



Joint Communication from the National Collections Joint Working Group - Postbox Strategy including Collections on Delivery

Introduction

This joint communication between Royal Mail and the CWU provides an update on the progress of the Postbox Strategy and is intended to provide clarification to Managers and CWU representatives.

It provides information on the following:

- Engagement
- Changes to the Access Time Specification (ATS)
- Deployment approach
- Detailed deployment plan for Postbox Strategy
- Timeline
- Collections Best Practice Revisions Guide
- Area/Local Cross Functional Joint Working Groups
- Identification of the initial postboxes that will move to collection on delivery
- Exceptions process for postboxes identified for collection on delivery
- The verification process for the identification of additional low volume postboxes
- Deployment of the timeplate change notification stickers
- SPDO connections
- Installation of new postboxes

Engagement

This joint communication enables full engagement/dialogue to commence between Royal Mail and CWU at all levels and across all relevant functions to begin working together towards the successful deployment of the Postbox Strategy in all of the affected operational units. It is essential that all information is shared and that all relevant functions (managers and CWU representatives) are involved from day one working together to deploy any changes in a joined up and coordinated way.

Changes to the Access Time Specification (ATS)

Weekday (Monday to Friday)

Classification	Current Final Collection Window (M-F)	No. of Postboxes in each category	New Final Collection Window (M-F)	Final collection window used for planning for boxes not on delivery (M-F)
Commercial	18:30 to 19:30	8,000 (7%)	09:00 to 19:30	16:00 to 19:30
Town & City	17:30 to 18:30	36,000 (31%)	09:00 to 18:30	16:00 to 18:30
Rest of UK	16:00 to 17:30	58,500 (50%)	09:00 to 17:30	16:00 to 17:30
Deep Rural	09:00 to 16:00	13,000 (12%)	09:00 to 16:00	09:00 to 16:00

Saturday

Classification	Current Earliest Collection Time	New Earliest Collection Time
Commercial	07:00	07:00
Town & City	10:30	07:00
Rest of UK	11:30	07:00
Deep Rural	11:30	07:00

The current ATS drives 88% of postboxes having a final weekday collection no earlier than 16:00. These are the rules that determine the window of the final collection time for each Postbox across the UK; one set for weekday time windows and one set of guidelines for Saturday.

With the decline in postbox usage and the regulators efficiency review of Royal Mail taking place we need to be more efficient where possible, whilst investing to improve access in other areas.

We have served notice of the changes to the ATS to the Regulator; and the new final collection window comes into effect from 18th August 2014.

Deployment approach

1. Postboxes with less than 50 items per day (low volume) will be moved to collection on delivery subject to a later alternative posting facility being available within ½ mile
2. Only low volume postboxes will utilise all of the new Access Time Specification window, all other postboxes (except deep rural) will begin their last collection from 16:00
3. The list of postboxes moving to collection on delivery for the first phase has been confirmed. (subject to the exceptions process where appropriate)
4. The walks which will carry out the postbox clearances for the first phase have been identified (subject to 3 above).
5. Postboxes moving to collection on delivery will have notice served via a sticker advertising the change to our customers
6. The changing of timeplates for the postboxes moving to delivery in England, Wales & N.Ireland will commence from 15th September (Scotland from 20th October). The plan for this will be shared with the CWU nationally and locally.
7. The low volume postboxes will only move to collection on delivery when the interconnected collections revision is deployed (The current state of the delivery duty will need to be taken fully into consideration and factored into any final delivery revision agreement)
8. Where postboxes move to collection on delivery they will run alongside existing final clearances prior to the collection revision deployment date for a 2 week period before switching off the current final visit when the revision goes live.
9. The remaining collection points/routes will be subject to either full GeoRoute or Tabletop revisions depending upon the number of postboxes moving to collection on delivery
10. Both methods will follow the revised and agreed Collections Best Practice revision process
11. Time must be allowed in the local discussions to accommodate any changes to duty sets, realignment of any SAs affected and any preference exercise required.

Detailed deployment plan

The detailed deployment plan has been shared with the National CWU and Royal Mail Directors. A copy of the latest version is attached. It includes details for all offices of the planned dates and the type of revision.

The plan is subject to change and as newer versions are available they will be shared with Royal Mail and the National CWU for cascade to CWU Divisional representatives.

Timelines

Revision activity in all affected operational units/functions should be carried out simultaneously and in parallel with this timeline where possible.

- 09 Aug – postbox notification stickers arrive in units with low volume postboxes (England, Wales and NI only)
- 12 - 18 Aug – notification stickers to be placed on low volume postboxes moving to collection on delivery (England, Wales and NI only)
- 18 Aug – 4 week notification period commences (England, Wales and NI only)
- 05 Sept – verification process for the identification of additional (phase 2) low volume postboxes completed
- 15 Sept – timeplate changes commence in units (England, Wales and NI only). Physical plate changes will be performed by Romec – actual roll out plan to be shared once received
- 18 Sept – postbox notification stickers arrive in units with low volume postboxes (Scotland only)
- 19 – 22 Sept – notification stickers to be placed on low volume postboxes moving to collection on delivery (Scotland only)
- 22 Sept – 4 week notification period commences (Scotland only)
- 26 Sept – Phase 2 low volume postboxes moving to collection on delivery confirmed
- 20 Oct – timeplate changes commence in Scottish units – physical plate changes will be performed by Romec – actual roll out plan to be shared once received
- End Oct – Phase 2 notification stickers placed on low volume postboxes
- End Nov – all Phase 1 (40k) timeplate changes completed for postboxes moving to collection on delivery
- End Dec – all Phase 2 timeplate changes completed for postboxes moving to collection on delivery

Collections Best Practice Revision Guide - Revised

The revised revision guide (version 3.0) now incorporates the Postbox Strategy planning specification.

A copy of the revision guide and detailed activity list with embedded documents is subject to PEC endorsement on Tuesday 19th August and will be sent out ASAP.

This will include the process for both GeoRoute and Tabletop revisions as detailed in the terms of reference.

Area/Local Cross Functional Joint Working Groups

Area/Local Cross Functional Joint Working Groups will be established in each Plant Collection Manager's catchment area. These will ensure CWU Representatives and Managers for the functions affected are fully involved in the deployment process and ongoing monitoring of the programme. This will enable everyone to be fully aware of the impact within their respective areas of responsibility and to deploy the changes in a joined up and coordinated way.

The objective of the Area/Local Cross Functional Joint Working Groups will be to successfully deploy the strategy/programme whilst at the same time retaining a predominately full-time workforce, protecting earnings opportunities where required and job security in line with

existing national agreements. It is jointly recognised that to deliver the strategy/programme on all counts may require a degree of flexibility in the planning and application, taking into consideration any potential changes to attendance patterns/duty structures.

The Area/Local Cross Functional JWG's will also need to consider if there may be a need to simultaneously perform a non-binding preference exercise for all sites affected within the Plant Collection Managers catchment area.

Changes to local duty sets across all functions will be agreed locally in line with the IR framework. This is where it is essential that there is a joined up and coordinated approach and where there will be a requirement for a local JWG involving the relevant local functional managers and CWU representatives.

The Area wide Cross Functional Joint Working Group will support this process as and when required and will need to monitor any potential impact on feeder runs and mail centre arrivals across the area.

Any issues of interpretation should be sent to the National Collections Joint Working Group for resolution

The Area Wide Cross Functional Joint Working Groups will be led by the Lead Collections Planner in conjunction with the CWU Lead Divisional representative and will generally be attended by the following:

CWU area processing	CWU area distribution/network	CWU area delivery/collection
RM Plant Collections	RM Logistics	RM Delivery
Lead Collections Planner	RM HR	

The Area and Local Cross Functional Joint Working Groups should be established immediately.

Local discussions will continue to take place in line with normal procedures which will be overseen by the Area Cross Functional Joint Working Group.

Identification of the initial postboxes that will move to collection on delivery

The initial c40k postboxes that will move to collections on delivery have been identified using the Collections Management Database (CMD) volume data. In most circumstances, this would have been provided by collection drivers as part of the counts that took place when collecting base data for previous revisions.

Any postbox with less than 50 items per day will move to collection on delivery apart from the following:

- Postboxes associated with Post Offices
- Postboxes associated with business boxes
- Postboxes associated with delivery offices, collection hubs and mail centres
- Postboxes identified as the later ½ mile posting facility
- Most postboxes associated with high profile public locations such as shopping centres, train stations, hospitals etc.

Exceptions process for postboxes identified for collection on delivery

The initial postboxes that will move to collections on delivery have been identified through volume counts entered into CMD, performed by collection drivers as part of previous collection revisions undertaken over the last 3 years.

It is anticipated that there will be minimal changes to this number considering that stamped volumes have declined year on year to date.

Where there is believed to have been an error in the identification of a postbox to move to collection on delivery the following process should be followed:

- Timeplate notification change stickers should continue to be displayed in the event that the postbox will change as per the plan
- The unit manager in conjunction with the unit CWU representative will then provide the Lead Collections Planner with the following required information
 - CMD unit name
 - Postbox name
 - Postbox number
 - Volume count information for 5 consecutive days (Consideration should be given to the time of year this is carried out)
 - The suggested approach is for the collection driver to bag and label the contents of the identified Postbox, with the Postbox number so that this can be jointly counted and recorded back at the unit to avoid any delay.
 - Reason for restoration to a post 16:00 collection. (This may also be due to non compliance with the ATS i.e. not within ½ mile of a post 16:00 Postbox)
- The Lead Collections Planner will then escalate this to the central Collections Programme team for restoration to post 16:00 as the timeplate change will need to be removed from the deployment plan.

The Lead Collections Planners are as follows:

Craig Charlton	AB, EH, KY, PH, TD, BT, IV, KW, HS
Chris Hughes	DG, DD, G, PA, KA, ML, FK
Nicola Witherley	HG, HU, WF, YO, NG, TS, DN, DL, NE, SR, S, LS, DH
Jeff Brindle	BB, BL, CA, FY, OL, PR, BD, HD, HX, LA, WN
Will Davies	CH, CW, LL, M, SK, L, WA
Tony Bowen	B, DE, LE, ST, WR, WS, WV
Nick Cornish	TA, PL, TQ, TR, EX
Richard Barry	DY, TF, HR, SA, SY, CF, NP, GL, LD
Simon Lloyd	SN, OX, RG, BA, BS
Vacant (Paul Birleson temp)	PO, SO, SP, BH, DT
Mark Bactor	E, EC, WD, IG, N, NW, RM, W, WC, EN
Ian Stainer	CR, GU, KT, SW, TW, SE, SM
Peter Darling	CB, CM, CO, SS, IP, NR, PE, LN
Mark Moore	AL, CV, HP, LU, MK, NN, HA, UB, SL, SG
Nigel Walton	BN, BR, CT, DA, ME, TN, RH,

Note: This is the initial plan for leads by postcode area and subject to change as the plan progresses.

Verification process for the identification of additional low volume Postboxes

There are a number of units that have been identified for further postbox volume checks in addition to the postboxes that have already been identified to move to collection on delivery.

These units will be contacted directly and a supporting brief, which has been agreed, will also be included detailing the process to be followed.

This must be completed by Unit Managers and CWU representatives by Friday 5th September and returned to the central Collections Programme Team.

Deployment of the timeplate change notification stickers

Postbox timeplate notification change stickers have now been sent to operational units in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. These stickers provide the required 4 week notification period for customers advising them that the postbox is scheduled to move to an earlier collection time.

Collection drivers are required to attach these as per the list and will provide confirmation to the unit manager and CWU representative that they have been placed on the correct postbox as per the guidelines in time for Monday 18th August.

Units in Scotland will receive their stickers on 18th September and must be placed onto the appropriate postbox in time for Monday 22nd September.

The physical timeplate changes for this phase will be completed by Romec.

Re-plating of Postboxes as part of any subsequent revision activity will be undertaken by the collection drivers in the majority of locations or RoMec where assistance is required.

SPDO Connections

Stamped mail collected on delivery from low volume postboxes in operational units without existing mail centre feeder services or suitable connections to a parent unit that means they will be unable to connect in line with the operational workplan should consolidate mail collected on delivery into the postbox associated with the SPDO or another designated Postbox collected after 16:00 within ½ mile.

The DOM and Area/local CWU representative will jointly identify the Specific Postboxes to be used as part of the planning/revision process.

Installation of new Postboxes

Royal Mail will also boost public access to Postboxes in those areas currently underserved with the addition of up to 2,000 new Postboxes. These will be targeted at rural areas, with a particular focus on Scotland and Northern Ireland, as well as to areas of new development that are currently not served by a Postbox. Some will be added in high footfall areas such as train stations and shopping centres. Local Managers and CWU representatives can propose the siting of new boxes where they deem this to be viable and in line with the criteria mentioned above.

Review

The deployment of the Postbox Strategy/programme will be jointly overseen, monitored and refined throughout, and any emerging issues resolved in line with existing national agreements, joint statements and guidelines.

In addition to the review at National and Area/Local level, feedback on the Postbox Strategy/programme will be a regular feature of the Collections Joint Working Group, who will provide regular updates of progress against this initiative to the Integrated Delivery Programme - Steering Group and Agenda for Growth Programme Board.

Signed.....
Kevin Cooper - Royal Mail

Signed.....
Bob Gibson - CWU

Date