

Management Instruction

NTSN Guidelines for PS-10 Electronics Technician Positions

This management instruction contains guidelines for managing PS-10 electronics technician (ET) positions assigned to the National Technical Support Network (NTSN) directed by the Maintenance Technical Support Center (MTSC). In this management instruction, PS-10 ETs are referred to as "NTSN technicians." NTSN technicians are the first level of national technical support through the MTSC HelpDesk. These guidelines apply to the MTSC, area offices (AOs), local offices, and NTSN technicians.

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Definitions

The following definitions are key to understanding the principles and methodology used in this instruction.

- AO — area office
- ET — electronics technician
- MBTF — mean time between failures
- MMO — maintenance management order
- MSS — maintenance selection system
- MTSC — Maintenance Technical Support Center
- MWO — modification work order
- NTSN — National Technical Support Network
- OMSS — organization management staffing system
- PER — promotion eligibility register
- SMO — software modification order
- Field Office — any processing and distribution office requiring NTSN support
- Local Office — an office administratively responsible for NTSN technicians

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Background

The complexity of USPS equipment and systems created the need to increase the level of technical expertise available to field offices. The NTSN technician position fills this need.

General Policy

NTSN Technician Assignment

NTSN technicians positions are assigned to postal facilities that are best able to logistically support the NTSN. NTSN positions are not counted against the authorized complement of local offices.

Goals and Functions

The NTSN technician's primary function is to provide emergency technical support to reduce the time needed to repair postal equipment. Local offices must understand that NTSN technicians may be unable to complete locally assigned daily routines or work when called upon to provide emergency technical support.

Secondary support is as follows:

- Increasing the mean time between failure (MTBF) of postal equipment.
- Contributing to USPS corporate goals of improving customer satisfaction, strengthening employee and USPS effectiveness, and improving financial performance.

Reporting Relationship

NTSN technicians are part of the NTSN under the MTSC direction. Functionally, NTSN technicians report to the NTSN team leader at the MTSC. Administratively, NTSN technicians report to their local maintenance manager. The manager of Maintenance Support at the AO coordinates NTSN technician work through the NTSN team leader.

Staffing

Criteria

Authorization of NTSN technician positions is based upon a demonstrated need to support field requirements. Major factors of consideration are the operational need and the inventory of automation, mechanization, and telecommunications equipment. The MTSC and the AO evaluate the need to add new positions and fill vacant positions.

Procedure

All requests to add, revert, abolish, or fill NTSN technician positions should be submitted through the manager of Maintenance Support at the AO to the manager of the MTSC for evaluation. The MTSC authorization is based on the documented rationale for the positions and existing NTSN support capabilities. If a new position is authorized, the MTSC initiates the appropriate action to authorize the position on the organization management staffing system (OMSS). The local office then establishes and maintains an NTSN PS-10 ET promotion eligibility register (PER).

Schedule

The MTSC determines work schedules for NTSN technicians. These schedules are consistent with the provision of the Agreement between the United States Postal Service and the American Postal Workers' Union, AFL-CIO.

Previously Existing PS-10 ET Positions

Employees who were in the ET positions at the time Management Instruction AS-620-87-10 was issued on August 28, 1987, but who are not part of the NTSN continue at that level. Incumbents remain in their positions and perform the duties associated with those positions. If equipment requiring PS-10 ET skills is deleted from a facility's inventory, employees previously assigned to that equipment are reassigned to duties requiring PS-9 ET skills. Those employees can retain their PS-10 ET positions if they can perform assigned duties after appropriate training.

Selection

Promotion Eligibility Register (PER)

NTSN technician positions are filled from a PER established through the maintenance selection system (MSS). If a PS-10 ET PER does not exist in an office where a position is authorized, the PER must be established. Ranking on the PER must be established on the basis of best qualified according to applicable provisions of Article 38, Maintenance Craft, of the Agreement between the United States Postal Service and the American Postal Workers' Union, AFL-CIO. A representative of the MTSC manager participates in and chairs the review panel of the MSS.

Qualifications

Employees on the PS-10 ET PER must meet all qualifications for that position as defined in the Qualification Standard for PS-10 ET and must be willing to travel frequently.

Local Office

The local office initiates appropriate selection, posting, and promotion actions to fill NTSN technician positions.

Responsibilities

Maintenance Technical Support Center (MTSC)

The MTSC focuses the efforts of the NTSN to reflect corporate priorities. The MTSC ensures national coverage of technical support by the NTSN to reduce the time needed to repair postal equipment. The MTSC provides emergency technical support through a team consisting of the MTSC HelpDesk, NTSN Equipment Specialists, and NTSN technicians.

- The MTSC HelpDesk provides field offices with a single point of contact for resolving field problems. The MTSC HelpDesk is the interface between field offices and NTSN technicians.
- The NTSN Equipment Specialists provide problem management, ensure the proper escalation of emergency technical support, and give feedback to the maintenance community.
- The NTSN technicians provide emergency technical support over the phone or by traveling on-site.

Procedures for obtaining NTSN support are in the current maintenance management orders (MMOs) entitled “Procedures for Obtaining Maintenance Support from the National Technical Support Network” and “Procedures for Obtaining Specialized Support from the National Technical Support Network.”

The MTSC schedules NTSN technicians for training. The MTSC also provides NTSN technicians with pagers, tools, test equipment, and other necessary items.

Area Office

The AO identifies work within its area that requires NTSN resources and coordinates with the NTSN team leader to accomplish this work.

Local Office

The local office conducts the administrative and corrective actions for NTSN technicians. These actions are performed according to the Agreement between the United States Postal Service and the American Postal Workers' Union, AFL-CIO, and according to postal regulations and local practices.

The NTSN is national in scope, and local office actions can affect the ability of the NTSN to accomplish its mission. It is imperative that the local office receive approval from the MTSC and the AO before taking any action, including all administrative actions such as temporary tour changes, personnel actions, and grievance responses.

The local office provides a work-space of at least 100 square feet in a quiet area and also a location for storing and securing capital property and documentation. For the work-space, the local office also provides a desk or work table, a chair, and a telephone with two outside lines. One of these telephone lines must roll over to a number at the local office that is staffed 24 hours a day. The local office should also ensure telephone access to the Postal Service Intranet, the internet, and national electronic bulletin boards. Where practical, the local office provides transportation for local travel.

NTSN Technician

The primary responsibility of NTSN technicians is to reduce the time needed to repair postal equipment by providing emergency technical expertise by telephone or on-site assistance. First and foremost, NTSN technicians will respond to calls from the MTSC HelpDesk. NTSN technicians are empowered to use their best judgment to complete assigned jobs when providing emergency technical support.

NTSN technicians help field technicians and local technicians enhance their knowledge and skills. NTSN technicians assist field sites and their local site with implementation of MMOs, modification work orders (MWOs), software modification orders (SMOs), etc. NTSN technicians also assist with maintenance reviews, maintenance evaluations, and job training seminars.

NTSN technicians must travel frequently and often on short notice, and they must keep the maintenance manager informed of their location and hours when on travel or at their local site. NTSN technicians must inform the local office of their travel before departure. NTSN technicians must observe all Postal Service and local office rules and guidelines, especially those concerning safety.

Pay, Time, and Attendance

The local office, following local practices and procedures, administers pay, time, and attendance.

Funding

The MTSC provides funding for travel, training, and workhours.

Workhours

Local offices transfer NTSN workhours to the MTSC. The local office may transfer regular workhours, overtime workhours, and out-of-schedule workhours. It is not possible to transfer penalty overtime workhours and leave. MTSC authorizes penalty overtime only for the repair of mail processing equipment that is impacting operations and customer service.