

# SORTING AND DELIVERY CENTERS

BY TOM RUTHER, NATIONAL CAD REPRESENTATIVE



**U**nder the Postmaster General's Deliver for America plan, the USPS has created a new facility called the Sorting and Delivery Center (S&DC). The S&DC is a concept where they have consolidated small Carrier Stations to create a large facility to house the carriers within a 30-mile radius. The first S&DC opened in November of 2022 in Athens, Ga and over the last 18 months approximately 40 more have opened across the country for a total of 600 to be opened over the next 10 years. The Postal Service states that consolidating carrier stations into S&DCs will save money in transportation, staffing, and rent. With the opening of these facilities, it has given the NPMHU the opportunity to regain the work that was awarded to us through the RI-399 process. While the MH craft has worked in large carrier stations since their inception, many of the small Associate Office did not have enough Mail Handler work to show a need for one to be hired. Under what is termed the 4-hour rule, either craft must show that there is more than 4 hours of continuous work in a facility. While the four hours could be achieved over several functions, sadly in a small station there typically just wasn't enough work. With the new S&DCs and the consolidation of carrier stations, there generally will be at least four hours of continuous work, which means that Mail Handlers (and likely multiple Mail Handlers) should be employed in those new facilities.

Under the RI-399 process, S&DCs are considered new or consolidated facilities. What this means is that upon their activation, the parties are required to meet to discuss and create a jurisdictional inventory. During this process, the

NPMHU must be vigilant in ensuring that the agreed to language in the RI-399 process is followed. The Clerk Craft has been trying to undermine the process by claiming erroneously that since the S&DC are predominantly function 4 facilities, they are the only craft that should work in these operations. The MH craft has a long history of working in both Function 1 and Function 4 operations, with National Arbitrator Eischen putting that argument to bed when he upheld the USPS award of Spreading of the Mail to the MH craft.

## WHAT WORK DOES A MH PERFORM IN AN S&DC?

By following this RI-399 process, the MH craft has been successful at having work at the S&DCs assigned to Mail Handlers. This work includes driving Power Industrial Vehicles, Spreading the Mail to the Carriers, Working Presort mail, allied labor on the SDUS or ADUS, empty equipment processing, and the loading and unloading of trucks.

National President Hogrogian has created a Task Force to prepare the Local Unions on how to create an inventory and secure that MH perform the duties that belong to us. The Task Force consists of John Gibson Eastern Regional VP and Local 308 President, Kelly Dickey Local 322 President, Nick Moser Local 318 President, Teresa Harmon Manager of Contract Administration and myself. The committee will provide training and assistance to Locals that have S&DCs opening within their jurisdiction. The Task Force is to help you fight to make sure that the NPMHU's voice is heard in the formation of these new facilities.