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United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

November 19, 2025

The Honorable David Steiner
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, D.C., 20260

Dear Postmaster General Steiner,

We are writing regarding the tragic death of Nicholas Acker, a constituent and U.S. Air Force veteran, at the United States Postal Service (USPS) Detroit Network Distribution Center (NDC) in Allen Park, Michigan and the larger safety concerns that this incident brings to light. No workplace related injuries or fatalities should ever be acceptable inside of a Postal Service facility. Every worker is entitled to safe working conditions, and the Postal Service must take every step possible to prevent a tragedy like this from occurring again. As members of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, our committee has jurisdiction over the USPS.

On Saturday, November 8, around 12:20 p.m., Mr. Acker, a maintenance mechanic at the NDC, was found dead inside a mail processing machine. He was last seen between 4 and 6 a.m., six to eight hours before his body was found and emergency responders were contacted. At some point on Saturday morning, he came into contact with a mail processing machine and died. NDC employees and management did not know Mr. Acker was missing until his personal items were seen in the facility after his shift had ended and employees and management realized that he had not clocked out. It was not until this time that NDC equipment was shut off and employees and management began searching for him.

We are deeply concerned about Mr. Acker's death and the length of time it took to both determine he was missing and locate his body after the accident. This incident also raises broader questions about USPS policies regarding routine practices and workplace safety within USPS facilities. We ask that you please respond to the following questions by Friday, December 12, 2025:

1. Please provide a comprehensive timeline of what occurred at the Allen Park NDC on Saturday, November 8, 2025, including:
 - a. When did Mr. Acker's fatal accident occur inside the facility? What time is his estimated time of death?
 - b. When did NDC management identify that Mr. Acker was missing?
 - c. When did NDC management shut down the facility?
 - d. When was a search for Mr. Acker conducted?
 - e. When was Mr. Acker discovered by facility employees?
 - f. When was facility management alerted that Mr. Acker was discovered? When were local authorities including the Allen Park Police Department and Fire Department contacted?
2. What activity or task was Mr. Acker performing when the accident occurred?
 - a. Is this activity or task typically assigned to a mechanic?
 - b. Is this activity or task typically performed alone?
 - c. Does this activity or task require an employee to turn off processing machinery, including conveyor systems?
 - d. On November 8, 2025, did management or an employee instruct Mr. Acker or any other employee to disregard any safety policies?
 - e. Has management ever instructed an employee at the Allen Park NDC to perform tasks like maintenance or mail searches while processing machines are operating?
3. What is USPS's policy for conducting a mail search on processing machines?
 - a. Does the policy specify that processing machines are to be operating or not operating during such a search?
 - b. Was that policy modified in any way—written or orally—at this facility?
 - c. Was that policy followed at this facility?
4. What is USPS's policy for performing maintenance on processing machines?
 - a. Does the policy specify that processing machines are to be operating or not operating during such maintenance?
 - b. Was that policy modified in any way—written or orally—at this facility?
 - c. Was that policy followed at this facility?
5. Mr. Acker's accident occurred during Tour One, but he was not discovered until six to eight hours later during Tour Two.
 - a. What procedures, if any, are in place to account for an employee before, during, and at the conclusion of their tour?

- b. What procedures, if any, are in place to identify when an employee fails to clock out of their tour?
- 6. What is the name of the machine in which Mr. Acker's death occurred? Was this machine operating at the time of the accident?
- 7. Does the Allen Park NDC have surveillance footage inside the facility? If so, was Mr. Acker captured on footage during any point of his Tour One shift on November 7 and 8?
- 8. Has the Allen Park facility management or USPS received any written or verbal safety grievances or complaints from employees regarding this processing facility since January 1, 2025?
 - a. If so, please provide a copy of each written grievance.
 - b. What has USPS and facility management done to address the grievance(s) and rectify any safety issues?
- 9. What entity is currently conducting the internal investigation into the death of Mr. Acker?
 - a. What other entities or agencies are involved in this investigation?
 - b. How will USPS ensure that this investigation is conducted in an independent and impartial manner?
 - c. What policies does USPS have in place to conduct investigations into accidents, including fatalities that occur inside of its processing facilities?
- 10. Does USPS commit to fully cooperate with the investigation that is being conducted by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)?
- 11. Does USPS permit unions to engage in fact finding regarding accidents or incidents?
 - a. Does USPS permit local union representatives to interview their colleagues on site?
 - b. Does USPS commit to allow the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) to investigate this accident free from interference?
- 12. Please provide all applicable USPS safety policies, manuals, and procedures at processing facilities.
 - a. Did employees at the Allen Park facility receive training on these policies?
 - b. Did Mr. Acker receive training on these policies?
- 13. Please provide all applicable USPS policies, manuals and procedures on the appropriate ways to conduct a "mail search" and maintenance on processing machines.
 - a. Were employees at the Allen Park facility trained on these policies?

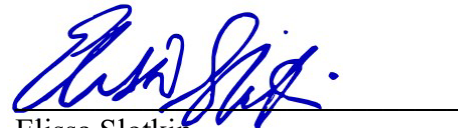
- b. Was Mr. Acker trained on these policies?
14. How many fatalities have occurred inside USPS processing facilities in the last 15 years?
15. How many work-related injuries have occurred inside USPS processing facilities in the last five years?
- a. Please provide a copy of any internal USPS safety reviews of facilities where a serious injury or fatality has occurred.

Since you became Postmaster General earlier this year, you have underscored that safety is your top priority and stated that USPS has “a lot of goals, but none are more important than your safety.” We intend to work with your team to identify the cause of this accident and work collaboratively to ensure we prevent another future tragedy. Every Postal Service employee should know they will be able to return home safe at the end of a workday serving the American public.

Sincerely,



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
On Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs



Elissa Slotkin
United States Senator