enclosed letter mail is evident from the appearance of the tray unit.

Do not strap trays together in a two-tray unit. Strap each tray and sleeve in a single unit and dispatch individually. Do not enclose trays in pouches.

Employees must receive training to operate semi-automatic and automatic strapping equipment.

4-8.1.5 **Storing**

Assembled trays nest easily for storage and shipment of empties. The sleeve collapses into its original condition and may be stored flat or bundled together for shipment.

Trays interface well with the family of multi-purpose tray containers. Ease of transport and cube utilization (i.e., the use of space within a storage area, trailer, or container) are two advantages provided by using trays along with the appropriate wheeled transport containers.

4-8.1.6 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a. When assembling or handling MM trays, sleeves, or strapping, take care not to get paper cuts on your hands.

b. Never pull or lift MM trays by the plastic strap — instead, pull or lift an MM tray only by the tray's handholds. Pulling or lifting by the strap can cause cuts on the hands as the material is thin and rigid.

c. Use proper lifting techniques. Supervisors must ensure that employees are taught the proper techniques and must enforce their use. A basic rule for proper lifting is to bend your knees, keep your back almost vertical, and keep the lifted weight close to your body. To do otherwise causes bodily strain and makes the body more vulnerable to injury.

4-8.1.7   **Inspection for Reuse**

Return good reusable trays and lids to service. Once trays have been assembled, do not break them down until their useful life has been exhausted.

Systematically remove damaged trays and lids from the supply stream and send them back to the MTESC for condemnation. Damage includes rips or tears, open seams, broken handholds, and significant reduction in strength.

4-8.2   # Sacks and Pouches

4-8.2.1   **General Description**

There are multiple types of sacks available at the MTESC: semi-clear plastic, nylon sacks and white cordura pouches. The Postal Service has an obligation to ensure that an adequate supply of sacks is made available to mailers and that existing inventories are used as efficiently as possible. Efficient and prompt processing of sacks is essential to meet these obligations.

4-8.2.2   **Types of Sacks and Pouches**

4-8.2.2.1   **Semi-clear Plastic Sack**

A semi-clear plastic mail sack (EIRS 01VM) (see Exhibit 4-8.2.2.1) is made of two layers of plastic and is 100 percent recyclable. The semi-clear plastic mail sack can hold up to 70 pounds, has a Velcro/neck strap for closing, and features a fill line that lets employees know when they've reached the bag's capacity. The body of the pouch has a landing patch to accept Scan Where You Band (SWYB) Distribution and Routing (D&R) tags. Because the sack is semi-transparent, you can see what's inside it, which helps with identifying mail items when necessary and making sure all the mail is emptied from a sack. If a plastic mail sack has a broken Velcro/neck strap, return it to an MTESC for repair or condemnation. Do not recycle locally.

Exhibit 4-8.2.2.1
Semi-clear Plastic Sack

A sack that is interchangeable with the 01VM sack is the 03VM sack, which is a shorter version of the 01VM sack. However, the Postal Service no longer purchases 03VM sacks but instead has replaced them with 01VM sacks.

4-8.2.2.2   **White Cordura Nylon #2 Pouch**

A white #2 mail pouch (EIRS 09CN) (see Exhibit 4-8.2.2.2) is made of sewn cordura nylon that has a neck strap with a closing latch and eye attached near the opening. Metal grommets are near the opening for hanging the pouch on the hooks of a pouch rack. A label holder is riveted to the inside of

the pouch opening above the neck strap. The Postal Service is replacing this pouch with a plastic sack that closes with a barcoded zip tie.

Exhibit 4-8.2.2.2
White Cordura Nylon #2 Pouch

4-8.2.2.3   **Orange Nylon Priority Mail Pouch**

An orange Priority Mail pouch (EIRS 12M) (see Exhibit 4-8.2.2.3) is made of sewn nylon that has a neck strap with a closing latch and eye attached near the opening. Metal grommets are also near the opening for hanging the pouch on the hooks of a pouch rack. A label holder is riveted to the inside of the pouch opening above the neck strap. A plastic landing patch is sewn or otherwise attached to the body of the pouch to accept SWYB D&R tags.

The Postal Service no longer purchases these pouches but instead has replaced them with the 01VM sack.

Exhibit 4-8.2.2.3
Orange Nylon Priority Mail Pouch

4-8.2.2.4   **Green Nylon First-Class Mail Pouch**

A green First-Class Mail pouch (EIRS 13) (see Exhibit 4-8.2.2.4) is made of sewn nylon and has a neck strap with a closing latch and eye attached near the opening. Metal grommets are near the opening for hanging the pouch on the hooks of a pouch rack. A label holder is riveted to the inside of the pouch opening above the neck strap.

The Postal Service no longer purchases these pouches but instead has replaced them with the 01VM sack.

Exhibit 4-8.2.2.4
Green Nylon First-Class Mail Pouch

4-8.2.2.5 **Green, Red, or Grey Security Pouch Liner**

A green, red, or grey Registered Mail security pouches (EIRS 18G) (see Exhibit 4-8.2.2.5) is made of sewn nylon and has a neck strap with a closing latch and eye attached near the opening. A label holder is riveted to the inside of the pouch opening.

The Postal Service no longer purchases these pouches but instead has replaced them with the 01VM sack.

Exhibit 4-8.2.2.5
Green, Red, or Grey Security Pouch Liner

4-8.2.2.6 **Orange and Blue Nylon Express Mail Pouch**

An orange and blue Express Mail pouch (EIRS 20M) (see Exhibit 4-8.2.2.6) is made of sewn nylon and has a neck strap with a closing latch and eye attached near the opening. Metal grommets are near the opening for hanging the pouch on the hooks of a pouch rack. A label holder is riveted to the inside of the pouch opening above the neck strap. A plastic landing patch is sewn or is otherwise attached to the body of the pouch to accept SWYB D&R tags.

The Postal Service no longer purchases these pouches but instead has replaced them with the 01VM sack.

Note: These pouches are still called "Express Mail" pouches because, even though the service name has changed from "Express Mail" to "Priority Mail Express," the former name is printed on them (having been created and printed before the change).

Exhibit 4-8.2.2.6
Orange and Blue Nylon Express Mail Pouch

4-8.2.2.7 **Grey and Blue International Mail Sack**

A grey and blue international mail sack (EIRS 01VF) (Exhibit 4-8.2.2.7) is made of plastic. Close them with the international zip-tie/seal.

Exhibit 4-8.2.2.7
Grey and Blue International Mail Sack

4-8.2.2.8 Orange and Blue International Priority Sack

An orange and blue international Priority Mail sack (EIRS 01FE)
(see Exhibit 4-8.2.2.8) is made of plastic. Close them with the international
zip-tie/seal.

Exhibit 4-8.2.2.8
Orange and Blue International Priority Sack

4-8.2.3 Use

Use sacks and pouches only for the transport of mail. The Postal Service
does not authorize other uses for sacks and pouches, such as using them to
store records or as waste receptacles for equipment and supplies.

4-8.2.4 Safety

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Use proper lifting techniques. Supervisors must ensure that employees
     are taught the proper techniques and must enforce their use. A basic
     rule for proper lifting is to bend your knees, keep your back almost
     vertical, and keep the lifted weight close to your body. To do otherwise
     causes bodily strain and makes the body more vulnerable to injury.

b.   Follow procedures when handling an overweight sack — i.e., one that
     exceeds 70 pounds. Two USPS employees must move an overweight
     sack.

c.   If two USPS employees are not available, handle overweight sacks as
     follows:

     (1)   Remove excess mail and place it in another sack.

     (2)   Replace the original sack label with a new label.

     (3)   Label the second sack the same as the first one.

4-8.2.5 Inspection for Reuse

Examine every sack or pouch at the time it is dumped. Supervisors must
ensure that employees properly examine empty sacks and pouches so that
no mail is left inside and that emptied equipment is properly packed and
labeled. The "elbow and eyeball" technique is the most common method for

examining sacks and pouches — use your elbow to hold open a sack or pouch so that you can "eyeball" the entire inside of the sack or pouch to identify any loose mail.

Immediately make empty sacks and pouches available for reuse unless they are excess to the operation. Lay loose sacks flat in a pallet box for return to the MTESC for redistribution.

Do not stuff sacks into each other ("bumming") and do not turn sacks inside out before returning them to the MTESCs.

Examples of damage to sacks and pouches include holes, tears, seam rips, one or more grommets missing, stains (paint, grease, oil, or mildew on the sack or pouch), and broken closing straps and/or latches.

Return all damaged MTE to an MTESC for repair or for removal from the national inventory before condemnation.

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5 Non-MTESC MTE

5-1 Non-MTESC MTE and Primary Use

This chapter covers additional types of equipment used in mail processing or the transport of mail — see Exhibit 5-1.

Note: This equipment is either obsolete or no longer available to be ordered from an MTESC. Do not return any of this equipment to an MTESC, but instead dispose of it or repair it locally.

Exhibit 5-1
Non-MTESC MTE and Primary Use

MTE Type	Primary Use
Multi-Purpose Mail Containers	
Post-Con	Used for transport, staging, distributing, and organizing mail, both in-plant and between USPS facilities.
Hampers	
Hamper, Canvas, Small	Used to transport bulk, bundled, and sacked mail between USPS operations.
Utility Containers	
Utility Cart	Used for in-plant transport of loose mail and bundles. Use with a canvas insert.
Platform Nutting Truck	Used for in-plant transport of bulk mail, trays, sacks, and pouches between USPS operations.
BMC/OTR Containers	
In-house Container	Used within NDCs to move outsides between in-plant operations.
Tray Containers	
Letter Tray Transporter	Used to transport full and empty plastic trays in-plant and between USPS facilities.
"A" Frame Tray Cart	Used to transport full and empty trays in-plant and between USPS facilities.
ERGO Cart	Used to stack flats-shaped mail in columns.
Automation Containers	
FSS CASTR Carts	Used to load and transport trays of sequence flats for FSS operations.
FSS Dollies	Used to transport trays between the stand-alone mail prep area and FSS.
DBCS Staging Tray Cart	Used to stage mail trays for the DBCS.
AFCS Letter Tray Cart	Used to stage mail trays for the AFCS.
Automation Compatible Tray for FSS	Used to transport flats mail for the FSS.
Rigid Captive Tray	Used to transport flats mail through the FSS
Street Tray for FSS	Used to transport sequence flats mail from the FSS to the delivery unit.

5-2 Multi-purpose Mail Containers — POST-CON Container

5-2.1 **Description**

In the term "POST-CON," "POST" is an acronym for "parcels, outsides, sacks, and trays." ("CON" stands for "convoy," as does the second "CON" in "CON-CON.") See Exhibit 5-2 for an image of a POST-CON container.

Exhibit 5-2
POST-CON Container

The following describes the POST-CON container:

a. The POST-CON is a wheeled transport and distribution container that can be used to transport all types of mail, sacks, trays, and bundles.

b. The POST-CON is equipped with four casters, all of which swivel for easy maneuverability. The right front caster has a swivel lock — you must disengage this lock to provide control when pushing or towing the POST-CON.

c. The POST-CON has two fold-up shelves (one at the bottom and one halfway up) to separate the load in the container. The center shelf may remain in the "stored" or "up" position for loading. When both shelves are in the vertical position, the POST-CON can be nested to save floor space.

d. The POST-CON has a nylon-webbed door, which can be easily raised out of the way to load or unload the container. Positive locking latches (panels) retain the door and shelves in the "stored" position.

e. The POST-CON is equipped with a tow pocket for a towing connection to a PIT and with a placard for labeling.

f. In addition to the basic container, the POST-CON might have optional shelving units for use with letter and flats trays. Install or remove these units, as needed.

g. The POST-CON is manufactured with square and crushed steel tubing and sheet steel material and has a protective painted finish.

The Postal Service no longer purchases POST-CONs but instead has replaced them with the GPMC and ERMC. The POST-CON is considered obsolete MTE — do not return it to an MTESC, but instead reposition it locally or recycle it.

5-2.2 **Dimensions/Capacity**

The POST-CON is 44 inches long by 29 inches wide by 69 inches high. The usable capacity of the containers is 39 cubic feet. The POST-CON weighs 240 pounds empty. It has a maximum load of 1,200 pounds.

The capacity of the POST-CON container is as follows:

Type of Container	With Shelves	Without Shelves
Letter trays	21	33
Three-sided flats trays	21	N/A
Sacks/Pouches	N/A	15–35
Nonmachinable Outsides (NMOs)	N/A	20–25

5-2.3 **Storage and Transportation**

Unlike GPMCs and ERMCs, the POST-CON does not fold or collapse. It converts to a U-shape that, because of its tapered configuration, allows it to be nested with other POST-CON containers. The POST-CON retains its stability even in the U-shape.

Employees must do the following tasks:

a. Unlatch the nylon mesh door by grasping the top bar with the left hand while using the right hand to lift the latch located on the right side of the top header.

b. Lower the mesh door and let it hang loosely at the middle. Unlike the ERMC nylon mesh door, the mesh door on the POST-CON does not totally collapse. It is affixed to a U-frame in the middle of the container on which the middle main shelf rests.

c. Unlock the lower gate bar by pulling up on the two rings located on the bottom gate bar.

d. Remove optional shelf units by grasping each shelf with both hands and pulling. After removing individual shelves, you can lift out the individual shelf supports from the left and right of the POST-CON by grasping and lifting up.

e. Grasp the U-frame in the middle of the container and move to the rear panel. Secure the U-frame and middle main shelf by lowering both latches with you right hand as your left hand holds the U-frame and the shelf against the rear panel. As an added precaution, drape the mesh door over the back of the container to ensure that the main shelf cannot fall.

f. Grasp the lower main shelf and swing it up against the back panel. No latching is necessary. The panel stays in place by gravity.

g. Locate the wheel lock over the wheel on the outside of the right panel. To unlock the wheel, lift the selector rod and position it over the bracket in the unlocked position. This allows all four wheels to swivel freely.

h. Push the POST-CON into the other nested containers by using both hands to grasp the front frame on the left and right, and then push straight back.

i. Ensure that the mesh door is draped over the rear panel. Grasp the bottom shelf and lower it to base — you can now load items into the unit's bottom shelf.

If you need the upper shelf to provide a separation for the initial loading sequence, or if the lower door section needs to be closed for loading, proceed with the following steps:

a. Grasp the U-frame (at the center) with your left hand while using your right hand to lift the latch located at the top side of rear panel. Lower the U-frame until it stops. Allow the webbed door to hang freely.

b. If you must secure the lower gate, grasp the bottom gate bar and align the U-bolts of the gate with the U-bolt receptacles on the bottom shelf.

c. Secure the bottom bar of the lower door to the bottom shelf.

    Note: If filling the container beyond midpoint, always use the middle shelf. If you don't use the middle shelf when fully loading the container, the load tends to bulge out at the bottom of the container, which causes difficulties in loading and unloading trucks (e.g., it takes up extra space, it catches on other containers, etc.). When you need the middle shelf, use your left hand to grasp the shelf while using your right hand to lift the shelf latch, and then lower the middle shelf to the U-frame.

d. When you need optional shelving, position the shelf supports in the container (both left and right sides, at the top and/or the bottom). Slide the three individual shelves forward and snap them into place.

e. To close the nylon-web door, raise the upper door to the top header. Insert the bar at the top of the door into the left side header receptacle, and then slide the right side into the top header slot. To lock the door, secure the latch on the right side header.

5-2.4 Manual Maneuvering

Employees must do the following tasks:

a. Lock the right-hand wheels into position before maneuvering the POST-CON (the left-hand wheels are still able to swivel, allowing you to maneuver it). To lock the wheel, lift the selector rod, swing it clear of the bracket, and release it. If the wheel does not lock, a slight push of the POST-CON straightens the wheel and allows the selector rod to drop in place.

b. Put both hands on the left side of the POST-CON.

c. Push forward at a walking pace.

d. Check the clearance on both sides of the POST-CON as you push it.

5-2.5 **PIT Towing**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a. Lock the right-hand wheels into position before maneuvering the POST-CON (the left-hand wheels are still able to swivel, allowing you to maneuver it). To lock the wheel, lift the selector rod, swing it clear of the bracket, and release it. If the wheel does not lock, a slight push of the POST-CON straightens the wheel and allows the selector rod to drop in place.

b. Position the POST-CON behind towing equipment with the left-hand wheels closest to the towing equipment (the left-hand wheels are the ones that are unlocked and still able to swivel).

c. Grasp the towbar, lower it, and attach it to the tugger.

d. When towing more than one POST-CON, lower and secure the towbar of the subsequent POST-CON under the pin of the preceding POST-CON. This pin is located under the base on the same side of the POST-CON as the selector rod.

5-2.6 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a. Never store empty POST-CONs or stage full POST-CONs in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

b. When releasing the latches, always use one hand to hold the U-frame connected to the middle shelf.

c. When storing the main middle shelf, always drape the mesh door over the back panel. This serves as an added precaution to ensure the shelf does not become disengaged and fall accidently.

d. Ensure that both latching bars are securely positioned. Double check that the latches are secure.

e. Stack loads carefully to prevent the load toppling against the mesh door.

f. If the load has toppled against the mesh doors, never attempt to remove the restraining bar without assistance.

    Note: The restraining bar can be extremely dangerous because of a spring-like action when released.

g. Always hold the restraining bar with one hand when releasing it.

h. Never throw mail or equipment into the POST-CON — it has no brakes and might move if jostled.

i. When positioning the POST-CON on an uneven surface, use at least two wheel chocks (front and back).

5-3 Canvas Hamper, Small

5-3.1   **Description**

See Exhibit 5-3.1 for an image of a small canvas hamper (EIRS 60).

Exhibit 5-3.1
Small Canvas Hamper

The following describes the small canvas hamper:

a.   The frame is made of heavy gauge circular steel mounted on a wooden base. It is mounted on two casters that are in a fixed position in the center of the hamper sides. A swivel-type caster is mounted on each of the four corners of the wooden base for easy maneuverability.

b.   The canvas is replaceable, and limited repairs may be made to the frame.

c.   Because of the properties of the container and the relative flexibility of the steel framing, it might be difficult to maneuver the container when it is overloaded. Since the characteristics of the mail affect capacity, local managers must ensure that hampers do not become overloaded.

5-3.2   **Dimensions/Capacity**

The small canvas hamper is a smaller version of the large canvas hamper, similar in shape, construction, and functions. It is 36 inches long by 26 inches wide by 28 inches high, and it weighs 48 pounds.

Some small canvas hampers are mounted on six wheels in the same configuration as the large canvas hamper, while others have only two wheels, one in the middle of each side.

The small canvas hamper has a design capacity of 11 cubic feet of mail or approximately 440 pounds.

The small canvas hamper is considered obsolete MTE — do not return it to an MTESC, but instead reposition it locally or recycle it.

5-3.3   **Storage and Transportation**

With their tapered design, hampers can be nested or stacked for storage when empty. Employees must do the following:

a.   Because of the difficulties associated with stacking and unstacking hampers and related safety hazards, USPS employees must not nest them more than three high, and two USPS employees must stack them.

     Exception: When using a hamper stacker, USPS employees may stack and unstack hampers five high.

b. One employee must never attempt to stack or unstack hampers without the assistance of another employee. Ensure that there is enough space to perform the task safely and without danger of striking objects or fellow employees. Before stacking hampers, employees must always be sure that the hampers are empty and free of mail or debris. Before unstacking nested hampers, turn them over on their side.

c. Because of the weight of the hampers and the height at which they must be stacked, stacking hampers may become a safety hazard for employees. Local managers must ensure that employees have received safety training before assigning them to this task.

d. Ensure that vehicles carrying hampers are equipped with nylon web strapping or other restraining devices to restrain the hampers while in transit.

e. Load and unload hampers onto vehicles only with the assistance of the appropriate ramps, reciprocating dock levelers, scissors lifts, etc.

f. Never use hampers as storage containers or trash containers, or for any other purpose except transporting mail.

5-3.4 Manual Maneuvering

Employees must do the following tasks:

a. Move hampers manually. To avoid potential injuries, always push them rather than pulling them from either end.

b. Use extreme caution when maneuvering hampers up or down ramps. Maintain control of the hamper at all times.

c. Be careful when maneuvering hampers — they are relatively difficult to maneuver because of their small wheels and flexible steel framing.

Local managers must ensure that hampers are not filled beyond capacity.

5-3.5 Safety

Employees must do the following tasks:

a. Never tow equipment that is not equipped with tow pockets.

b. Never tow equipment by placing the towbar or coupler over the top of the canvas hamper or while holding the top of the canvas hamper and operating a PIT.

c. Never store empty hampers or stage full hampers in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

d. When manually unloading hampers, never bend at the waist without also bending at the knees. When necessary, empty only half the hamper, and then tip the hamper over to unload the rest. Do not place heavy objects in hampers because they cannot be properly lifted out (see Handbook PO-413, *Platform Operations,* part 313).

e. Never use hampers to store hazardous, toxic, flammable, or leaking material. Being canvas, hampers are neither waterproof nor fireproof.

f.   Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

(1)   When red tagging a defective container, be sure the tag contains the following information: office, date, time, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

(2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the defect could be injured.

5-4   Utility Containers

5-4.1   Utility Cart

5-4.1.1   Description

The utility cart (see Exhibit 5-4.1.1) is a wheeled, chrome-plated, grocery-style cart with a canvas liner used to transport mail between in-house operations. Utility carts have a hinged basket that, when you release the locking mechanism by the foot pedal, you can adjust to various angles between zero and 90 degrees. Grooves cut into the base of the basket re-engage the locking mechanism when it reaches the appropriate angle. Use the cart for in-house transport, distribution, processing, and storage of flats, small parcels, circulars, letters, etc.

The utility cart is considered obsolete MTE — do not return it to an MTESC, but instead reposition it locally or recycle it.

Exhibit 5-4.1.1
Utility Cart

5-4.1.2   Dimensions/Capacity

The utility cart is 35.6 inches long by 21.5 inches wide by 40 inches high, and it weighs 80 pounds. The cart has the capacity for approximately 120 pounds of flats or the equivalent in other types of mail.

5-4.1.3   Storage and Transportation

Empty carts nest easily when the basket is tilted to the maximum vertical position (90 degrees). Because of the stability of upright utility carts, only the

amount of available floor space limits the number of carts that can be nested together. You can transport one or two nested carts provided that the carts and wheels are in good working order and the travel path is reasonably straight and free of obstructions.

The utility cart is not suitable for over-the-road transportation, because when full it has a high center of gravity and a tendency to topple or tip over. This same characteristic makes it impractical to tow the carts either by tow motor or similar device, or within the mechanized tow conveyor systems.

5-4.1.4 **Manual Maneuvering**

Push utility carts from either end by holding on to the top edge of the cart. Never pull utility carts — pulling can cause muscle strains or other serious injuries.

5-4.1.5 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Never tow equipment that is not equipped with tow pockets.

b.   Never tow equipment by placing the towbar or coupler over the top of the canvas hamper or while holding the top of the canvas hamper and operating a PIT.

c.   Never store empty utility carts or stage full utility carts in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

d.   Never overload utility carts, because they become top-heavy and can overturn. This is particularly true when pushing the container up or down inclines.

e.   When depressing the lever that positions the basket part of the container in the vertical or horizontal position, always depress it carefully with either foot — never use your hands to depress this lever.

f.   When adjusting the basket to the desired position, stay clear of moving parts so that clothing and/or parts of the body do not get caught in the cart.

g.   Use particular care when the utility cart contains mail. Depressing the lever used to position the basket, even accidentally, can cause the contents to be hurled from the cart and might cause injury.

h.   Never use a utility cart to store hazardous, toxic, flammable, or leaking material. Having a canvas liner, the cart is neither waterproof nor fireproof.

i.   Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

(1)   When red tagging a defective container, be sure the tag contains the following information: office, date, time, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

(2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the defect could be injured.

Utility carts come affixed with plastic guards to protect the user from the hinging mechanism. Occasionally, due to normal wear, the plastic guards break, creating a sometimes jagged and sharp edge. As a result, the hinge becomes exposed. When this happens, red tag the container and take it out of service.

5-4.2 Platform Nutting Truck

5-4.2.1 Description

Platform nutting trucks (EIRS 73) have a long history of use throughout the Postal Service. They are extremely rugged, require little maintenance, and have a long life span. Platform nutting trucks are rigid, wheeled containers constructed of wood and steel. They consist of a rectangular, low, wooden platform that is mounted on wheels, with a detachable pipe rack at each end to restrain loads. They are designed for in-plant movement of mail in bulk quantities. See Exhibit 5-4.2.1.

The platform nutting truck is considered obsolete MTE — do not return it to an MTESC, but instead reposition it locally or recycle it.

Exhibit 5-4.2.1
Platform Nutting Truck

5-4.2.2 Dimensions/Capacity

The platform nutting truck is 74 inches long by 32 inches wide by 14 inches high. With the addition of the pipe rack, it is 54 inches high. It weighs 290 pounds and has a gross capacity of 3,000 pounds.

5-4.2.3 Storage and Transportation

Platform nutting trucks perform a useful purpose in loading and unloading vehicles with bed-loaded sacks, pouches, and/or parcels. The platform nutting truck can be rolled directly into the vehicle for loading/unloading. While this is an acceptable practice, it is preferable to use roll-on/roll-off containers or, if bed loading is required, extendable or portable conveyors.

When compared with other types of containers, platform nutting trucks present some significant disadvantages that you must consider before planning to use them:

a.   Because of their weight, bulkiness, inability to be braked, etc., platform nutting trucks are totally unsuitable for dispatch over the road, and the Postal Service strictly prohibits this use.

b.   Because platform nutting trucks cannot be collapsed or nested, they occupy the same amount of floor space whether full or empty. Consequently, it is very difficult to store a supply of empty platform nutting trucks near the operation where they are needed.

5-4.2.4 **Manual Maneuvering**

Place directly on the platform bulk items of mail requiring in-plant transport, such as mail sacks and pouches, trays, parcels, and outsides. Evenly distribute the load, and stack items in a stable position to prevent the load from toppling off the truck. Never load a platform nutting truck higher than the pipe racks at either end.

Push platform nutting trucks from either end by using the pipe rack as a handhold. Never pull platform nutting trucks — pulling can cause muscle strains or other serious injuries.

5-4.2.5 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Always push platform nutting trucks — never pull them except as necessary to reposition them for certain operations.

b.   Keep hands within the framework of the pusher bar.

c.   Always ensure that there is proper clearance and that loaded mail does not extend beyond the top of the pipe rack or over the sides of the truck.

d.   Never store empty platform nutting trucks or stage platform nutting trucks in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

e.   Never use platform nutting trucks to transport mail or equipment over the road.

f.   Never stand on, jump over, or ride on a platform nutting truck.

g.   When moving the platform nutting truck, ensure that ropes on sacks do not drag on the floor.

h.   Never throw mail onto the platform nutting truck — it has no brakes and might move if jostled.

i.   Never park a platform nutting truck on an incline.

j.   Never tow the platform nutting truck.

k.   Never install shelving on the platform nutting truck — this changes the center of gravity of the truck and might cause the truck to topple or tip over.

l.   Use proper lifting techniques. Supervisors must ensure that employees are taught the proper techniques and must enforce their use. A basic rule for proper lifting is to bend your knees, keep your back almost vertical, and keep the lifted weight close to your body. To do otherwise causes bodily strain and makes the body more vulnerable to injury.

m.   Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

(1)   When red tagging a defective container, be sure the tag contains the following information: office, date, time, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

(2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the defect could be injured.

5-4.3 **In-house Container (IHC)**

5-4.3.1 **Description**

The in-house container (IHC) (see Exhibit 5-4.3.1) is constructed of steel for durability. The container is mounted on four metal casters equipped with polyurethane treads. The two rear casters are fixed. The two front casters swivel for easy maneuvering. The IHC is equipped with two end rails. Some containers have two detachable side rails that fit into sockets on each side to assist in holding the mail on the container. The container was designed to be used only in the NDC. It comes equipped with a tow pin assembly, plus a code cardholder, that allows it to be transported on the automatic tow conveyor.

The IHC is considered obsolete MTE — do not return it to an MTESC, but instead reposition it locally or recycle it.

Exhibit 5-4.3.1
In-house Container

5-4.3.2 **Dimensions/Capacity**

The IHC is 65 inches long by 41.5 inches wide by 36 inches high, and it weighs 342 pounds. It has a capacity of 3,000 pounds.

5-4.3.3 **Manual Maneuvering**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Always push the IHC from the swivel wheel end. Never pull the container.

b.   When pushing a loaded IHC into a trailer to be unloaded, enter the trailer as far as necessary and turn the container sideways. Place the end of the IHC against the side of the trailer to restrict movement while unloading it.

c.   Before moving the container, always ensure that the tow pin is in the up position. If the tow pin is in the down position when the container is moving, it could catch on the floor and cause the container to stop suddenly, which could cause personal injury or damage to the mail or the container.

d.   Always ensure that the necessary clearance is available when moving the IHC in a congested area.

e.   Never use the container to push other equipment or pieces of mail out of the way.

5-4.3.4 **Towing**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Position the IHC behind the towing equipment with the swivel wheels closest to the equipment.

b.   Place a three-pronged towbar in position — insert the two prongs into the metal bumper on the front of the IHC, and insert the other prong in the PIT.

c.   If towing an additional container, position a three-pronged towbar in the same manner behind the first IHC.

d.   Never tow more than three containers at a time (see Handbook EL-801 for further information).

5-4.3.5 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Never overload an IHC. When loading heavy or dense pieces of mail, adjust the size of the load so the container is not too heavy for one employee to handle.

b.   Never store empty containers or stage containers in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

c.   Never stand on, jump over, or ride on an IHC.

d.   When handling empty IHCs, never push them out of your grasp so that they move on their own, without you holding onto them. Use a walking pace when pushing them to their destination.

e.   When pushing IHCs around corners or other blind spots, check overhead safety mirrors, where available. If mirrors are not available, stop and make a visual check before proceeding.

f.   Use proper lifting techniques. Supervisors must ensure that employees are taught the proper techniques and must enforce their use. A basic rule for proper lifting is to bend your knees, keep your back almost vertical, and keep the lifted weight close to your body. To do otherwise causes bodily strain and makes the body more vulnerable to injury.

g.   Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

(1)   When red tagging a defective container, be sure the tag contains the following information: office, date, time, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

(2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the defect could be injured.

h.   When removing empty IHCs from the tow conveyor, do it as swiftly as possible. Remove the tow pin by quickly lifting the bar on the front of the IHC, which is attached to the tow pin. Once you have done this, quickly move the container to either side of the tow conveyor.

i.   Never pull a loaded or unloaded IHC — there is a high risk of striking the back of the leg or heel.

j.   Be careful when pulling a loaded IHC — there is a possibility for bodily strain that makes the body more vulnerable to injury.

k.   Before attempting to move an overloaded IHC, either ask for assistance or first split up the load.

5-5   Tray Containers

5-5.1   1226-B and 1226-C Tray Carts

5-5.1.1   Description

The 1226 tray cart (see Exhibit 5-5.1.1) comes in two models: 1226-B and 1226-C. They are heavy-duty, wheeled containers with fixed shelving. The shelving consists of a heavy angle iron frame with dense steel mesh interlaced to form the shelf itself. Each shelf is designed to hold standard USPS letter and three-sided flats trays. These carts are commonly called pie carts, bread carts, and other similar names.

Both models are mounted on four steel casters with polyurethane tread. The back wheels are fixed, and the front wheels swivel for maneuvering. These containers are extremely sturdy and have a life expectancy of 10 years. Repairs may be made locally.

Exhibit 5-5.1.1
1226 Tray Cart

5-5.1.2   Dimensions/Capacity

The 1226-B is 60 inches long by 29 inches wide by55 inches high. It weighs 253 pounds and has a capacity of 24 letter trays (four on each of its six shelves).

The 1226-C is 65 inches long by 29 inches wide by 58 inches high. It weighs 270 pounds and has a capacity of 35 letter trays (five on each of its seven shelves).

5-5.1.3   Storage and Transportation

Use these tray carts as mail staging units to hold prepared mail in trays to be worked at a later time. They are also well suited as storage units for empty trays of all types.

The tray carts have a limited use as an in-plant transport unit. Do not used them in over-the-road operations.

5-5.1.4 **Manual Maneuvering**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Use both hands to maneuver the tray cart.

b.   Always make sure that the mail has been secured before moving a full container.

c.   Always push or maneuver the tray cart from the swivel caster end for better control.

d.   Never pull the tray cart manually except as necessary to reposition it away from equipment, walls, etc. and gain access to the swivel caster end.

e.   Push the tray cart forward at a walking pace.

f.   When pushing it, check the clearance on either side of the tray cart.

5-5.1.5 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Always push the tray cart — never pull it except as necessary to reposition them for certain operations.

b.   Keep your hands within the framework of the tray cart.

c.   Never store empty tray carts or stage tray carts in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

d.   Never tow the tray cart.

e.   Before loading or unloading the tray cart, engage the caster brake to prevent the container from moving.

f.   Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

(1)   When red tagging a defective container, be sure the tag contains the following information: office, date, time, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

(2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the defect could be injured.

5-5.2 **ERGO Cart**

5-5.2.1 **Description**

The ERGO cart (see Exhibit 5-5.2.1) is used to stack flats-shaped mail in columns. It is a metal platform container on four wheels with vertical dividers. The dividers are supported by a spring-loaded platform that allows employees to avoid bending when loading or unloading mail. The ERGO carts were initially deployed with AFSM 100s, but you may use them in UFSM 1000 operations.

The ERGO cart is considered obsolete MTE — do not return it to an MTESC, but instead reposition it locally or recycle it.

Exhibit 5-5.2.1
ERGO Cart

5-5.2.2 **Dimensions/Capacity**

The ERGO cart is approximately 45.7 inches long by 51.2 inches wide by 71.5 inches high. It contains four vertical dividers on each side of the cart, with each divider about 11 inches wide (for a total width of 44 inches) by 42.125 inches high.

ERGO carts can hold 3,000 pieces of flats mail or enough mail for a half-hour run on an AFSM 100 depending on throughput.

5-5.2.3 **Storage and Transportation**

ERGO carts are excellent storage units for prepared mail in trays. Store them stored close to processing areas for ready access when processing begins.

Because of its limited capacity, poor cube utilization, and the inability to secure mail and trays to the cart, ERGO carts are not suitable for transporting mail over the road. Instead, use other more suitable containers, such as the multipurpose containers, for such transport.

5-5.2.4 **Manual Maneuvering**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a. Put both hands on the handle on the left side (the swivel-wheel side) of the ERGO cart.

b. Always ensure that the mail has been secured with the straps before moving a full container, either manually or mechanically.

c. When moving an ERGO cart manually, always push or maneuver it from the swivel caster end for better control.

d. Never pull the ERGO cart manually except as necessary to reposition it away from equipment, walls, etc. and to gain access to the swivel caster end.

e. Push the ERGO cart forward at a walking pace.

f. When pushing an ERGO cart, check the clearance on either side of it.

5-5.2.5 **Towing**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a. Position the ERGO cart behind towing equipment with the swivel wheels closest to the towing equipment. Ensure that the swivel lock lever is in the lock position, and push the ERGO cart to set the rear wheel in the direction of forward motion.

    b.   Place a three-pronged towbar in position with the two prongs in the ERGO cart sleeves and the other prong in the tow hitch of the PIT.

    c.   Position additional containers in the same manner behind the first container.

    d.   When using an integral towbar on the ERGO cart, join the leading container to the PIT with a three-pronged towbar. Position the integral towbar so that the coupler pin on the succeeding ERGO cart is directly above the end of the towbar. Allow the spring to raise the towbar with its ring around the coupler pin on the succeeding container.

    e.   Never use your hands to hold equipment while it is being towed behind a PIT.

    f.   For safety reasons, tow no more than three ERGO carts (whether loaded or empty) at one time (see Handbook EL-801 for further information).

Note: When mixed with ERGO carts equipped with the integral towbar, place containers not equipped with the integral towbar at the front of the train.

5-5.2.6 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

    a.   Push the ERGO cart — never pull the ERGO cart except as necessary to reposition it for certain operations.

    b.   Keep your hands within the framework of the ERGO cart.

    c.   Never store empty ERGO carts or stage ERGO carts in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

    d.   Before loading or unloading the ERGO cart, engage the caster brake to prevent the container from moving.

    e.   Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

        (1)   When red tagging a defective container, be sure the tag contains the following information: office, date, time, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

        (2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the defect could be injured.

5-6 Automation Containers

5-6.1 **FSS CASTR Cart**

5-6.1.1 **Description**

The FSS CASTR (Flats Sequencing System Carrier Automated Street Tray Rack) cart (see Exhibit 5-6.1.1) is a metal cart mounted on four wheels. It has four horizontal shelves with space provided to hold 12 street trays of

sequenced flats mail. Use the FSS CASTR cart for loading and transporting trays of sequenced flats at FSS machines for transport from FSS sites to delivery units.

Exhibit 5-6.1.1
FSS CASTR Cart

Each FSS CASTR cart is equipped with Surface Visibility (SV) license plates, used for scanning purposes. The top shelf has a set of latches that pivot the top shelf down at an angle for ease in removing street trays from the top shelf. You can operate the latches simultaneously or one at a time. To aid in transport, the FSS CASTR has an integral towbar on one end and tow pockets located at the opposite end. The towing features meet USPS standards. There are four wheels — two are fixed in position, and two swivel. One swivel wheel has a brake, which holds the cart in place. Apply the brake by pressing down on the lever until it locks in the down position. Release it by pressing the top of the lever.

Do not send FSS CASTR carts to the MTESC for either repair or recycling — instead, handle repair or recycling at the local level.

5-6.1.2 Dimensions/Capacity

The FSS CASTR cart is 47 inches long by 22 inches wide by 70 inches high.

5-6.1.3 Trailer Load

Load FSS CASTR carts into trailers side-by-side and end-to end. Push the first FSS CASTR cart into the trailer using the handle and position it as far into the trailer as possible. Push the second cart into the trailer and position it next to the first. After establishing a row of four carts, secure the row with two shoring straps, or add a second row of four carts and secure both rows of carts with two shoring straps. Restrain no more than two rows of FSS CASTR carts by each set of straps.

For more information about securing trailer loads, see the following item at *http://blue.usps.gov/network_operations/lop_and_sops.htm:* "LO SOP201101 - Properly Restraining Mail Containers."

5-6.1.4 Manual Maneuvering

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Put both hands on the handle on the left (or swivel-wheel side) of the FSS CASTR cart.

b.   For better control when moving an FSS CASTR cart manually, always push it or maneuver it from the swivel caster end using the handle.

    c.   Never pull the FSS CASTR cart manually except as necessary to reposition it away from equipment, walls, etc. and to gain access to the swivel caster end.

    d.   Push the FSS CASTR cart forward at a walking pace.

    e.   When pushing an FSS CASTR cart, check the clearance on either side of it.

5-6.1.5 **Towing**

Employees must do the following tasks:

    a.   Position the FSS CASTR cart behind towing equipment with the swivel wheels closest to the towing equipment.

    b.   Position additional containers in the same manner behind the first container.

    c.   When using the integral towbar on the FSS CASTR cart, join the leading container to the PIT with a three-pronged towbar. Position the integral towbar so that the coupler pin on the succeeding FSS CASTR cart is directly above the end of the towbar. Allow the spring to raise the towbar with its ring around the coupler pin on the succeeding container.

    d.   Never use your hands to hold equipment while it is being towed behind a PIT.

    e.   For safety reasons, tow no more than three FSS CASTR carts (whether loaded or empty) at one time (see Handbook EL-801 for further information).

Note: When mixed with FSS CASTR carts equipped with the integral towbar, place containers not equipped with the integral towbar at the front of the train.

5-6.1.6 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

    a.   Never pull the FSS CASTR cart when manually moving it, unless removing it from the CASTR maker.

    b.   Never store empty FSS CASTR carts or stage FSS CASTR carts in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

    c.   To prevent the FSS CASTR cart from moving, engage the caster brake before loading or unloading it.

    d.   When raising or lowering the top shelf, ensure that your hands are free form the actuation mechanism.

    e.   Use two hands to push the top shelf back into the fully raised position, but if the shelf resistance is too much for you to overcome without risking injury, ask for assistance.

    f.   Never attempt to stop the top shelf from lowering once you have released the release latches.

g. Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

(1) When red tagging a defective container, be sure the tag contains the following information: office, date, time, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

(2) Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the defect could be injured.

5-6.2 FSS Dolly

5-6.2.1 Description

The FSS dolly (see Exhibit 5-6.2.1) is a metal cart mounted on four wheels. Use the dolly to transport both empty and full automation compatible trays (ACTs) between the Standard Alone Mail Prep (SAMP) and the FSS. Each dolly holds 12 ACTs and is equipped with SV license plates. Retention bars hold the ACTs in place and keep them secure. You can lift the retention bars if the ACTs require manual loading. The dolly has one wheel brake to stabilize the dolly in place. Use the handle to push the dolly from one location to another. To aid in transport, the dolly has an integral towbar on one end and tow pockets located at the opposite end. Keep dollies inside the facility — do not dispatch them externally.

Do not send FSS dollies to the MTESC for either repair or recycling — instead, handle repair or recycling at the local level.

Exhibit 5-6.2.1
FSS Dolly

5-6.2.2 Dimensions/Capacity

The FSS dolly is 37.3 inches long by 35 inches wide by 53.2 inches high (the handle height is 40 inches). It weighs approximately 170 pounds.

5-6.2.3 Manual Maneuvering

Employees must do the following tasks:

a. Put both hands on the handle on the left (or swivel-wheel side) of the FSS dolly.

b. For better control, always push or maneuver the FSS dolly from the swivel caster end using the handle.

     c.   Never pull the FSS dolly manually except as necessary to reposition it away from equipment, walls, etc. and to gain access to the swivel caster end.

     d.   Push the FSS dolly forward at a walking pace.

     e.   When pushing the FSS dolly, check the clearance on either side of it.

5-6.2.4 Towing

Employees must do the following tasks:

     a.   Position the FSS dolly behind towing equipment with the swivel wheels closest to the towing equipment.

     b.   Place a three-pronged towbar in position with the two prongs in the FSS dolly tow pockets and the other prong in the tow hitch of the PIT.

     c.   Position additional containers in the same manner behind the first container.

     d.   When using an integral towbar on the FSS dolly, join the leading container to the PIT with a three-pronged towbar. Position the integral towbar so that the coupler pin on the succeeding FSS dolly is directly above the end of the towbar. Allow the spring to raise the towbar with its ring around the coupler pin on the succeeding container.

     e.   Never use your hands to hold equipment while it is being towed behind a PIT.

     f.   For safety reasons, tow no more than three dollies (whether loaded or empty) at one time (see Handbook EL-801 for further information).

Note: When mixed with FSS dolly equipped with the integral towbar, place containers not equipped with the integral towbar at the front of the train.

5-6.2.5 Safety

Employees must do the following tasks:

     a.   Never pull the FSS dolly cart when manually moving it, unless removing it from the dolly maker or induct units.

     b.   Never store empty FSS dollies or stage FSS dollies in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

     c.   Before loading or unloading the FSS dolly, engage the caster brake.

     d.   When manually loading or unloading trays from the FSS dolly, ensure that your hands are free form the travel path of the bar securing it.

     e.   Use proper lifting techniques. Supervisors must ensure that employees are taught the proper techniques and must enforce their use. A basic rule for proper lifting is to bend your knees, keep your back almost vertical, and keep the lifted weight close to your body. To do otherwise causes bodily strain and makes the body more vulnerable to injury.

    f.   Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

        (1)   When red tagging a defective container, be sure the tag contains the following information: office, date, time, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

        (2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the defect could be injured.

5-6.3 DBCS Tray Cart

5-6.3.1 Description

For Delivery Barcode Sorter (DBCS) operations, use the DBCS tray cart (see Exhibit 5-6.3.1) to stage mail trays. Its low profile makes sweeping from DBCS machines much easier. It has four large 6-inch wheels — two are rigid, and two are smooth-rolling, nonmarking swivel casters that facilitate effortless movement over countless surfaces. It has a durable powder-coated finish, and it has shelf partitions to prevent mail trays from sliding.

Do not send DBCS tray carts to the MTESC for either repair or recycling — instead, handle repair or recycling at the local level.

Exhibit 5-6.3.1
DBCS Staging Tray Cart

5-6.3.2 Dimensions/Capacity

The DBCS tray cart is 30 inches long by 76.5 inches wide by 61 inches high. It has four shelves to hold up to 32 mail trays, and it weighs 275 pounds empty.

5-6.3.3 Manual Maneuvering

Employees must do the following tasks:

    a.   Never pull the DBCS tray cart manually except as necessary to reposition it away from equipment, walls, etc. and to gain access to the swivel caster end.

    b.   Push the DBCS tray cart forward at a walking pace.

    c.   When pushing the DBCS tray cart, check the clearance on either side of it.

5-6.3.4 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Never store empty DBCS tray carts or stage DBCS tray carts in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

b.   Never tow equipment that is not equipped with tow pockets.

c.   Ensure that there are at least 28 inches of space between the machine and the DBCS tray cart.

d.   Before loading or unloading the DBCS tray cart, engage the caster brake to prevent the container from moving.

e.   Use proper lifting and sweeping techniques. Supervisors must ensure that employees are taught the proper techniques and must enforce their use. A basic rule for proper lifting is to bend your knees, keep your back almost vertical, and keep the lifted weight close to your body. A basic rule for proper sweeping is to avoid planting your feet or twisting your torso. To do otherwise causes bodily strain and makes the body more vulnerable to injury.

f.   Ensure that all the tray locks are functional, and pull out only one shelf at a time for each level on the cart.

g.   When stacking full letter trays on top of the DBCS tray cart, never stack more than four high.

h.   Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

(1)   When red tagging a defective container, be sure the tag contains the following information: office, date, time, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

(2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the defect could be injured.

5-6.4 **1226-F Tray Cart**

5-6.4.1 **Description**

For Delivery Barcode Sorter (DBCS) operations, use the 1226-F tray cart (see Exhibit 5-6.4.1) during mail processing.

Do not send 1226-F tray carts to the MTESC for either repair or recycling — instead, handle repair or recycling at the local level.

Exhibit 5-6.4.1
1226-F Tray Cart

5-6.4.2   **Dimensions/Capacity**

The 1226-F tray cart is 75.8 inches long by 31.5 inches wide by 61 inches high.

5-6.4.3   **Manual Maneuvering**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Never pull the 1226-F tray cart manually except as necessary to reposition it away from equipment, walls, etc. and to gain access to the swivel caster end.

b.   Push the 1226-F tray cart forward at a walking pace.

c.   When pushing the 1226-F tray cart, check the clearance on either side of it.

5-6.4.4   **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Never store empty 1226-F tray carts or stage 1226-F tray carts in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

b.   Never tow equipment that is not equipped with tow pockets.

c.   Ensure that there are at least 28 inches of space between the machine and the 1226-F tray cart.

d.   Before loading or unloading the 1226-F tray cart, engage the caster brake to prevent the container from moving.

e.   Use proper lifting and sweeping techniques. Supervisors must ensure that employees are taught the proper techniques and must enforce their use. A basic rule for proper lifting is to bend your knees, keep your back almost vertical, and keep the lifted weight close to your body. A basic rule for proper sweeping is to avoid planting your feet or twisting your torso. To do otherwise causes bodily strain and makes the body more vulnerable to injury.

f.   Ensure that all the tray locks are functional, and pull out only one shelf at a time for each level on the cart. If a tray lock does not release, contact local maintenance to assist with freeing the tray lock or repairing the tray cart.

g.   When stacking full letter trays on top of the 1226-F tray cart, never stack more than two high.

h.   Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

   (1)   When red tagging a defective container, be sure the tag contains the following information: office, date, time, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

   (2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the defect could be injured.

5-6.5   AFCS Letter Tray Cart

5-6.5.1   Description

The shelves of the AFCS letter tray cart (see Exhibit 5-6.5.1) are inclined to keep mail from falling over in the trays. The top shelf is fixed, but the trays on the lower shelf pull out one at a time for easier access. Below the two shelves is an area to store empty trays. The tray cart is mounted on 8-inch diameter caster wheels for easy movement and has a brake in the center of the steer side of the cart.

Do not send AFCS letter tray carts to the MTESC for either repair or recycling — instead, handle repair or recycling at the local level.

Exhibit 5-6.5.1
AFCS Letter Tray Cart

5-6.5.2   Dimensions/Capacity

The AFCS letter tray cart is 30 inches long by 76.5 inches wide by 61 inches high by, and it weighs 275 pounds empty. It contains two shelves with space to hold six trays per shelf (total of 12 trays).

5-6.5.3   Manual Maneuvering

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Never pull the AFCS letter tray cart manually except as necessary to reposition it away from equipment, walls, etc. and to gain access to the swivel caster end.

b.   Push the AFCS letter tray cart forward at a walking pace.

c.   When pushing the AFCS letter tray cart, check the clearance on either side of it.

5-6.5.4 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a. Never store empty AFCS tray carts or stage AFCS tray carts in fire evacuation aisles, in front of firer exit doors, or outdoors.

b. Never tow equipment that is not equipped with tow pockets.

c. Ensure that there are at least 28 inches of space between the machine and the AFCS letter tray cart.

d. Before loading or unloading the AFCS tray cart, engage the caster brake to prevent the container from moving.

e. Use proper lifting and sweeping techniques. Supervisors must ensure that employees are taught the proper techniques and must enforce their use. A basic rule for proper lifting is to bend your knees, keep your back almost vertical, and keep the lifted weight close to your body. A basic rule for proper sweeping is to avoid planting your feet or twisting your torso. To do otherwise causes bodily strain and makes the body more vulnerable to injury.

f. Ensure that all the tray locks are functional, and pull out only one shelf at a time for each level on the cart.

g. Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

(1) When red tagging a defective container, be sure the tag contains the following information: office, date, time, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

(2) Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the defect could be injured.

5-6.6 **AFCS-200 Tray Cart**

5-6.6.1 **Description**

The shelves of the AFCS-200 tray cart (see Exhibit 5-6.6.1) are inclined to keep mail from falling over in the trays. The top shelf is fixed, but the trays of the lower shelf pull out one at a time for easier access. Below the two shelves is an area to store empty trays. The AFCS-200 tray cart is mounted on caster wheels for easy movement and has a brake in the center of the steer side of the cart.

Do not send AFCS-200 tray carts to the MTESC for either repair or recycling — instead, handle repair or recycling at the local level.

Exhibit 5-6.6.1
AFCS-200 Tray Cart

5-6.6.2 **Dimensions/Capacity**

The AFCS-200 tray cart is 88 inches long by 24 inches wide by 49.5 inches high. The tray slides out, and when it is fully extended, the cart is 41 inches wide.

5-6.6.3 **Manual Maneuvering**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Never pull the AFCS-200 letter tray cart manually except as necessary to reposition it away from equipment, walls, etc. and to gain access to the swivel caster end.

b.   Push the AFCS-200 letter tray cart forward at a walking pace.

c.   When pushing the AFCS-200 letter tray cart, check the clearance on either side of it.

5-6.6.4 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Never store empty AFCS-200 tray carts or stage AFCS-200 tray carts in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

b.   Never tow equipment that is not equipped with tow pockets.

c.   Ensure that there are at least 28 inches of space between the machine and the AFCS-200 tray cart.

d.   Before loading or unloading the AFCS-200 tray cart, engage the caster brake to prevent the container from moving.

e.   Use proper lifting and sweeping techniques. Supervisors must ensure that employees are taught the proper techniques and must enforce their use. A basic rule for proper lifting is to bend your knees, keep your back almost vertical, and keep the lifted weight close to your body. A basic rule for proper sweeping is to avoid planting your feet or twisting your torso. To do otherwise causes bodily strain and makes the body more vulnerable to injury.

f.   Ensure that all the tray locks are functional, and pull out only one shelf at a time for each level on the cart.

g.   Place a properly completed PS Form 4707 on a damaged mail transport container as soon as the damage is noted. This prevents further damage and prevents injury. Note the following:

(1)   When red tagging a defective container, be sure the tag contains the following information: office, date, time, description of defect, and the name of the person tagging it.

(2)   Never load into a container anything that has been red-tagged and taken out of service, because employees unaware of the defect could be injured.

5-6.7   Automation Compatible Tray for FSS

5-6.7.1   Description

The Automation Compatible Tray (ACT) (see Exhibit 5-6.7.1) is a green plastic tray designed for use with the Stand Alone Mail Prep (SAMP) system. It supports flats mail preparation for FSSs. Use ACTs within the FSS to transport flats mail via conveyors to the feeders for automatic induction. Keep ACTs inside the facility — do not dispatch them externally.

The ACT is not considered MTE — do not return it to an MTESC, but instead reposition it locally or recycle it.

Exhibit 5-6.7.1
Automation Compatible Tray

5-6.7.2   Dimensions/Capacity

The ACT is 16.2 inches long by 15.9 inches wide by 11 inches high (the handle height is 8 inches). Each ACT holds approximately 110 pieces of flats mail.

5-6.7.3   Safety

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Lift an ACT only by the tray's handholds.

b.   Use proper lifting techniques. Supervisors must ensure that employees are taught the proper techniques and must enforce their use. A basic rule for proper lifting is to bend your knees, keep your back almost vertical, and keep the lifted weight close to your body. To do otherwise causes bodily strain and makes the body more vulnerable to injury.

c.   Never stand on overturned ACTs.

d.   Never store empty ACTs or stage ACTs in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

5-6.8   **Rigid Captive Tray**

5-6.8.1   **Description**

The Rigid Captive Tray (RCT) (see Exhibit 5-6.8.1) is a blue plastic tray that serves as an output bin in the FSS. These trays are internal to the FSS and never leave the machine.

The RCT is not considered MTE — do not return it to an MTESC, but instead reposition it locally or recycle it.

Exhibit 5-6.8.1
Rigid Captive Tray

5-6.8.2   **Dimensions/Capacity**

The RCT is shaped like a trapezoid in that its dimension at the top is larger than at the bottom. It is approximately 16.5–19 inches long by 12.5–14 inches wide by 12 inches high. Each tray holds approximately 65 pieces of flats mail.

5-6.8.3   **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Lift an RCT only by the tray's handholds.

b.   Use proper lifting techniques. Supervisors must ensure that employees are taught the proper techniques and must enforce their use. A basic rule for proper lifting is to bend your knees, keep your back almost vertical, and keep the lifted weight close to your body. To do otherwise causes bodily strain and makes the body more vulnerable to injury.

c.   Never stand on overturned RCTs.

d.   Never store empty RCTs or stage RCTs in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

5-6.9   **Street Tray for FSS**

5-6.9.1   **Description**

The street tray (see Exhibit 5-6.9.1) is a yellow plastic tray that is used to transport sequenced flats mail from the FSS at the plant to the delivery unit. Use CASTR carts to transport street trays to the delivery unit. Carriers take the street trays with them on their routes. Return them daily from the delivery unit to the plant. Place flats inside the street trays vertically. Ribs on the inside bottom of the street trays aid in holding the flats in place vertically. You can stack street trays in a nested fashion and take them apart easily.

Empty trays turned upside down can act as a lid for a street tray containing flats.

The street tray is not considered MTE — do not return it to an MTESC, but instead reposition it locally or recycle it.

Exhibit 5-6.9.1
Street Tray

5-6.9.2 **Dimensions/Capacity**

The street tray is shaped like a trapezoid in that its dimension at the top is larger than at the bottom. It is approximately 17–20.5 inches long by 12.5–14 inches wide by 6 inches high. Each tray holds approximately 65 pieces of flats mail.

5-6.9.3 **Safety**

Employees must do the following tasks:

a.   Lift a street tray only by the tray's handholds.

b.   Use proper lifting techniques. Supervisors must ensure that employees are taught the proper techniques and must enforce their use. A basic rule for proper lifting is to bend your knees, keep your back almost vertical, and keep the lifted weight close to your body. To do otherwise causes bodily strain and makes the body more vulnerable to injury.

c.   Never stand on overturned street trays.

d.   Never store empty street trays or stage street trays in fire evacuation aisles, in front of fire exit doors, or outdoors.

6 Ordering and Returning MTE

6-1 Defining MTE Needs

Facilities that supply a significant amount of MTE to mailers must define the equipment needs of specified mailers to ensure that sufficient equipment is available. Base the quantity on the actual amount required for each mailer's 14-day production volume, not what the customer desires. Do not allow mailers with multiple or as-needed transportation to stockpile MTE.

The CIC/BSN periodically reviews a customer's MTE requirements and ordering pattern to determine customer satisfaction, prevent stockpiling of equipment, and determine if any adjustments to the customer's standing order is required. The CIC/BSN notifies the serving facility of excess/empty MTE available for pickup.

6-2 MTE Order Types

6-2.1 General Description

Mailers can place three types of orders for MTE: standing orders, one-time orders, and emergency orders.

Standing orders and one-time orders should comprise at least 90 percent of MTE orders. Order limitations set forth in the contract between the Postal Service and the MTESC Operating Contractors require all mailers and USPS facilities to plan for their MTE needs and to utilize either standing orders or regular orders as the normal process for ordering MTE.

Review all internal MTE standing orders to ensure that the supply of MTE is necessary and that the quantity is correct. If your facility does not unload an MTESC trailer within 3 days of arrival, then you might not need the equipment — in such cases, review the standing order and modify it as necessary.

6-2.2 Standing Orders

6-2.2.1 Description

Standing orders are for both internal and external customers with steady, recurring requirements. For mailers served from an MTESC, standing orders must be for at least one truckload of MTE per week, and the Postal Service expects that they are to continue over time without need for further adjustment. All plants must develop MTE standing orders to fill long-term recurring MTE deficiencies. To develop a standing order, use a Standard Order template (SOT) (see Exhibit 6-2.2.1).

Exhibit 6-2.2.1
Weekly MTE Standing Order Template

								Weekly MTE Standing Order Template									
Facility Name:	Mid-Island			NASS:	117			Date:	July 6, 2011		Name:	Steve Rondot					
From MTESC			**Monday**		**Tuesday**		**Wednesday**		**Thursday**		**Friday**		**Saturday**		**Sunday**		
HCR#	Trip #	Time	EIRS	Quanti	EIRS	Quantity	EIRS	Quantity	EIRS	Quantity	EIRS	Quantity	EIRS	Quantity	EIRS	Quantity	**Comments**
117GK	203	0100	74P	40	74E	48	78P	48	74HP	48	Empty	1	68	36	Empty		
117GK	203	0100	75	8													
117GK	205	0600	74E	48	75E	20	01VM	48	65P	24	68	36	61P	60	No trip		
117GK	205	0600			75	18											
117GK	205	0600			75H	10											
117GK	207	1030	Empty		Empty		Empty		Empty		Empty		Empty		Empty		
117GK	209	1300	68	36	61P	60	84C	48	68	36	61P	60	84C	48			
117GK	211	1600	Empty	1			Empty	1	No trip		Empty	1					

*Note:
List trip number and dispatch time at the MTESC
All palletized MTE in pallet quantity (maximum 48 pallets per load)
All rolling stock in piece quantity
List all trips on this sheet as listed on your MTESC HCR schedule
Add "Empty" trailer for non-utilized trips

6-2.2.2   **Mailer Standing Order Adjustments**

A mailer receiving MTE from an MTESC can request a change to standing orders through the Mail Transport Equipment Ordering system (MTEOR). A customer must notify the Postal Service of changes to its standing orders no less than 14 days before a change occurs — however, it is better if the mailer can notify the USPS order planner as far in advance as possible. In the event of permanent changes, the Postal Service also must include procedures to provide the customer with an updated copy of the supply schedule.

6-2.2.3   **USPS Plant Standing Order Adjustments**

Manage changes to a single standing order for plants through MTEOR. Review standing orders often and adjust them as needed. Plants must notify the appropriate Quality Examiner of permanent changes to their standing orders no less than 14 days before a change occurs. Shipping MTE unnecessarily to a plant increases transportation costs, reduces available inventory for other plants and mailers, and causes congestion at the receiving plant.

6-2.3 **One-time Orders**

One-time orders are more dynamic than standing orders and do not have predictable, long-term recurring patterns. USPS plants must place one-time orders in MTEOR at least 3 days in advance of the desired delivery date. Mailers must place one-time orders through MTEOR at least 4 days in advance of delivery.

6-2.4 **Emergency Orders**

An emergency order is one that a plant places fewer than 4 days in advance of the desired delivery date, and that a mailer places in fewer than 5 days in advance of the desired delivery date. These orders should occur only infrequently due to unusual circumstances. A USPS plant places an emergency order through its Quality Examiner. The BSN Representative or CIC manager places emergency orders for mailers served by the MTESCs and then contacts the Quality Examiner.

6-2.5 **Withdrawn (Cancelled) Orders**

Occasionally, the Postal Service must cancel an order in MTEOR due to a temporary shortage of a particular equipment type at an MTESC or due to an MTE requirement change by the mailer or plant. A mailer who does not have sufficient MTE on hand to operate must contact the BSN Representative for assistance. See the escalation process in Exhibit 3-5.

6-3 Mail Transport Equipment Ordering System (MTEOR)

The Mail Transport Equipment Ordering system (MTEOR) provides USPS plants and mailers the ability to order MTE online. It provides a standard process and centralized location for placing orders, reviewing order status, and canceling orders (within a set time before dispatch).

A user who needs to cancel an order after the allowed cancellation period, or a mailer or plant who has questions about an order, may contact the MTEOR Help Desk at 866-330-3404 or at MTEOR@usps.gov. The MTEOR Help Desk directs these requests to the appropriate Quality Examiner in conjunction with the Business Service Network (BSN) contact for mailers. The appropriate Quality Examiner, BSN, and local transportation office jointly address these MTE ordering issues.

More information about the MTEOR application can be found at *http://blue.usps.gov/network_operations/mteor.htm*.

6-4   Returning MTE

USPS facilities must ensure that no mail remains inside MTE being returned to an MTESC.

Before reusing or returning MTE to an MTESC, processing employees must remove D&R tags and destination air tags. MTESCs are not contracted to remove such tags.

For detailed instructions on handling excess equipment, see the following two links on the MTE Web site at *http://blue.usps.gov/network-operations/mte/welcome.htm*:

a.   "SOP Processing - Standard Operating Policy (SOP) for reuse of Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) at plants."

b.   "SOP Post Offices - Standard Operating Policy (SOP) for reuse of Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) at Post Offices and Delivery Units."

For more information about the MTE Web site, see chapter 9.

6-5   Recycling or Disposal of MTE

The MTESC network manages the disposal, modification, and recall of MTE. Only an MTESC may recycle or dispose of any MTE listed as Orderable MTE in the Mail Transport Equipment List, with the exception of the following items:

a.   Postal Pak (EIRS 82).

b.   West Pak (EIRS 82S).

c.   West Pak (EIRS 82P).

d.   Small Cardboard (EIRS 99BS).

e.   Intermediate Cardboard (EIRS 99BI).

f.   Large Cardboard (EIRS 99BL).

P&DCs, NDCs, AOs, and all other USPS facilities must send all unserviceable MTE to its designated MTESC. Clearly label unserviceable MTE as "Unserviceable," and ship such MTE on any transportation destinating at an MTESC.

Do not send to the MTESC any other item that may be considered MTE by a plant but that is not listed as Orderable MTE on the Mail Transport Equipment List. If the MTESC receives such items, it returns them to a P&DC within the MTESC service area. These items include but are not limited to the following: sack racks, FSS casters, trays or dollies, carrier cases, furniture, or automation equipment.

Do not send non-MTE items to an MTESC — instead, recycle them or dispose of them locally. Contact the district Environmental Coordinator for guidance on disposing of the following non-MTE items: shrinkwrap, plastic and metal banding, trash or waste, USPS and non-USPS boxes.

7 Inventory Management

7-1 Planning and Control

MTE inventory it represents hundreds of millions of dollars in expense, so the Postal Service pays close attention to it. Inventory planning and control are functions relating to inventory management and are essential in controlling costs.

Inventory planning includes creating forecasts to determine how much inventory should be on hand to meet internal and external customer demand.

Inventory control is the process by which managers count and maintain inventory.

By effectively controlling inventory, the Postal Service gains numerous financial and service-related advantages, including leaner operations and reduced operational expenses.

The costs of maintaining this huge inventory with its processing, storing, and shipping costs are proportionately high. They include the costs of labor, transportation, real estate, contracting, IT systems, and other costs associated with management and control.

7-2 Definitions

The following terms play a vital role in managing MTE inventory:

a. *Daily Usage:* The amount of a particular equipment type that a facility requires in order to operate for 1 day.

b. *Net Difference:* The difference between the amount of a particular equipment type that a facility actually uses and the amount it receives.

c. *Balance on Hand:* The available amount of a particular equipment type when the inventory is taken.

7-3   Acceptable Inventory Levels

The following parameters define the acceptable inventory levels for USPS facilities and mailers:

a.   *Associate Offices, Stations, and Branches:* Maximum of a 1–2 day supply (daily usage) of any equipment type.

b.   *Processing and Distribution Facility:* Maximum of a 7-day requirement.

c.   *Private Mailer:* Maximum of a 14-day requirement.

7-4   Plant Inventory Tracking

USPS plants must complete a weekly inventory report through the webMCRS application by close of business local time on Wednesdays. To help plants count and track their inventory, the following tools are available on the MTEOR Web page at *http://blue.usps.gov/network_operations/ mteor.htm:*

a.   Plant MTE Checklist.

b.   MTE to Mailers Tracking Tool.

7-5   Mailer Inventory Tracking

Mailers who receive direct delivery of MTE from an MTESC must complete a weekly inventory report through the MTEOR application by 11:59 p.m. local time on Wednesdays. To help mailers count and track their inventory, the following Excel tools are available on the MTEOR RIBBS Web page at *https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=mteor.*

a.   Perpetual Inventory (tracks pallet quantities).

b.   Mailer Inventory by Pallet Tracker.

c.   Mailer Inventory by Piece Tracker.

8 Audits

8-1 Purpose

The Postal Service requires regular comprehensive MTE audits to maintain management and inventory control of USPS assets, ensure compliance with appropriate directives, and assist in identifying and solving problems.

8-2 Responsibility

USPS management must conduct comprehensive audits at all USPS facilities and major mailer sites as follows:

a. The MTE manager must ensure that Quality Examiners at all MTESCs conduct comprehensive MTE audits. Quality Examiners also conduct audits at USPS facilities and for large mailers within their MTESC service area (large mailers are those mailers who are serviced directly by the MTESC).

b. Each area office is responsible for conducting regular comprehensive audits at all USPS processing facilities within its respective area.

c. District and plant managers are responsible for ensuring that BSNs or designated USPS employees conduct comprehensive audits at major mailers sites and delivery units.

8-3 Comprehensive Audits

Comprehensive audits include all aspects of the MTE ordering and operating/supply plan. These audits address reuse of MTE, planning, closed loops, ordering procedures, and inventory levels for various aspects of USPS operations. They consist of auditing the following operations on the specified frequencies:

a. All mail processing facilities.

b. Some auxiliary facilities, such as Terminal Handling Services and Surface Transfers Centers. The Postal Service audits auxiliary facilities on a selected basis.

c. At least 10 percent of major mailers. Select mailers on a random basis.

d. At least 5 percent of delivery units (stations, branches, and associate offices).

8-4   Procedures

8-4.1   **Arrival Announcement**

Announce visits to USPS facilities and major mailers at least 3 days in advance.

Upon entering a USPS or mailer's facility, the auditor must present USPS identification to the manager, state the purpose of the visit, and ask for management personnel to act as a guide through the facility (and delivery units when appropriate).

8-4.2   **Standard Audit Form**

Quality Examiners are prepared with the appropriate audit forms and instructions for conducting the comprehensive MTE audits.

8-4.3   **Transmittal Letter**

Upon completion of the audit, the auditor must prepare a completed audit report with a transmittal letter and forward a copy to the plant manager of the site that was audited, Headquarters MTE, and the areas Networks Office.

8-4.4   **Follow-Up Letter**

The area or district office must take follow-up action as appropriate.

9 MTE Policies and Related Materials

The MTE Web site at *http://blue.usps.gov/network-operations/mte/ welcome.htm* provides links to many documents and other reference works, including the following:

a.   "SOP Processing - Standard Operating Policy (SOP) for reuse of Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) at plants."

b.   "SOP Post Offices - Standard Operating Policy (SOP) for reuse of Mail Transport Equipment (MTE) at Post Offices and Delivery Units."

c.   "57 Mail Transport Equipment — Postal Operations Manual."

The following handbooks are available at *http://blue.usps.gov/cpim/ hbkid.htm*:

a.   Handbook EL-801, *Supervisor's Safety Handbook*.

b.   Handbook PO-413, *Platform Operations,* part 313.

The following document is available at *http://blue.usps.gov/ network_operations/lop_and_sops.htm*: "LO SOP201101 - Properly Restraining Mail Containers."

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