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PRC Issues Another Advisory Opinion

In its third advisory opinion in less than a year, the Postal Regulatory Commission was less than convinced that the Postal Service has sufficiently considered its most recent change to service standards.

Issued June 9, concluding Docket N2022-1, *Retail Ground and Parcel Select Ground Service Standard Changes, 2022*, the PRC's 87-page opinion acknowledged the potential benefits that could be derived from the planned changes, but also found those benefits were based on questionably sound assumptions and inadequate evaluation of circumstances.

Findings

The commission's opinion included "several key findings":

"First, the Commission finds that there are immediate benefits from reducing the number of times ... pieces are handled during processing. However, the Commission is concerned that this proposal may result in an increased need for manual processing and staff availability for facilities already failing to meet operating plans. This could lead to disruptions in processing and transportation operations and cost increases.

"Second, the Commission finds that the projected transportation efficiencies – reduced reliance on air transportation and a more efficient surface transportation network – are not evident in the near term. The Postal Service expects them to materialize over time, provided the proposed changes capture some of the demand for shipping of medium-speed, low-price, large packages via ground transportation. The Postal Service is unable to predict when these efficiencies might materialize. The Commission notes that the calculated transportation cost changes are based on numerous assumptions, several of which might be unrealistic.

"Third, the Commission finds that the planned changes have the potential for meeting market demand and enhancing service to customers sending larger packages. However, the Commission identifies several areas of concern relating to the market research conducted by the Postal Service and used to support its assertions. Specifically, the Commission notes the lack of research targeted to current customers of the products at issue.

"Based on these findings, the Commission provides the following recommendations to the Postal Service for consideration before implementing its plan. The Postal Service should:

- Design a timeline, which includes all intended incremental changes to the processing network operations and how each would contribute to the eventual, more efficient, shape-based processing network envisioned in its 10-year plan;
- Design a plan to monitor all implications of each such incremental network change, in order to learn from previous changes and fine-tune subsequent changes;
- Conduct more robust research into the market segment that the upgraded ... service standards would attract, to gain a better idea of this unknown profile in order to ensure that continued provision of low prices for potentially high-cost shipping of new volumes does not negatively impact contribution for RG and PSG products.

Limitations

In issuing its opinion, the PRC was clear that the USPS is not required to abide by it or accept any recommendations.

"In general, decisions regarding the Postal Service's Competitive products – products that have private competitors in the marketplace – are left to the reasonable business judgment of the Governors of the Postal Service. RG and PSG are Competitive products, and the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) limited the Commission's oversight role for these types of products. ... However, 39 USC § 3661(b) requires the Postal Service to request an Advisory Opinion from the Commission prior to implementing a change in the nature of postal services that will generally affect service on a nationwide or substantially nationwide basis. The Commission's Advisory Opinion is nonbinding, and the Commission does not have the authority to enforce its advice regarding the Postal Service's proposed changes to service standards."

As in its two previous advisory opinion requests, the Postal Service offered optimistic statements about the benefits that will result from its proposals, largely based on favorable assumptions and its internally-developed analyses and projections. If history is a guide, the questions and cautions from the commission or anyone else – which PMG Louis DeJoy dismisses as "noise" – will not deter the USPS from the headlong implementation of its plans. Whether the risks of unquestioning execution of the PMG's 10-year Plan will be offset by actual results remains to be seen.

USPS Agrees to Test Paper

In a June 17 *Industry Alert*, the USPS announced that, given the ongoing paper supply issues, it would work with mail producers to test alternative paper types:

“Alternative paper may be tested and approved for use by Postal engineering to meet machinability requirements for specific formats. Exceptions to use approved paper for specific commercial mailings will be considered on a case by case basis. Exception requests for mailings must be sent to and approved by the Pricing and Classification Service Center: PCSC@usps.gov. ...”

Detailed instructions were posted on *PostalPro* (right). A subsequent email from the PCSC will require further information from the mailer on an “information sheet” (below).

WG 188 Restart Test Request Information – include with the samples

Company name:
 Contact name:
 Contact phone number:
 Contact email:
 Paper name:
 Paper stock:
 Description of mailpiece to be tested:
 Disposition of samples:
 Dispose of samples: YES or NO
 If no, return to:

As of this date, two papers are listed as approved:

Mailpiece Type	Min. Thickness Req.	DMM Ref.	Type of Paper	Mailpiece Size	Paper Thickness	Matte/Gloss	Date of Test	Test Results	Comments
Card Type Letter	0.009"	201.1.1.1a	Mohawk Smooth Cover	6" x 8.5"	0.008"	Matte	3/11/2022	Pieces fed. No jams. Pieces exhibited wear and tear.	One-time exception available. Individual exceptions OK if configuration is identical and parties (MSP/Mail Owner) accept damage possibility.
Card Type Letter	0.009"	201.1.1.1a	Chorusart GlossCover	6" x 11"	80 Pound	Gloss	4/11/2022	Pieces fed. No jams. Pieces exhibited wear and tear.	One-time exception available. Individual exceptions OK if configuration is identical and parties (MSP/Mail Owner) accept damage possibility.

Process to request testing:

Note: Testing will not be conducted for any paper that is 10 pounds below the current requirement for any format.

- Send an email to request testing
 - Send to PCSC@usps.gov, copy Juan.Tosado@usps.gov.
 - Subject line: Work Group 188 Restart Test.
 - Indicate that you would like to have samples tested – provide a brief description
 - Mailpiece type
 - Paper to be tested
- You will receive an email from the PCSC indicating the assigned case number. Include the email with the samples being sent. An example of the email you will receive is in the “Sample Email” tab.
- As indicated in the email, the following is required:
 - Sample requirements
 - Minimum 100 pieces.
 - Must be addressed, barcoded and have an indicia (basically, finished mail pieces).
 - Twenty 8-1/2 x 11 sheet samples of paper to be tested for a lab test.
 - Other information
 - Provide the name and stock of paper to be tested.
 - Provide a description of the type of mailpiece being tested (i.e. – card type piece, basic folded self-mailer, etc)
 - Indicate the disposition of the samples once testing is complete. If you would like the samples returned, provide an address.
 - Send samples to

Attn: Chris Stratton
 Work Group 188 Restart Test – Case # _____
 USPS Engineering
 8403 Lee Highway
 Merrifield VA 22082-8101
- After shipping the samples, provide the tracking number used on the shipment of the samples, by replying to the email you received from the USPS indicating the case number.
- See the “Information Sheet” tab for formatted information to accompany the samples. It can be copied and pasted in to Microsoft Word to complete.

USPS Announces Leadership Changes

In a June 13 memo, PMG Louis DeJoy rearranged the leadership of the mail processing and logistics functions.

The title and responsibilities of Executive VP Isaac Cronkhite were changed to delete logistics, with that function being moved under newly-designated EVP and Chief Logistics Officer Kelly Abney.

In turn, VP Logistics Robert Cintron was moved from Cronkhite’s organization to Abney’s, while Peter Routsolias, VP for Transportation Strategy, was moved from the organization of Jacqueline Krage Strako, EVP and Chief Commerce and Business Solutions Officer, into the new Logistics group.

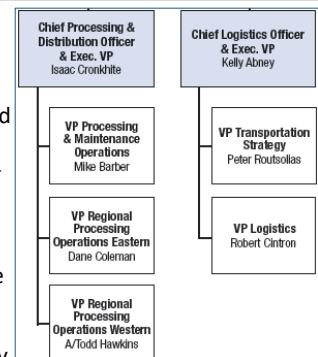
DeJoy’s announcement stated that EVP Cronkhite, now the Chief Processing and Distribution Officer

“... will be responsible for setting the strategy and operating plans for all processing and distribution operations, processing facilities, and the distribution network across the country. He and his leadership team will manage operations within the four walls of our processing facilities.”

Concurrently, Abney

“will be responsible for leading the strategic design of a world-class transportation network and developing cost and service-enhancing processes to enable optimization and execution through our plants and delivery operations. This new organization will lead the redesign of the surface transportation network, reduce air transport, improve carrier management, and deploy a state-of-the-art logistics platform.”

Cronkhite has years of experience in a variety of senior USPS executive positions while Abney was hired only two years ago. However, Abney has a history with DeJoy, having worked with him at New Breed Logistics and XPO Logistics, and so may have DeJoy’s confidence in his new assignment.



Union Group Seeking Details About Amazon NSA

Though largely unnoticeable from the official docket information, the Postal Regulatory Commission is dealing with an effort to gather details of the negotiated service agreement between Amazon and the Postal Service.

Seeking access

In a June 6 order in docket MC2021-115 (joined with docket CP2021-117), the PRC offered some background on the matter at hand:

“On May 12, 2022, [the Strategic Organizing Center (SOC)] filed a motion requesting access to the unredacted versions of the negotiated service agreement (NSA) currently in effect between the Postal Service and Amazon, and of the supporting Governor’s Decision. Upon information and belief, SOC identifies Shipping Services Priority Mail & First-Class Package Service Contract 200 (Contract 200), filed as Appendix B to the Postal Service’s request that the Commission add the contract to the competitive product list in Docket No. CP2021-117, as the relevant NSA. SOC requests access to Contract 200 as well as the supporting Governor’s Decision for its counsel so that SOC may investigate and initiate a complaint before the Commission pursuant to 39 USC § 3662.

“On May 18, 2022, the Postal Service filed a response in opposition to the Motion and urges the Commission to deny the Motion with prejudice. On May 19, 2022, the Package Shippers Association (PSA) also filed a response in opposition, requesting that the Commission deny the Motion.”

However, the commission concluded otherwise, stating:

“... For the reasons discussed below, the Commission denies the Motion without prejudice to SOC refiling a request for access to non-public materials in the appropriate docket(s) at least 7 calendar days after filing of a joint statement by SOC and the Postal Service. The Commission holds Docket Nos. MC2021-115 and CP2021-117 in abeyance pending the filing of a joint statement by SOC and the Postal Service within 60 days of the date of issuance of this Order, after SOC’s counsel meet and confer with the Postal Service’s counsel in a good faith effort to narrow or resolve disputed issues and clarify the parties’ positions on any issues they cannot resolve.”

The Strategic Organizing Center is a coalition of four labor groups: the Service Employees International Union, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Communications Workers of America, and United Farmworkers of America. The group’s position on the matter, as explained by the PRC:

“SOC requests access to unredacted versions of Contract 200 and the supporting Governor’s Decision for its counsel for the purpose of “aiding the initiation of a proceeding before the Commission”. Specifically, SOC seeks access to these documents so that its counsel may investigate and initiate a complaint before the Commission ... in which it would allege that in its performance of Contract 200, the Postal Service is: (1) giving undue preference to the counterparty to the contract, in violation of [statute]; (2) causing delays to the delivery of equivalent service categories of “important letter mail,” in violation of [statute]; and (3) is undermining “effective and regular postal services to rural areas,” in violation of [statute].

“SOC states it has preliminary evidence that the Postal Service prioritizes Amazon packages over every other kind of mail, that the Postal Service does not seek recourse for physical damage caused by Amazon deliveries to the Postal Service’s facilities, and that Amazon may cancel its use of a particular post office without giving meaningful notice. This suggests, according to SOC, that the Postal Service’s NSA with Amazon likely includes

terms that violate [statute]. SOC therefore seeks access to the unredacted versions of Contract 200 and the supporting Governor’s Decision to assess whether there are valid grounds for filing a complaint before the Commission.”

The PRC summarized the USPS position in response:

“The Postal Service argues that SOC is attempting to circumvent well-established channels and safeguards for gaining access to non-public materials protected under [statute] Instead, the Postal Service argues, SOC is attempting to engage in some sort of pre-lawsuit discovery on ‘a fishing expedition’ for potential collateral litigation.

“In addition, the Postal Service argues that granting the Motion would have a chilling effect on mailers’ willingness to contract with the Postal Service if any party could simply gain access to mailers’ confidential business information under the guise of gathering evidence to aid the initiation of a proceeding before the Commission. ...

“Finally, the Postal Service argues that none of the public or redacted terms in the materials at issue have any bearing on the service-related allegations in the Motion. Specifically, the redacted content in Contract 200 includes the “name, address, signature block, and other information that could identify the customer[,] the negotiated price structure and the terms directly related to implementation of the price structure.” The redacted content in the Governor’s Decision includes “the costs authorizing Domestic Competitive contracts[] and the analysis of those costs.” The Postal Service argues that SOC thus fails to show how the materials sought are relevant to the proposed proceeding in accordance with [PRC regulations].”

Sorting it out

In its analysis of the opposing motions, the commission described the circumstances that would allow the disclosure of otherwise non-public information, specifically noting that its rules require the party seeking access to detail what it wants disclosed and how that would be relevant to its case. The PRC could not find anything in the contract or Governors’ Decision that would support the SOC’s claims, apparently warranting that the USPS motion to dismiss be granted.

However, the commission noted, it added rules in 2018 that would “allow a person to seek access for the purpose of aiding the initiation of a proceeding before the Commission” and that the SOC request “appears to be the first instance [since 2018] in which the movant seeks access to non-public information” under that rule, thus arguing against the Postal Service’s motion to dismiss.

Summing it up, recognizing that the SOC has not established that the contract will shed light on its claims, the PRC denied SOC’s request “without prejudice to SOC refiling a request for access to non-public materials ... at least 7 calendar days after filing of a joint statement by SOC and the Postal Service.” (PRC rules require the two sides to meet in an effort to resolve any potential complaint before a formal proceeding is initiated.) In effect, SOC has been given a re-do.

Suspicions among mailers and assertions by postal employees about preferential treatment for Amazon items are not new but those claims have never been proven. Therefore, this somewhat obscure case could have significant ramifications should the SOC get any traction in finding evidence – in the contract or elsewhere – to substantiate its allegations.

New Types of International Postal Addresses—And Why It Matters to US Mailers

All postal addresses are a code defining a physical location where mail can be delivered. There are many different types in one country – building addresses, post office boxes, military, etc. – and many variations in different countries. New types of postal addresses – mobile phone numbers, postal IDs, Pick-Up-Drop-Off (PUDO) points and multi-carrier parcel lockers – are stretching the definition of postal addresses and raising questions and problems for mailers.

When there is no physical location as with a mobile number or an ID, a database links the information to a location. Depending on the country, the recipient may choose to have the item delivered to a location, pick it up or, in the case of letters, have them scanned and sent electronically. Use of mobile phone numbers as a postal address is spreading, particularly but not exclusively in sub-Saharan Africa. Personal Postal IDs are used in a few countries. In these addresses, the “address line” is a number or a combination of letters and numbers (an alpha-numeric).

PUDOs allow for delivery of mail to a location that accepts and sends packages, and sometimes groceries and letters, to and from multiple individuals, holding items for pick up. They may be located in an existing business, such as a convenience store or a gas station. Multi-carrier parcel lockers are clusters where packages can put in a locker with the recipient given a code to open the locker. These are more popular in Europe and some Asian countries than in the US. Both of these types may use a street address that is not that of the individual receiving the package.

All of these new types of addresses raise practical problems and potential legal concerns for US mailers from design of online forms and database structures to export compliance. Large numbers of potential customers or donors may ultimately use these types of addresses; they are currently used in Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Collecting, storing, and verifying

Online forms often require certain fields to be completed, sometimes in particular ways. While reasonable to prevent nonsensical information, this can cause problems when the address is not an anticipated type. What we call Address Line 1 hasn't usually contained numbers without words or letters until the use of mobile phone numbers and postal IDs. The same problem exists if an organization's database has logic checks that reject all numeric entries for the fields that make up Address Line 1. (These problems also apply to other situations. For example, Germany's Deutsche Post does not use a street address line for large organizations or government agencies that have a unique postal code assigned to them.)

Since these new types of addresses are used more frequently in developing countries, address verification is less possible than in many more developed countries. Postal address databases may not be available to the public, other postal services, or to address hygiene companies. Since the use of different forms of addressing is often not widely announced, it is difficult to determine whether they are indeed valid addresses in a particular country.

Know Your Customer

Banks and other financial institutions are very familiar with Know Your Customer (KYC) requirements. Other organizations may need to maintain similar information to meet

export requirements or to prove due diligence in meeting US embargoes on trade with particular entities, either individuals or organizations.

The home address of an individual or the registered address of an organization is considered part of KYC information. Addresses that are not a physical location (mobile number or postal ID) or are not directly related to recipients (PUDO or parcel lockers) may violate KYC or other US legal requirements for particular customer information. Whether mobile numbers, postal IDs, PUDOs, and parcel locker addresses meet your particular requirements is a legal issue deserving consideration before problems occur.

Privacy laws

There is awareness and discussion around the privacy issues in the countries that are using telephone numbers as postal addresses. That is not, however, the issue for *mailers*.

Each country makes the laws and regulations that govern that country, its citizens, its residents, and those who do business in that country. Mailing into a country is doing business in that country. We must follow US laws and regulations as US mailers. When mailing to another country, we also must comply with its laws governing inbound mail. That's more complicated in reality than these simple sentences, with over 200 mail destinations with their own laws and regulations.

As applied to privacy laws, addresses and phone numbers are usually part of the information covered. Using them often requires permission from the “owner” of that address or phone number. (Specifics vary in different countries and territories.) Organizations normally have policies for data collection and storage that take into account the requirements of laws where they do business. So, to bring this all together in regard to phone numbers as addresses for mailers, phone numbers are generally no different than a home address.

USPS export compliance

The USPS tests for specific information as part of its export compliance checks and to meet the requirements of outbound EAD for mail to countries requiring inbound EAD regulations. To date, these have been limited. It remains unclear how thorough these checks may be in the future. Obviously, the recipient's name must be provided. Postal code and province are dependent on whether the destination requires them. If the destination does require them, the USPS says there are (or will be) compliance checks with formats.

Some of these checks verify address information, presumably against an unidentified source of accurate, up-to-date, and regularly updated information. (I do not know of any such source, including the UPU and private enterprises.) If the USPS expands these checks to the address line, it's very unclear whether mobile phone numbers or personal postal IDs will meet the tests.

Poverty is decreasing and demand for consumer goods is increasing in developing countries. With the expansion of cross-border trade in consumer goods continues to expand, it's worthwhile to be open to new and different addresses. It's time to recognize that not all addresses look like ours.

*This article was produced by Merry Law, Mailers Hub's expert consultant on international mail.
Merry may be reached at MLaw@WorldVu.com.*

Playing His Own Game – Commentary

For the past two years, we've been watching as Postmaster General Louis DeJoy has been implementing his Plan to "fix" the Postal Service.

Coming from a private sector trucking business and bringing strong political connections – but no experience in the public sector let alone in the mailing business – DeJoy has steam-rolled over anyone questioning his Plan or methods. Any suggestion that charging more for slower service was not a good way to retain mail volume was brushed aside as whining and "noise." As a result, ratepayers will soon be paying over 13% higher rates than a year ago, all while enjoying service that – despite the spin of postal publicists – is deliberately slower than when DeJoy took office.

Home turf

What DeJoy did accomplish that his predecessors could not was passage of the Postal Reform Act of 2022 that eliminated the onerous "prefunding" obligation. DeJoy had political ties that, coupled with the influence of the postal unions he'd co-opted, facilitated partisan alignment to pass the legislation. As a political operative, DeJoy played on familiar turf and was successful.

Now comes another engagement on familiar ground, the reworking of the postal processing and logistics networks, that is an even greater and far more complex challenge. Unlike what he had to do to play politics, if DeJoy is to win this round he'll have to make many more people bend to his will and do what he needs them to do.

Ever since he's been in his job, DeJoy has been tuning the executive ranks to where the functions are organized, and the leadership is populated, so that The Plan can be executed as he wants it to be. This is clearly illustrated by how the HQ org chart has changed since mid-2020.

Now, having bulled his way through price hikes and service changes, he's tackling operations and logistics – moving stuff – that's his personal forte.

Moving parts

In this next campaign, DeJoy has little to worry about in his executive ranks.

On the operations side – "inside the four walls" as he puts it – he has Isaac Cronkhite, an experienced postal executive who understands data and processes as well as anyone, and who can use the information he gathers to inform decisions about what needs to be done, when, and how.

On the logistics side, DeJoy has postal newcomer but long-time colleague Kelly Abney, largely unknown to the postal community, but presumably a trusted logistician who can build DeJoy's network as we wants it built.

Beneath the HQ executives and their staffs are the top tiers of field leadership – the regional VPs over processing and the area and division leaders for logistics. Farther along are their staffs, and the managers of the individual plants. Lastly are the people who actually do the work – not only the hundreds of thousands of USPS line supervisors and craft employees, but thousands of contractors and their employees.

If history is any guide, DeJoy's challenges will not be at the upper levels. Plans will be developed and instructions will be issued that mesh perfectly with The Plan, and the PR folks will produce a stream of messages about how well everything is being executed to yield a "world class" network when finished.

Rather, DeJoy's challenge lies at the other end of the chain. As orders get repeated and changes get implemented, there's an inevitable loss of "precision" (a DeJoy word) as variability in circumstances takes effect. Everyone doesn't do things the same way and equally well, and conditions can arise that inhibit the notion of doing everything the same way everywhere. As the USPS Office of Inspector General has previously noted, field managers and supervisors often lack training, don't know how to use data-driven management tools, or simply don't follow standard operating procedures. That human factor can't be managed from HQ.

Of course, the key to DeJoy's success is the workforce that's going to do the work to implement the plans his executives will have developed. Though he's made decisions to make union executives happy, and though those leaders can influence their memberships, postal craft workers have seen PMGs – and other executives and managers – come and go with little impact on their own lives. Moreover, craft employees know they're not held to any performance standards and are safe from being fired or laid off. What's left is "discretionary effort," the individual's choice about how much effort will be put into the job. ("Will I sweep the mail one more time or just go on my scheduled break?") What's in DeJoy's Plan is of little interest at the end of the chain.

Meanwhile

Not to be overlooked amidst all the disruptive realignment of processing facilities, relocating of people and equipment, and changes to transportations schedules and routes is the need to keep moving the mail, presumably in accordance with published standards. And that "mail" isn't just the letters and flats composing the market-dominant classes, it's also the packages in the competitive products.

DeJoy may give lip service to concerns about retaining market-dominant mail, but he's not only very interested in packages, he's predicated a major part of his Plan – and future USPS revenue – around growing the package business. Despite his optimistic perspective, carving out more of the shipping business "pie" means beating very capable competitors – like FedEx and UPS – at what they do very well already. And beating them can't be simply offering a lower price; package shippers are responsive to their customers' needs for prompt service – in reality, not in press releases.

All in all, embarking on a complete overhaul of the USPS processing and logistics networks may be worthwhile in principle. Doing that while trying to execute all the steps correctly, getting all the people to do what's necessary, and maintaining any sort of service (especially during "peak") is something else. Though DeJoy will be playing on home turf for all of this, whether that means he can pull it all off is by no means assured; we'll have to wait and see.

USPS NOTICE OF INTENT

POSTAL SERVICE

Notice of Intent To Prepare a Supplement to the Next Generation Delivery Vehicles Acquisitions Final Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Postal Service.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: On January 7, 2022, the Postal Service published a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), its implementing regulations, and the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for its Next Generation Delivery Vehicle (NGDV) Acquisitions. On February 23, 2022, the Postal Service issued its Record of Decision, determining that it would implement the NGDV FEIS's Preferred Alternative to purchase and deploy over a ten-year period 50,000 to 165,000 purpose-built, right-hand drive NGDV consisting of a mix of internal combustion engine (ICE) and battery electric vehicle (BEV) powertrains, with at least ten percent BEVs. On March 24, 2022, in accordance with that decision, the Postal Service placed an order for 50,000 NGDV, of which 10,019 are BEV. The Postal Service now announces its intention to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to address the three considerations that have developed since the NGDV FEIS and Record of Decision.

DATES: Comments should be received no later than July 25, 2022. The Postal Service will also publish a Notice of Availability to announce the availability of the Draft SEIS and solicit comments on the Draft SEIS during a second 45-day public comment period.

ADDRESSES: Interested parties may direct comments and questions to: Mr. Davon Collins, Environmental Counsel, United States Postal Service, 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Office 6606, Washington, DC 20260-6201, or at NEPA@usps.gov. Note that comments sent by mail may be subject to delay due to federal security screening. Faxed comments are not accepted. All submitted comments and attachments are part of the public record and subject to disclosure. Do not enclose any material in your comments that you consider to be confidential or inappropriate for public disclosure. The Postal Service will also conduct a virtual public hearing on Tuesday, July 19, 2022, at 7 p.m. (ET). Registration information will be made available 15 days prior to the hearing date at the following website:

<http://uspsngdveis.com/>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The three considerations that have developed since the NGDV FEIS and Record of Decision are as follows:

First, in response to potential delivery network refinements and route optimization efforts being considered for the postal delivery network, the SEIS would analyze the potential impacts to the delivery fleet from such changes, including whether the changed route length and characteristics warrant an increase in the minimum number of BEV NGDVs to be procured under the Proposed Action set forth in the FEIS.

Second, in response to its need to accelerate the replacement of aged and high-maintenance Long Life Vehicles (LLV) and Flexible Fuel Vehicles (FFV) in furtherance of its Universal Service Obligation, the Postal Service intends to analyze the potential impacts of replacing the remainder of its LLV/FFV fleet with a combination of NGDV and Commercial Off-the-Shelf (COTS) vehicles. The Postal Service anticipates that the SEIS Proposed Action will propose acquiring up to 37,000 left-hand drive COTS with ICE and BEV powertrains, which would be deployed on routes with fewer than 21 curb-line delivery points.

Third, as the NGDV FEIS only assessed the environmental impacts from a replacement of the Postal Service's LLV and FFVs, the SEIS would also assess the potential impacts from replacing other aged and high-maintenance non-LLV/FFV postal delivery vehicles. This analysis would include consideration of the acquisition of: (1) up to 60,000 right-hand drive non-NGDV purpose-built vehicles with ICE and BEV powertrains to place on routes currently utilizing personally owned vehicles (POVs), for rural route growth, and for routes that require a vehicle less than 111 inches tall; and (2) the acquisition of up to 26,000 left-hand drive COTS with ICE and BEV powertrains to replace existing COTS delivery vehicles that will reach the end of their service lives within the next ten years.

The Postal Service actively seeks input from the public, interested persons, organizations, and Federal, state, and regional agencies to identify environmental concerns and potential alternatives to be addressed in the SEIS and will accept public comments for a 45-day period, concluding on July 25, 2022. With respect to recommendations regarding potential alternatives, the Postal Service requests that comments be as specific as possible regarding vehicle type, model and manufacturer so that the Postal Service might fully consider the alternative in terms of pricing, operational capabilities, and market availability.

References

1. U.S. Postal Service, Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for Purchase of Next Generation Delivery Vehicles, [86 FR 12715](#) (Mar. 4, 2021).
2. U.S. Postal Service, Notice of Availability of Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Purchase of Next Generation Delivery Vehicle, [86 FR 47662](#) (Aug. 26, 2021).
3. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Notice of Availability of EIS No. 20210129, Draft, USPS, DC, Next Generation Delivery Vehicle Acquisitions, [86 FR 49531](#) (Sept. 3, 2021).
4. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Notice of Availability of EIS No. 20220001, Final, USPS, DC, Next Generation Delivery Vehicle Acquisitions, [87 FR 964](#) (Jan. 7, 2022).
5. U.S. Postal Service, Notice of Availability of Final Environmental Impact Statement for Purchase of Next Generation Delivery Vehicles, [87 FR 994](#) (Jan. 7, 2022).
6. U.S. Postal Service, Notice of Availability of Record of Decision, [87 FR 14588](#) (Mar. 15, 2022).

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USPS FINAL RULE: New Mailing Standards for Domestic Mailing Services Products

POSTAL SERVICE

39 CFR Part 111

New Mailing Standards for Domestic Mailing Services Products

AGENCY: Postal Service.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: On April 6, 2022, the Postal Service (USPS) filed a notice of mailing services price adjustments with the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC), effective July 10, 2022. This final rule contains the revisions to *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service, Domestic Mail Manual (DMM)* to implement the changes coincident with the price adjustments and other minor DMM changes.

DATES: Effective July 10, 2022.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Doriane Harley at (202) 268-2537 or Dale Kennedy at (202) 268-6592.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On May 27, 2022, the PRC favorably reviewed the price adjustments proposed by the Postal Service. The price adjustments, and DMM revisions are scheduled to become effective on July 10, 2022. Final prices are available under Docket No. R2022-1 (Order No. 6188) on the Postal Regulatory Commission's website at www.prc.gov.

Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM) Uniform Rate: The Postal Service is offering to replace the current pricing tiers with a uniform per-piece price for QBRM letters up to and including 3.5 ounces. The offering would also allow high-volume business reply mail customers to use the QBRM product.

Direct Container Discount for Marketing Mail High Density Plus and Saturation Flats: The Postal Service is offering discounts for USPS Marketing Mail Saturation Flats (including EDDM, not EDDM Retail) and High Density Plus Flats in 5-digit (direct) containers (pallets, sacks, and tubs). Currently, the Postal Service offers discounts for Carrier Route Flats and High Density Flats on 5-digit (direct) pallets; these discounts would now extend to Carrier Route Flats and High Density Flats in 5-digit (direct) sacks and tubs.

Round-Trip Mailings With One Optical Disc--Nonautomation Presort: The Postal Service is extending the updated pricing structure for nonautomation machinable letters to Round-Trip Mailings with One Optical Disc. Letter-shaped mailpieces up to 1 ounce will be able to avail themselves of nonautomation machinable letter AADC and Mixed AADC prices instead of being limited to one nonautomation presort price. Similarly, flat-shaped mailings up to 2 ounces will be able to avail themselves to nonautomation machinable letter AADC and Mixed AADC prices instead of one nonautomation presort price.

Priority Mail Insurance: The Postal Service will make the amount of insurance included with retail and commercial priced Priority Mail limited to a maximum liability of \$100.00. In addition, the Postal Service will include the \$100.00 of insurance with Priority Mail Return service pieces.

The Postal Service did not receive any formal comments.

We will publish an appropriate amendment to 39 CFR part 111 to reflect these changes.

List of Subjects in 39 CFR Part 111

Administrative practice and procedure, Postal Service.

PART 111 – [AMENDED]

1. The authority citation for 39 CFR part 111 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 5 USC 552(a); 13 USC 301-307; 18 USC 1692-1737; 39 USC 101, 401, 403, 404, 414, 416, 3001-3011, 3201-3219, 3403-3406, 3621, 3622, 3626, 3632, 3633, and 5001.

2. Revise the *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service, Domestic Mail Manual (DMM)* to read as follows:

Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service, Domestic Mail Manual (DMM)

233 Prices and Eligibility

4.0 Additional Eligibility Standards for Nonautomation Machinable First-Class Mail

4.3 Price Application – Nonautomation Machinable--Letters

Nonautomation machinable letters are subject to AADC and mixed AADC prices only (including Round-Trip Mailings with One Optical Disc).

243 Prices and Eligibility

6.0 Additional Eligibility Standards for Enhanced Carrier Route USPS Marketing Mail Letters and Flats

6.3 Basic Price Enhanced Carrier Route Standards

[Revise the title and text of 6.3.4; to read as follows:]

6.3.4 Basic Carrier Route Bundles on a 5-Digit/Direct Container (Basic-CR Bundles/Container) Price Eligibility – Flats

The Basic-CR Bundles/Container discount applies to each piece in a carrier route bundle of 10 or more pieces that are palletized under 705.8.0 on a 5-digit carrier route or 5-digit scheme carrier route pallet entered at an Origin (None), DNDC, DSCF, or DDU entry or palletized under 705.14.0 on a FSS scheme pallet (in a FSS Scheme bundle), or in a Carrier Route sack or tub under 245.9.3 and entered at an Origin (None), DNDC, DSCF, or DDU.

6.5 High Density and High Density Plus (Enhanced Carrier Route) Standards--Flats

[Revise the title and text of 6.5.3; to read as follows:]

6.5.3 High Density Carrier Route Bundles on a 5-Digit/Direct Container (High Density-CR Bundles/Container Discount Eligibility) – Flats

High Density-CR Bundles/Container discount applies to 125 or more High Density-eligible pieces that are palletized under 705.8.0 on a 5-digit carrier route, 5-digit carrier routes, or 5-digit scheme carrier route pallet entered at an Origin (None), DNDC, DSCF, or DDU entry, or palletized under 705.14.0 on a FSS scheme pallet (in a FSS scheme bundle), or in a Carrier Route sack or tub under 245.9.3 and entered at an Origin (None), DNDC, DSCF, or DDU.

[Add new section 6.5.4; to read as follows:]

6.5.4 High Density Plus Carrier Route Bundles on a 5-Digit/Direct Container (High Density Plus-CR Bundles/Container Discount Eligibility) – Flats

High Density Plus-CR Bundles/Container discount applies to 300 or more High Density Plus eligible pieces that are palletized under 705.8.0 on a 5-digit carrier route, 5-digit carrier routes, or 5-digit scheme carrier route pallet entered at an Origin (None), DNDC, DSCF, or DDU entry, or palletized under 705.14.0 on a FSS scheme pallet (in a FSS scheme bundle) or in a Carrier Route sack or tub under 245.9.3 and entered at an Origin (None), DNDC, DSCF, or DDU.

6.7 Saturation Enhanced Carrier Route Standards – Flats

USPS FINAL RULE: New Mailing Standards for Domestic Mailing Services Products

[Add new section 6.7.3; to read as follows:]

6.7.3 Saturation-(including EDDM) Carrier Route Bundles on a 5-digit/Direct Container (Saturation-CR Bundles/Container Discount Eligibility) – Flats
Saturation-CR Bundles/Container discount applies to at least 90% or more of the active residential addresses or 75% or more of the total number of active possible delivery addresses on each carrier route that are palletized under 705.8.0 on a 5-digit carrier route, 5-digit carrier routes, or 5-digit scheme carrier route pallet entered at the origin (None), DNDC, DSCF, or DDU entry, or palletized under 705.14.0 on a FSS scheme pallet (in a FSS scheme bundle), or in a Carrier Route sack or tub under 245.9.3 and entered at an Origin (None), DNDC, DSCF, or DDU.

500 Additional Services

503 Extra Services

1.0 Basic Standards for All Extra Services

1.4 Eligibility for Extra Services

Exhibit 1.4.1 Eligibility – Domestic Mail

Extra service	Eligible mail	Additional combined extra services
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Insurance	*****	*****
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Insurance Restricted Delivery	*****	*****
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[Revise the “Note:” under “Insurance” to read as follows:]

Note: Priority Mail Express includes \$100.00 of insurance and Priority Mail includes \$100.00 of insurance; see 503.4.0.

4.0 Insured Mail

4.2 Insurance Coverage – Priority Mail

[Revise the introductory text of 4.2 to read as follows:]

Priority Mail pieces, including Priority Mail Return service, are insured against loss, damage, or missing contents, up to a maximum of \$100.00, subject to the following:

[Revise the text of item a to read as follows:]

a. Insurance coverage is provided against loss, damage, or missing contents and is limited to a maximum liability of \$100.00 when the Priority Mail pieces bear an Intelligent Mail package barcode (IMpb) or USPS retail tracking barcode (see 4.3.4) and the mailer pays retail or commercial prices.

[Delete item b in its entirety and renumber items c through f as b through e, respectively.]

[Revise the text of item d (as renumbered) to read as follows:]

d. Insurance coverage under 4.2a is not provided for Priority Mail pieces mailed as Priority Mail Open and Distribute or Premium Forwarding Service.

505 Return Services

1.0 Business Reply Mail (BRM)

1.6 Additional Standards for Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM)

1.6.1 Description

[Revise the text of 1.6.1a, through 1.6.1e; to read as follows:]

a. Meets all the Business Reply Mail (BRM) standards in 1.3 through 1.8.

b. Has postage and per piece charges deducted from a BRM advance deposit account.

c. Is a letter weighing 3.5 ounces or less or card that is prepared to meet the automation compatibility requirements in 201.3.0.

d. Is authorized to mail at QBRM prices and fees under 1.6.2. During the authorization process, a proper ZIP+4 code is assigned to the mailer (under 1.6.2) for each QBRM to be returned under the system (one for card priced pieces and one for letter-size pieces weighing up to and including 3.5 ounces).

e. Bears the proper ZIP+4 code, assigned by USPS, in the address of each piece. The ZIP+4 codes assigned for this program must be used only on the organization’s appropriate QBRM pieces. * * *

3.0 USPS Returns Service

3.1 Basic Standards

3.1.3 Postage and Prices

[Revise item c1 to read as follows:]

1. Insurance is available for USPS Returns service (see 503.4). Insurance is not included with the postage for Priority Mail Return service (see 503.4.2). Insurance for First-Class Package Return service and Ground Return service, and additional insurance for Priority Mail Return service is available to the account holder for a fee on packages that have the applicable STC embedded into the IMpb on the authentic USPS label with valid postage, and for which the account holder has provided electronic data that supports the value of the merchandise (see 503.4.3.1a). Only the account holder of record may file a claim (see 609). Except for Priority Mail Return service, mailers mailing a USPS Returns service package may obtain insurance at their own expense at the time of mailing by presenting an authentic USPS Returns label with valid postage affixed to the package at a Post Office retail unit to obtain the service.

Notice 123 (Price List)

[Revise prices as applicable.]

Joshua J. Hofer, Attorney, Ethics and Legal Compliance.

Miscellany

Competitive rates approved

In a June 8 order, the Postal Regulatory Commission approved the competitive product price and classification changes announced by the Postal Service in a May 6 filing. The USPS announcement made no changes to prices except as related to cubic pricing for Priority Rate Commercial Base and Parcel Select Ground. As the agency intended, the new rates will be effective July 10, 2022.

Rule withdrawn

In a notice published in the June 13 issue of the *Federal Register*, the Postal Service withdrew a proposed rule it had issued last March about the selvage on parcels sent in soft packaging. Significant opposition arose among shippers of such items primarily because existing packaging equipment would not allow compliance with the proposal.

POSTAL SERVICE

39 CFR Part 111

Parcels Prepared in Soft Packaging

AGENCY: Postal Service.

ACTION: Proposed rule; withdrawal.

SUMMARY: The Postal Service is withdrawing the proposed rule that would have added new subsections to establish parcel selvage standards and to clarify how to measure parcels prepared in soft packaging.

DATES: The proposed rule published on March 24, 2022 (87 FR 16700), is withdrawn effective [immediately or June 13, 2022].

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Karen F. Key at (202) 268-7492 or Garry Rodriguez at (202) 268-7281.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In the proposed rule that was published in the *Federal Register* on March 24, 2022, the Postal Service proposed to implement a two-inch maximum of selvage on the length and the width of a parcel prepared in soft packaging and to provide a clarification defining how to measure parcels prepared in soft packaging to generally determine the length, width, and height of the mailpiece.

In consideration of concerns expressed by members of the mailing community during the proposed rule comment period, the Postal Service has elected to withdraw the proposed rule.

Joshua J. Hofer, Attorney, Ethics & Legal Compliance.

International price changes

In the June 15 issue of the *Federal Register*, the USPS published its final rule for changes to international mail prices. The agency had filed the changes with the Postal Regulatory Commission last April 6, and the PRC approved the changes in an order issued May 27. The revised prices, that will be effective July 10, were shown in the final rule and will be reflected in a revision to Notice 123 – *Price List*.

Mail service ending

According to a June 15 report in *Stars & Stripes*, the Department of Defense has directed the Military Postal Service Agency to end mail service for “military retirees, Red Cross workers, and some government employees living and working overseas” as of August 24, impacting all APO/FPO destinations worldwide. The article noted that the change would force current customers to “rely on their host nation postal services for their mail delivery,” which may impact their shipments of medications and other important mail.

Update on list changes

In a conference call on June 17, the USPS provided an update about the migration of the L006 sites to the L007 list and implications for mail prep:

- All of the remaining sites on L006 will be moved to L007 with the release of the July 1 Label List changes.
- For the July 1 posting, L006 will still be shown but all sites will be showing in delete mode. L006 will be retired with the September 1 List update.
- The L007 list will shift the entry/drop point for flats to the SCF location due to the limitation of not having a separate mail directions distinction.
- With the movement of all of the remaining L006 sites to L007, FSS Prep will no longer be required. All flats will be prepped according to the 5 Digit/CR RT sortation required for L007. (The FSS Prep in the DMM will be removed sometime in August/September as it is no longer needed.)
- We are following the standard Label List Change process for announcing the changes (with the July 1 Label List), then implementing the changes (with the August 1 Label List), and then they become required.

Test ended

In a brief June 6 notice to the Postal Regulatory Commission, the Postal Service stated it would let its marketing test of Commercial PO Box Redirect Service expire as scheduled on June 8. The USPS provided no further information or explanation for its decision.

As described in the Postal Service’s May 8, 2020, filing, the service was targeted at remittance mailers who were consolidating their incoming PO Box addresses, and would allow them to forward the associated mail to another PO Box address. Participants were required to use Caller Service at the new address and, because the forwarding would be done during mail processing, the service would redirect only automation First-Class Mail letter pieces; non-automation pieces would not be redirected. How these conditions, and the overall decrease in the use of remittance mail, contributed to the Postal Service’s decision was not disclosed.

Separate reporting

In a June 3 filing with the Postal Regulatory Commission, the Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers urged that service performance for nonprofit mail be reported separately from that of commercial mail. The Alliance’s proposal was part of its comments in Docket RM2022-7, *Periodic Reporting of Service Performance*, in which the PRC is examining the scope of the service performance data that should be required of the Postal Service. As the Alliance stated:

“... Prompt, reliable, and affordable service is vital to our members – charities and other nonprofit organizations – who rely on the mail to raise funds, build membership, distribute publications, and disseminate information. And transparent, quality data depicting whether the Postal Service is meeting its service standards enables our members to determine the value they are receiving for the postal services that they pay for. ... The Alliance believes that the quality of reported service data would be significantly improved if the Postal Service were to report nonprofit mail separately from commercial mail in the classes nonprofit mailers use: Marketing Mail, Periodicals, and First Class. ...”

All the Official Stuff

Federal Register

Postal Service

NOTICES

June 9: Product Change: Parcel Select Negotiated Service Agreement, 35250.

June 10: Environmental Impact Statements; Availability, etc.: Intent to Prepare a Supplement to the Next Generation Delivery Vehicles Acquisitions, 35581-35582; Meetings; Sunshine Act, 35582.

June 13: Privacy Act; Systems of Records [2], 35800-35803, 35803-35804.

June 15: Product Change: Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement [2], 36157, 36157.

June 16: Product Change: Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement [2], 36347, 36347.

PROPOSED RULES

June 13: Parcels Prepared in Soft Packaging, 35701.

FINAL RULES

June 13: New Mailing Standards for Domestic Mailing Services Products; 35658-35660.

June 15: International Mailing Services: Price Changes, 36061-36063.

Postal Regulatory Commission

NOTICES

June 8: New Postal Products, 34912-34913.

June 10: New Postal Products, 35580; Inbound Competitive Multi-Service Agreements with Foreign Postal Operators, 35580-35581.

June 13: New Postal Products, 35800.

June 14: New Postal Products, 36014.

June 16: New Postal Products, 36346-36347.

PROPOSED RULES

[None].

FINAL RULES

[None].

DMM Advisory

June 14: UPDATE 240: International Mail Service Updates Related to COVID-19.

Postal Bulletin (PB 22600, June 16)

- Effective **July 10**, DMM 503, 507, 604, 703, 705, and the Index are revised to reflect the Postal Service's decision to discontinue the Special Handling – Fragile extra service. The decision to discontinue

Special Handling – Fragile will not affect live animals tendered to the Postal Service for shipping as provided in Publication 52, *Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail*. In addition, the Postal Service is revising the applicable Quick Service Guides (QSG), Notice 123 — *Price List*, and Publication 52 to reflect this standard. The Postal Service believes this standard, which is effective July 10, 2022, will provide customers with a more efficient mailing experience.

- The Postal Service is revising IMM 534 and in the Individual Country Listings for Belarus and Russia to update information based on recent US government sanctions that regard export, re-export, or transfer (in country) of “luxury goods” to Belarus and Russia and for which the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) requires a license and an Internal Transaction Number (ITN). For purposes of the new license requirements, a “luxury good” refers to any item that is identified under 15 CFR 746.10(a)(1) of the Export Administration Regulations (EAR). Although these revisions will be published in the next edition of the online IMM, the standards are effective immediately.
- Effective **June 16**, the IMM Individual Country Listing for Australia is revised to note an additional phytosanitary certificate requirement for certain plant products to safeguard against the entry, establishment, and spread of the khapra beetle (*Trogoderma granarium*) in Australia.
- Effective **June 16**, the IMM Individual Country Listing for Kazakhstan is revised to reflect a revision to the observation regarding limits for the duty-free import of goods.
- Effective **June 16**, Publication 52, *Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail* (Pub 52), is revised to incorporate new requirements for mailers to separate, into identifiable containers, all hazardous material (HAZMAT) requiring hazardous marks or labels from other mail when tendering to the Postal Service. The Postal Service is also adopting related standard operating procedures for the Postal Service's acceptance, dispatch, and mail processing personnel to maintain the integrity of HAZMAT separation. Additionally, the Postal Service is revising Pub 52 to reflect new Postal Service requirements that pre-owned, damaged, or defective electronic devices (such as cell phones, laptops, tablets, cameras, etc.) packaged with or containing lithium batteries be mailed only via surface transportation (USPS Retail Ground, Parcel Select, Parcel Return Service, or Ground Return Service) and bear specified markings. Although the Postal Service will not publish these revisions in Publication 52 until a future edition, the standards are effective immediately.

USPS Industry Alerts

June 8, 2022

Parcels Prepared in Soft Packaging Federal Register Notice Withdrawn

The Postal Service is withdrawing the *Federal Register* proposed rule, *Parcels Prepared in Soft Packaging*, that would have added new subsections in the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) to establish parcel selva standards and to clarify how to measure parcels prepared in soft packaging. In the proposed rule that was published in the *Federal Register* (87 FR 16700-16702) on March 24, 2022, the Postal Service proposed to implement a two-inch maximum of selva on the length and the width of a parcel prepared in soft packaging and to provide a clarification defining how to measure parcels prepared in soft packaging to generally determine the length, width, and height of the mailpiece. In consideration of concerns expressed by members of the mailing community during the proposed rule comment period, the Postal Service has elected to withdraw the proposed rule.

June 9, 2022

Webinar: Back to Basics Series – Cass Cycle O and Addressing

The popular Back to Basics Series hosted by the PCC Advisory Education Programming Sub-Committee will be hosting weekly sessions starting on Friday, July 1 and ending on Friday, July 29, 2022 all starting at 2 PM ET. The first session features Michelle Evans, USPS, Address Management Support Specialist. Michelle will review CASS Cycle O and Address Updates. Should you have questions on this upcoming event, please send Cathy Scocco an email at: cathy.m.scocco@usps.gov. To dial in, please use the Zoom dial in information below. Note: you do NOT need a Zoom account to join the meeting. The preferred choice is to Join with Computer Audio. If you use Zoom Call Me, please click the dropdown from the Call ME tab to select INT EXT for the best results. [Join Zoom Meeting](#) Phone one-tap: US: +15033361236,,1607580129#,,, *034330# or +1952-229-5070,,1607580129#,,, *034330#

Meeting URL: <https://usps.zoomgov.com/j/1607580129?pwd=MTNCa056ODhCQnMwNkU2N0RPVXdtZ09> Meeting ID: 160 758 0129; Passcode: 034330

Join by Telephone: For higher quality, dial a number based on your current location. Dial: US: +1 503 336 1236 or +1 952-229-5070 or +1 650-581-7094 or +1 855-860-4313 or +1 678 317 3330. Meeting ID: 160 758 0129; Passcode: 034330. [International numbers](#).

Join from an H.323/SIP room system: H.323: sip.zoomgov.com. Meeting ID: 160 758 0129; Passcode: 034330

SIP: 1607580129@sjp.zoomgov.com; Passcode: 034330

June 9, 2022

PRC Favorably Reviews New Postal Service Prices for 2022

The Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) favorably reviewed new competitive and market dominant prices that will take effect July 10, 2022. ... The final orders on the price adjustments and related mail classification changes can be found here: <https://www.prc.gov/dockets/document/121877> and here: https://www.prc.gov/docs/122/122019/Order_6195.pdf and the price change tables are available on the Postal Service's Postal Explorer website at <https://pe.usps.com/PriceChange/Index>.

June 10, 2022 [as revised June 17, 2022]

[JULY-PRICE CHANGE-2022] Release Notes

On Sunday, June 26, 2022, in preparation for July-Price Change-2022 (effective July 10, 2022) – the United States Postal Service has scheduled software updates for the following Commercial Systems: PostalOne System Release 55.0.0.0* (Deployment Date : 6/26/2022); Package Platform Release 5.0.0.0 (Deployment Date : 6/23/2022); Program Registration Release 23.4.0.0 (Deployment Date : 6/26/2022). * NOTE: PostalOne System Release 55.0.0.0 includes a "new" REQUIRED Mail.dat client. After implementation activities conclude, users should download Mail.dat client 55.0.0.0_PROD from the Business Customer Gateway (BCG) using the following path: Mailing Services → Electronic Data Exchange [Go to Service] → Mail.dat download (Windows 32-bit, Windows 64-bit or Solaris). Please reference the July-Price-Change-2022 Release Notes posted to PostalPro @ <https://postalpro.usps.com/june262022releasenotes>. All Business Service Administrators (BSAs) should alert their impacted stakeholders to ensure user awareness. During normal business hours (8:00 AM CT – 5:00 PM CT), please direct any inquiries or concerns regarding software updates in preparation for July Price Change 2022 to the Mailing and Shipping Solutions Center (MSSC) via eMail [MSSCAdmin@usps.gov] or telephone [(877) 672-0007].

June 14, 2022

Organizational Changes

... Effective immediately, Isaac Cronkhite will serve as the Chief Processing and Distribution Officer. He will be responsible for setting the strategy and operating plans for all processing and distribution operations, processing facilities, and the distribution network across the country. The following roles will continue to report to the Chief Processing and Distribution Officer: Vice President, Processing and Maintenance Operations, Mike Barber; Acting Vice President, Regional Processing, (Western) Todd Hawkins; Vice President, Regional Processing (Eastern) Dane Coleman; Executive Director, Performance/Field Operations Support, Don Flak; Director, Network Transformation, Jim Herrmann. Kelly Abney will serve as the Chief Logistics Officer, a newly created position on the Executive Leadership team. He will be responsible for leading the strategic design of a world-class transportation network and developing cost and service-enhancing processes to enable optimization and execution through our plants and delivery operations. This new organization will lead the redesign of the surface transportation network, reduce air transport, improve carrier management, and deploy a state-of-the-art logistics platform. The following roles will report to the new Chief Logistics Officer's organization: Vice President, Transportation Strategy, Pete Routolias; Vice President, Logistics, Robert Cintron.

June 15, 2022

Webinar: Back to Basics Series – Mailpiece Design

The popular Back to Basics Series hosted by the PCC Advisory Education Programming Sub-Committee will be hosting weekly sessions starting on Friday, July 1 and ending on Friday, July 29, 2022 all starting at 2 PM ET. Our second session features Patricia Farrall, USPS, Mailpiece Design Analyst II. Patricia will be going over Mailpiece Design. A great presentation for anyone new at your place of business. Come join us on Friday, July 8, at 2 PM EST. Should you have questions on this upcoming event, please send Cathy Scocco an email at: cathy.m.scocco@usps.gov ...

June 17, 2022

Business Customer Gateway eDoc Training Series – Postal Wizard and Intelligent Mail for Small Business Tool

The Postal Service will host bi-weekly webinars on utilizing the Business Customer Gateway (BCG) for electronic documentation (eDoc) and postage statement submission. The topics will alternate between using the Postal Wizard (PW) and Intelligent Mail for Small Business Tool (IMsb Tool) applications. Learn how to eliminate hard copy postage statements and submit Full-Service mail! Join us for the next session on Business Customer Gateway and Postal Wizard on Tuesday, June 21, 2022, at 1:00 PM EST. Bi-Weekly BCG PW and IMsb Tool training sessions: Meeting URL: <https://usps.zoomgov.com/j/1615857192?pwd=dGVJTjYNEFib2FGNmpjL2luZ2ZlZ09>; Meeting ID: 161 585 7192; Password: 903345; If requested, enter your name and email address; Enter meeting password: 903345. Join Audio by the options below: Call using Internet Audio; Dial: 1-855-860-4313, 1-678-317-3330 or 1-952-229-5070 & follow prompts.

June 17, 2022

Paper Availability

In acknowledgement of the nationwide paper availability challenges, the Postal Service and mailing industry have developed a two-step process to explore the opportunity to expand paper options outside of current specifications to enable the continued production and entry of mail. **Step 1.** Alternative paper may be tested and approved for use by Postal engineering to meet machinability requirements for specific formats. **Step 2.** Exceptions to use approved paper for specific commercial mailings will be considered on a case by case basis. Exception requests for mailings must be sent to and approved by the Pricing and Classification Service Center: PCSC@usps.gov. A complete set of instructions for tests (Step 1 above) has been posted on our Postal Pro website along with the list of paper that has been approved based on Postal engineering tests to meet machinability requirements for specific formats: [Letter Mail Paper Testing Instructions | PostalPro \(usps.com\)](#).

Calendar

To register for any webinar, go to [MailersHubWebinars.com](https://www.mailershub.com/webinars)

June 21 – **Mailers Hub Webinar: Transportation Woes**

July 12-13 – Delivery Technology Advocacy Council mtg., Sussex (WI)

July 17-20 – NACUMS Educational Conference, Ft Collins (CO)

July 19 – Atlantic Area AIM Meeting

July 19 – **Mailers Hub Webinar: The US Economy; A Wild Ride**

July 26-27 – MTAC Meeting, USPS Headquarters

August 4-6 – MFSA Conference, Dallas (TX)

August 16 – Southern Area AIM Meeting

August 17-19 – America's Print Show, Columbus (OH)

August 23 – **Mailers Hub Webinar: Mitigating the Great Resignation**

August 24 – Central Area AIM Meeting

September 22 – Chicago PCC Meeting

October 20 – Atlantic Area AIM Meeting

October 25-26 – MTAC Meeting, USPS Headquarters

Special Section: DMM Advisories and USPS Industry Alerts Related to COVID-19

These service disruptions affect Priority Mail Express International (PMEI), Priority Mail International (PMI), First-Class Mail International (FCMI), First-Class Package International Service (FCPIS), International Priority Airmail (IPA), International Surface Air Lift (ISAL), and M-Bag items. Unless otherwise noted, service suspensions to a particular country do not affect delivery of military and diplomatic mail.

June 14, 2022, DMM Advisory: UPDATE 240: International Mail Service Updates Related to COVID-19

On June 7, 2022, the Postal Service received notifications from various postal operators regarding changes in international mail services due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

Denmark UPDATE: Post Danmark (PostNord Denmark) has advised that it has resumed signature on delivery for inbound items and has returned to normal operations.

New Caledonia UPDATE: OPT-NC has advised that the previously declared force majeure for international letter-post, parcel-post and EMS items has ended.

Pakistan UPDATE: Pakistan Post has advised that all government-imposed restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic have been lifted and all postal activities have returned to normal.

Togo UPDATE: The Togo Postal Corporation has advised that the measures implemented to limit the spread of COVID-19 have not yet been lifted but have been relaxed sufficiently that they no longer pose a major constraint to postal operations. As a result, the collection, processing, and delivery of inbound and outbound mail (letter-post, parcel-post and EMS items) have largely resumed as normal.

The DMM Advisory will continue to provide updates as they are received. For a full list of international service disruptions, please visit <https://about.usps.com/newsroom/service-alerts/international/welcome.htm>.

BRANN & ISAACSON
ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

The services of Brann & Isaacson are now available to provide legal advice to subscribers. The firm is the Mailers Hub recommended legal counsel for mail producers on legal issues, including tax, privacy, consumer protection, intellectual property, vendor contracts, and employment matters. As part of their subscription, Mailers Hub subscribers get an annual consultation (up to one hour) from Brann & Isaacson, and a reduced rate for additional legal assistance. The points of contact at Brann & Isaacson are: Martin I. Eisenstein; David Swetnam-Burland; Stacy O. Stitham, ssstitham@brannlaw.com; Jamie Szal, jszal@brannlaw.com. They can also be reached by phone at (207) 786-3566.

BECOME A DIRECT MAIL MASTER BY ATTENDING OUR UPCOMING WEBINAR!

Direct Mail 101: Mailing Made Easy!
Wednesday, July 20th at 11am PT/2pm ET



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