

# Guide To Route Inspection Carrier Consultations

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There are two different consultations that must take place as part of route inspections. The first is the Route Evaluation Consultation. This consultation is the carrier's opportunity to review the data that has been collected from the week of inspection. This data is collected on forms PS 1838 (Carrier's Count of Mail) and PS 1840 (Carrier Delivery Route - Summary of Count and Inspection).

## Route Evaluation Consultation:

Form 1838 must be provided to each letter carrier 5 calendar days before the consultation. Form 1840 must be provided to each letter carrier 1 day before the consultation (M-39 Section 241.4). All time disallowances and related comments on the 1840 will be provided to each letter carrier 1 day before the consultation (M-39 Section 242.347). **If you are having a consultation and you didn't get Form 1838 five days prior and/or Form 1840 one day prior than you shouldn't be having a consultation.**

Any adjustments to a carrier's base street time due to identified improper practices or operational changes ( elimination of park points, relays ... ) must be documented by Comments on the reverse of form 1840. These adjustments must be discussed' with the carrier at the consultation. "If the carrier, at the time of the consultation, notes the absence of such documentation in writing on the Form 1840 or attachment thereto, and initials and dates the Form 1840 or attachments thereto, and management does not supply such documentation within one week, with a copy to the carrier, the time adjustment shall be disallowed." (M-39 Section 242.345). **If management takes time away from your route and does not explain why it's up to each carrier to note that and if management can't document why within 1 week then the deduction is no good.**

"If management excludes a day(s) from the 8 week analysis, the reasons must be documented and discussed with the carrier during the consultation. If management does not have comments documenting the change, the carrier may note this absence of documentation on the 1840 or an attachment. If management does not provide the documentation within a week, the exclusion of the day(s) is disallowed" (M-39 Section 242.346). **If management throws out days from the 8 week analysis because the time didn't fit into what they want it's up to each carrier to note this. If management can't document their reasoning within 1 week then they can't exclude the day(s).**

## Route Adjustment Consultation:

When relief or addition to a route is considered, the carrier should be consulted regarding the adjustment. The reasons should be discussed and the carrier's comments and recommendations should be recorded on the 1840. The carrier is not required to sign a statement (M-39 243.11a). **Management must talk with each carrier about their proposed route adjustment. Each carrier has the right to tell management their thoughts about the adjustments. The carrier does not have to sign anything.**

The carrier's comments cannot be just dismissed. They must be considered by the postmaster or designee (M-39 243.11c). **Just listening to the carrier is not enough. Management must actually hear what the carrier is saying. These consultations are mandatory. Management is not allowed to simply meet with the carrier and tell him or her what they came up with and what adjustment management intends to make. To consult means to seek an opinion as a guide to one's own judgment.**

You, the regular carrier, have an important role in determining the evaluated time of, and adjustment to, your assigned route. Do not allow management to pretend to consult, with a wink and nod, and simply go through the motions. Postal regulations are very explicit about what is required regarding consultations.

As with everything, when it comes to route inspections knowledge is important!  
Management is required to do the following:

- 1) Consultations must** be done within the 52 day period from the completion of the count that they have to implement the adjustments (M-39 Section 211.3)
- 2) Management must** record each carrier's recommendations and comments (M-39 Section 243.11) Management may not make the carrier sign anything (M-39 Section 243.11a).
- 3) Management must** consult with a carrier a second time if adjustments are proposed (M-39 Section 243.11a) Management must consider your suggestions (M-39 Section 243.11c)
- 4) Permit carrier's notation** of absence of documentation of street time and disallow adjustments if no documentation is provided within 1 week of notation (M-39 Sections 242.345 and .346)
- 5) Management must** provide a completed copy of reverse of 1840 promptly after consultation (M-39 Section 243.11a)

It's up to each carrier to arm themselves with the knowledge they need during consultations. Don't take the attitude that whatever will happen is going to happen. There is no guarantee that everything goes perfect but if you do your part it will make things easier even if violations need to be grieved later.

In Solidarity,

Dan Wheeler