

Chapter 2

Managing Platform Operations

210 Management Awareness

211 Assessing Potential Savings

Indirect operations that have Labor Distribution Code (LDC) 14, such as platform activities, opening units, and mail preparation, account for approximately 56 percent of total mail processing workhours. The number of workhours in LDC 14 is increasing at a significantly greater rate than are distribution workhours. This growth rate indicates that significant potential savings are available in these areas. Several regional and national programs, such as the Work Credit System, have been initiated to help plan, measure, and control these operations. The best way to ensure that these workhours are productively spent, however, is for line supervisors to make sure that they understand the operation and have managerial control over the workload, personnel, and equipment needed for a well-run operation. This handbook will help supervisors to operate efficiently and safely by providing reminders and asking basic questions about the operations. "Self-audits" highlight the areas where improvements can readily be made. These areas include safety, work methods, control of mail and workhours, and equipment efficiency.

212 Measuring Productivity

The concept of measuring productivity on the platform is still somewhat foreign. Historically we have not measured the workload and therefore have not developed a system to measure platform productivity (workload/workhours). With the installation of the Work Credit System in all MOD 1 offices, we now have a means of measuring performance in the major indirect operations. By measuring productivity, establishing goals, and tracking performance trends, we can reduce workhours and capture the potential savings identified by the new system.

213 Controlling Nonproductive Time

It is necessary to start now to identify and control all unnecessary and nonproductive workhours. As line supervisors and floor managers, you can accomplish this through two basic actions:

- a. Do not allow employees from another operation to be charged to your operation if you do not need them.
- b. Make full use of MODs Operation 340, Stand-by Time, when you have exhausted the other means of reducing workhours (liberal leave policy and assignments to available work).

Note: These actions will provide you and your operation with the ability to increase productivity and to identify unnecessary workhours. In the past, the belief has been that the use of Stand-by Time indicates poor management, but this is not true. Like using overtime when the workload exceeds the normal staffing level, using Stand-by Time is an effective way of compensating for days with a lower than normal workload. Stand-by Time, when used correctly, is a valuable management tool. However, monitor the use of these hours regularly to track any trends.

220 Management Action

221 General

Management of indirect operations is not as structured as is the management of direct operations, such as using letter sorting machines (LSMs), optical character readers (OCRs), and bar code readers. Management of well-functioning platform operations, however, typically is highly structured.

222 Operating Plan

222.1 General. A well-structured platform operation must include a formal operating plan. This plan is the basis for the direction of platform operations at your facility. To develop this platform operating plan, you must consider the critical entry and dispatch requirements for the