

Facility Access and Shipment Tracking (FAST)

MTAC User Group 3

FAST User Group Status



November 1, 2013
Update since May 2013 MTAC Meeting

FAST User Group Leadership Team:

Industry Co-Chairs.....Richard Domagala (*Mystic Logistics*)
Michelle Zalewski (*ALG Worldwide*)
Postal Representative.....Alexis Broadhurst-Ross (*HQ ME&PT*)

The FAST (*Facility Access and Shipment Tracking*) User Group (#3) is an on-going MTAC User Group. The FAST User Group (FUG) meets following each Full-Service release and as warranted when corporate issues or initiatives unfold that impact mail entry. During scheduled meetings, FUG participants include the FUG as well as the MTAC 1 (*PostalOne!*) User Group and Postal stakeholders.

During the window of time between FUG meetings, the FUG Leadership Team meets periodically to discuss possible resolutions to critical issues that require immediate attention. In addition, on occasions when the FUG does “not” meet during face-to-face sessions at Headquarters (HQ), the FAST Leadership Team takes this opportunity (*while on-site at HQ*) to have informal meetings to solidify the team relationship.

As the Postal Service:

- strives to remain competitive
- utilizes technological advances
- leverage existing system/applications

FAST continues to play an integral role as an automated solution for mail induction issues. The following activities, enhancements, and goals/objectives summarize the status of the FAST User Group.

- The FUG Leadership Team is committed to fostering an environment that is conducive to the team members in the presentation of issues/concerns, the exchange of ideas/solutions, and consensus in decision-making.
- The FUG Leadership Team is proactive to ensure prompt resolution of any cited issues which pre-empts senior management visibility. Corrective action is implemented to prevent reoccurrences; and policies/procedures are modified when warranted.
- Any systems-related issues are escalated to Tier 2 (FAST App Support) via the FAST Help Desk Remedy system, captured as a future enhancement, or action is initiated to activate an ETR (i.e., correction of system defects).
- Operations-related issues are also escalated to Tier 2 (FAST Operations) via the FAST Help Desk Remedy system and monitored by all stakeholders.
- All planned outages of the FAST system are communicated in advance to mailers by the FAST Application Support team. FUG members are alerted to specific dates and times for all planned outages.
- In July 2013, mailers identified an issue in which software searches for the CIN (Content Identifier Number) and discount types for the respective ZIP Code. Mailer software would receive multiple records for an “ASF/NDC” ZIP Code. On Wednesday, August 7 during a FUG teleconference, a long-term solution of removing ASF ZIP Codes from the NDC records in the Mail Direction File (MDF) was implemented.
- The Full-Service enhancements for the October 2013 FAST Release 26.0 are being discussed. Enhancements specific to the FAST system and the resulting benefits to the industry are presented.
- The FUG Leadership Team has identified a future enhancement to add the FAST User Group eMail link (FASTUserGroup@usps.gov) to the FAST Welcome Page.
- On-going initiatives continue as the FUG Leadership Team is dedicated to improve the Customer Experience when interfacing with the FAST Help Desk. One of the associated deliverables include the FAST Leadership

team creating a script (*template*) to assist the FAST Help Desk in prioritizing Remedy tickets before escalating to Tier 2.

- In addition, the FAST MTAC Leadership team is aggressively identifying issues and recommending clarification in reference to the Mail Direction File.
- The FUG Leadership Team continues to encourage FAST users to be participative (more vocal) with proposing enhancements to FAST.
- Until cited enhancements can be deployed, the FUG Leadership Team is instrumental in determining workarounds that meet the objective of both the Postal Service and the mailing industry.
- As previously referenced, the FUG Leadership Team is working to increase Industry and Postal visibility of FAST. One proposal is to create a FAST User Group newsletter. The newsletter would be released quarterly (*i.e., FAST Quarterly*). The Newsletters would be distributed via eMail and include planned enhancements, a “*Did You Know?*” section highlighting any new policies or changes to procedures. In essence, the Newsletter would be a consolidation of information that impact FAST users.
- The FUG Leadership Team is also providing input (championing) natural disasters procedures that would be included in the FAST Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). For example, lessons learned from Super Storm Sandy and Hurricane Irene would be referenced. *What to do if FAST is down?*, etc. is already detailed in the FAST COOP.
- The FAST Leadership team is working in conjunction with other MTAC task teams and work groups to discuss issues that impact FAST or its components (Customer/Supplier Agreements, Drop Ship Product File, Mail Direction File, eInduction, etc.).
- The FAST Leadership Team takes pride in ensuring that members of the FAST User Group are thoroughly engaged and contribute to the mission of the group overall.

- In September 2013 the FUG Leadership team and eInduction Program Manager provided an update of the eInduction roll-out. Specifically this included: improvements since July / August release, eInduction Deployment Status, SV Site List on RIBBS, and the distribution of third party notification eMails.
- In September 2013 the FAST Operations team discussed the Facility Holiday Schedule procedures. It was explained that sites are directed to determine holiday schedules “22 days” in advance and provide this information in the FAST interface.
- In September 2013 the FAST HQ Business team discussed the development and release of a “Sample MDF” with new classes to identify: FSS Standard, FSS Periodicals, and FSS Periodicals News. FUG was presented with “sample” data prior to the MDF publication.
- In October 2013 the FUG addressed an issue regarding identification of (Flats Sequencing Service) FSS sites versus Standard FSS sites within the MDF and FAST Facility Profiles.