

**Post-Hearing Questions for the Record**  
**Submitted to Melinda Perez, Acting Assistant Inspector General for Audit**  
**U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General**  
**From Chairman Gerald E. Connolly**

**“Waiting on the Mail: Postal Service Standard Drops in Chicago and the Surrounding Area” | October 15, 2021**

1. Has the Office of Inspector General (OIG) reviewed whether the Postal Service has developed a strategy to ensure that rural communities are not disproportionately impacted by reductions in service standards or other changes laid out in the Postal Service’s ten-year plan? What recommendations does OIG have for mitigating these negative impacts on rural communities?

***Response:***

As part of our ongoing work, we plan to issue an audit report to the Postal Service by March 31, 2022, on *Delivering for America*, the Postal Service’s 10-year strategic plan developed to achieve financial sustainability and service excellence. In this audit, we will evaluate whether the Postal Service conducted an analysis of the impacts of the initiatives set forth in the *Delivering for America* plan on mail service in rural communities. We will make recommendations to the Postal Service for corrective action if we identify deficiencies or opportunities in this area.

2. As part of the consolidation of district offices, the Postal Service plans to combine the Chicago district with other parts of northern Illinois. How will this consolidation impact the postal workforce in northern Illinois? In light of these district office consolidations, how will OIG ensure that it can continue to provide comparable longitudinal analyses of Postal Service delivery performance data?

***Response:***

As part of our ongoing audit of the *Delivering for America* plan, we will evaluate whether the Postal Service conducted an analysis of the impacts of its consolidations on the Postal Service workforce across the country. More broadly, we are conducting a separate nationwide audit to evaluate the impact on the workforce when/if critical knowledge is lost when employees leave the organization. While our overall conclusion will not be specific to Northern Illinois, we anticipate it will address the nationwide impact on the knowledge continuity of the workforce for all types of separations that, in some cases, are a result of the consolidations.

Regarding our ability to evaluate service impacts in specific geographic areas, our data analytics tools, combined with those of the Postal Service, allow us to evaluate performance at ZIP code and delivery route levels. We will continue to evaluate metrics at these levels as part of our ongoing audits and risk assessments.