

# COTS vehicle pilot test and MDD-TR updates



**Christopher Jackson**

In past articles, I have shared information about the Postal Service's need to replace older model vehicles in the delivery fleet. In working to replace these vehicles, the Postal Service is scheduled to deploy the Next Generation Delivery Vehicle (NGDV) in mid- to late 2024. However, the NGDV is not the only option the Postal Service is considering for the delivery fleet. This month, I would like to share information on the latest commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) vehicle model that USPS is evaluating, along with a recent update to the Mobile Delivery Device (MDD-TR).

the steering wheel, displays video feeds from cameras as installed above the passenger side cargo and rear doors of the vehicle as well.

The C250 is a right-hand drive model that is the same height as the current Long Life Vehicle (LLV) but extends four feet longer. The vehicle has approximately 250 cubic feet of cargo space, which is more than twice as much storage space as the LLV. The cabin area is equipped with a built-in passenger jump seat that also folds down into a tray for mail handling. There is no interior door connecting the cabin area to the cargo section; therefore, a carrier will need to exit the cabin to access mail loaded into the cargo section.



## Morgan Olson C250 pilot test

In October, the Postal Service notified NALC of its intent to pilot test a Morgan Olson C250 vehicle at six locations across the country. The Morgan Olson C250 is a COTS



internal combustion engine vehicle (ICE) that operates on pump gasoline. USPS states that the purpose of the test is to evaluate the performance and maneuverability of the vehicle when utilized in Postal Service operations.

Recently, my staff and I visited the USPS engineering facility in Merrifield, VA, to review this new vehicle. The C250 is equipped with many of the modern features found in today's passenger vehicles. A key fob is used to unlock the doors and to start the engine. A panel inside the cabin area holds push-button controls for a fan that is mounted on the dashboard, heated driver's seat, steering wheel and side mirrors, LED lighting for the cabin and cargo areas, and exterior rear auxiliary strobe lighting. There is a control for switching the vehicle between two-wheel drive (2WD) and four-wheel drive (4WD) to accommodate handling in various weather conditions. Additional cabin area controls operate the radio, power windows, hazard lights, heating and air conditioning. A small monitor, mounted above



The rear and cargo areas are accessible through roll-up shutter doors. The cargo area has one shutter door on each side of the vehicle. The area contains two levels of shelving with six rectangular sections.

Many of the sections feature rollers along the bottom for sliding equipment from one side to the other. A drop-down cover is attached to one of the sections on the driver's side providing a second working tray for mail handling.



A larger compartment aligned with netting is located in the rear of the vehicle. This compartment

*(continued on page 45)*

enrolled in SilverScript, they will continue to use their current identification card through the NALC HBP to get their prescriptions filled.

I believe that SilverScript is an excellent offering for our eligible members and an opportunity for those enrolled in Medicare to acquire additional savings.

We know that this is a change in the administration of your retiree prescription drug plan, and you may have many questions. Please know that we are diligently working to make this change as seamless as possible and to provide you with a positive experience. If you have any questions, please contact us.

**By the time this article reaches you, Open Season** may be nearing a close, or possibly already have closed. If you are a current member and choose to stay with us, I would like to thank you for your dedication. Your commitment is appreciated more than we can say. If you are a new member who has enrolled or may be considering us as an option, then I also say thank you for adding us to your list and giving us the chance to stand out. Together, let's make 2024 an even healthier year.

In closing, I would like to take this time to wish you and your families a joyous holiday season and a happy new year.

## MDD-TR updates (continued)

*(Continued from page 39)*

also functions as a large sliding tray. When the bottom handle of the compartment is lifted, the carrier can slide the entire section out through the rear door. This area also is accessible from either side of the vehicle by unhooking the attached netting. Testing of the C250 is being conducted Nov. 6, 2023, through Feb. 16, 2024.

### MDD Software Version 7.80

Also in October, the Postal Service shared the latest update to the MDD-TR, release 7.80. The update includes several enhancements that will affect city carriers.

One enhancement to the MDD-TR is related to Certified Mail processed into the Delivery Point Sequence (DPS) automated mail. In my October column, I discussed a notification received from USPS detailing its plan to conduct a pilot test using the MDD-TR to communicate with carriers when they have Certified Mail in their DPS. During the pilot program, the MDD-TR notified carriers as they approached a Certified Mail delivery point using its GPS capabilities. The device also tracked the total number of Certified Mail pieces and delivery attempts the carrier made throughout the day then the option to conduct a Certified Mail review was

presented to the carrier at the end of the tour. Through software update 7.80, the Certified Mail test features have now been implemented on all MDD-TR devices nationally. For more details regarding the pilot test, please see my October column.

Another feature of Release 7.80 is a popup reminder for carriers to enter their vehicle return mileage before ending their tour for the day. As a carrier breaks the geofence of the delivery unit when returning from the street, a reminder will display, "Please remember to enter Ending Mileage for the day." If the ending mileage is not input, when the carrier attempts to enter an "End Tour" the scanner will display the message, "Ending Mileage has not been reported. Press Enter to proceed." After pressing enter, the scanner will redirect the carrier back to the Ending Mileage entry screen. The MDD-TR will not accept an "End Tour" clock ring for the carrier until a vehicle return mileage is submitted.

**In closing, I want to remind carriers to be mindful of safety hazards on the street when loading and unloading from the rear of the vehicle.**

My staff and I will continue to monitor these initiatives and provide updates to the membership. Be sure to read my article each month and visit [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) for the latest information.