

MTAC Workgroup 123
Service Information Needs, Reporting, and Communication Channels

August 26, 2008 Meeting Notes

Introduction

Linda Kingsley, USPS senior Vice President of Strategy and Transition, welcomed the workgroup participants and reviewed the group's charter. She stressed that while Workgroup 123 is a follow-up to Workgroup 114, it is not a continuation of Workgroup 114. This new workgroup has many predecessors, she noted, in terms of workgroups that have discussed these issues. The USPS is looking to this workgroup to provide similar benefits as Workgroup 114 in defining common language and foundation between the USPS and industry.

Ms. Kingsley said the USPS wants to be able to pinpoint potential service issues without having to use multiple systems (e.g., eMIR, ePubWatch, ADVANCE, etc.), so the workgroup should review those existing channels with an eye toward standardization and simplification of systems. The USPS wants to hear from customers what their priorities are.

She noted that the USPS has already committed to what service measurement information it will provide the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC), and that is a starting point that will not change for now. Ms. Kingsley also noted that some measurement data will be free and some will be for a charge (e.g., like Confirm is now), and pricing discussions will not be part of this workgroup. She said any questions can be sent to her by e-mail (linda.a.kingsley@usps.gov).

Workgroup Direction

John Sexton, industry workgroup co-chair, commended the Postal Service for the number of people already engaged on the workgroup.

Becky Dobbins, USPS workgroup co-chair, said that a wealth of information has been gathered from industry over the last several years through a series of previous MTAC workgroups on related issues. She and others at USPS have spent time reviewing the notes from those workgroups because some of the information is still relevant in today's environment. Workgroups 94 and 103, for example, helped identify common needs for sharing reports between customers and the USPS to work toward resolving service issues.

Quickly reviewing the mission statement, Ms. Dobbins noted that the workgroup is tasked with focusing on service measurement and improvement, simplifying communication channels, identifying and resolving service issues, and has an expected completion date of January 2009.

Meeting Schedule

The group briefly discussed scheduling of meetings. Ms. Dobbins suggested the group should meet 3-4 times each month by telecon. An open meeting format will be used for all meetings, meaning that participants who wish to attend in person may do so at USPS headquarters, but all participants also can opt to join by telecon. The group agreed that a few in-person meetings may be optimal for some of the more in-depth discussions (with telecon capability for those that can not attend in person due to budget or travel constraints).

A weekly telecon schedule likely will be established. The group advised that Thursdays are not good for

industry as Workgroup 122 will be holding weekly calls on Thursday afternoons. The USPS noted Tuesdays at 11:00 are generally not good for USPS personnel. MTAC Workgroup 121 holds a telecon on Wednesdays at 2:00 pm every other week. Ms. Dobbins will send an e-mail to the group suggesting a time/day for telecons.

Initial Recommendations

Ms. Dobbins proposed that workgroup participants submit to the co-chairs a one-page, easy to read, simple outline of their recommendations in terms of what they want from service performance measurement that they do not get today. She will send out a list of information identified through previous workgroup efforts to add comments, edit, change, and return. The co-chairs will attempt to do some grouping of the issues.

One thing identified by industry in the past workgroup efforts, she noted, was the need for an “early warning” system so that companies can be alerted as soon as possible concerning service issues.

Action Items

1. Workgroup co-chairs will provide proposed telecon times/dates, and a list of past recommendations from prior workgroup efforts that are still relevant today (focusing on actionable data and improving service).
2. Workgroup participants will provide feedback on the recommendations, as well as providing a one-page, simple outline of their needs in terms of measurement data.
3. Workgroup participants will review the roster when they receive it to identify any participation gaps in terms of industry segments that should be encouraged to participate. Dennis Farley will reach out to Todd Black so a DelTrak representation is included.
4. Workgroup co-chairs will provide a summary of the data (report formats) developed for each class of mail for the quarterly and annual compliance reports to be submitted to the PRC as presented in the USPS’ service measurement proposal published by the PRC on June 18, 2008.

Next Meeting

A notice will be sent out on scheduling the next meeting, once the date/time have been determined. Suggested topics for the next meeting included:

- An overview from USPS about the measurement reporting it will provide to the PRC to help level-set the workgroup in terms of what will be provided. This could help identify gaps in terms of the data being provided in those reports vs. data industry and the USPS need.
- Discussion/Presentation by industry of what types of data are needed and what companies use the data for (e.g., why it is important to their business).
- USPS will explain the current processes for responding to customer inquiries on service issues. The USPS noted that the process depends on who the customer initially contacts, although the USPS would like its Business Service Network (BSN) to be the primary contact. Industry noted that companies generally use whatever process has worked for them in the past. The USPS will prepare an outline of the process flow for the next meeting if possible, or a subsequent meeting.

- The USPS will explain the current internal and external service measurement/diagnostic systems in place that provide it with service performance data. Industry participants to explain how they use existing systems/data (e.g., Confirm, Red Tag, DelTrak).