



Association for Postal Commerce

"Representing those who use or support the use of mail for Business Communication and Commerce"

"You will be able to enjoy only those postal rights you believe are worth defending."


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Postal News for January 2014

January 31, 2014

INDUSTRYALERT 2014 Saturation & High Density Standard Mail® Incentive Program Registration deadline extended to **February 7, 2014**

The 2014 Saturation & High Density Standard Mail® Incentive Program is a year-long incentive program that provides the opportunity for organizations to increase their Saturation, High Density and High Density Plus volume at decreased cost. Mailers who mailed at least six Saturation, High Density and/or High Density Plus mailings (or combination thereof) between October 1, 2012 and September 30, 2013 will be eligible for postage credit on volume that exceeds a pre-determined threshold. The program began on January 2, 2014 and will end on December 31, 2014. The registration deadline has been extended to February 7, 2014. Mailers who believe that they have met the eligibility requirements but were not notified by the USPS are encouraged to apply for participation by contacting the Program Office at: United States Postal Service Attn: Saturation & HD Mail Incentive Program Office 475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW Room 5538 Washington, DC 20260 or Email: SatHDIncentive@USPS.gov More information on the incentive is available on RIBBS at: <https://ribbs.usps.gov/mobilebarcode/saturationhighdensity.htm>

 **Consumerist:** The PRC's mission, basically, is to keep the Postal Service in line. They approve mail rate increases and they make sure the USPS follows its own rules and regulations. They also can be a recourse for customers who can't get what they need from the postal service. Chairman Ruth Goldway, the head of the Commission, sat down with Consumerist this week to explain what the PRC's role is, why some bad service keeps happening, what elements are working as intended, and how the United States Postal Service could evolve with tighter resources in an increasingly digitally-oriented world.


At the Postal Regulatory Commission:


- **Docket No. ACR2013 Initial Comments Of United Parcel Service.** We recognize that the issues currently before the Commission are limited (primarily, whether the rates in effect in FY2013 complied with the statute) and that the Commission must complete its review within a short, 90-day timeframe. As a result, while we raise several matters that are "relevant to the Commission's review," Order No. 1935 at 5, we urge the Commission to consider those matters in future proceedings, where they can be examined in greater detail. Some of those matters -- the decreased level of overall attribution and other Competitive Product costing and accounting trends -- lead us to question whether the Postal Service's Competitive Products are shouldering a fair and equitable share of total postal costs, as required by the statute....The Postal Service has improperly withheld the vast majority of Competitive Product cost and other data from public view. As a result, neither we nor other interested members of the general public can know with any degree of certainty whether Competitive Products are shouldering an equitable share of total postal costs. That undermines public credibility in the fairness of the process and, we submit, deprives the Commission


of valuable input, input of the type expected by Congress, that would aid the Commission in fulfilling its statutory responsibilities.


http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89083/FY2013_ACR_UPS_Comments.pdf


- **ACR2013 Valpak Direct Marketing Systems, Inc. and Valpak Dealers Association, Inc.** Initial Comments on The United States Postal Service FY 2013 Annual Compliance Report
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89089/APPENDIX%5B1%5D.pdf>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89089/Valpak%20Initial%20Comments.pdf>
http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89089/Valpak_Multi-year_Model_v2013_base.xls
- **ACR2013 Initial Comments of the American Catalog Mailers Association (ACMA)**
http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89090/ACMA_ACR2013_Workbook.xlsx
http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89090/ACMA_Initial_Comments_ACR2013.pdf
- **ACR2013 Comments of the Newspaper Association of America**
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89084/NAA-ACR2013-comments.pdf>
- **ACR2013 Comments of Pitney Bowes Inc.**
http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89087/PB_FY2013_ACR_Comments.pdf
- **Annual Report 10-K** "containing the information prescribed in Form 10-K of the Securities and Exchange Commission." 39 U.S.C 3654(a)(1)(B).
[http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89079/Form%2010K%20rev%20fnl%20esigs%20\(01%2031%2014\).pdf](http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89079/Form%2010K%20rev%20fnl%20esigs%20(01%2031%2014).pdf)
[http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89079/Transmittal%20Ltr%2010-K%20Rev%20\(01-31-14\).pdf](http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89079/Transmittal%20Ltr%2010-K%20Rev%20(01-31-14).pdf)

 **Environmental Leader:** A bill introduced by Reps. Jared Huffman (D-CA) and Gerry Connolly (D-VA), would authorize the US Postal Service to use energy savings performance contracts to improve the efficiency of its fleet. The bill, HR 3963, is called the Federal Leadership in Energy Efficient Transportation (FLEET) Act, The Hill reports. ESPCs allow companies, governments and other organizations to finance projects – usually infrastructure improvements – based on the expected energy savings.

 **Tri-City News:** Canada Post has announced its strategy to switch from home delivery to community mail boxes in response to concerns. On Wednesday, the Crown corporation released “guiding principals” for converting the remaining five million addresses with delivery at their door to community mailboxes over the next five years. It promises to be sensitive to the needs of seniors and disabled Canadians and will develop alternative approaches for people with mobility challenges. Canada Post will also work with community leaders and municipal planning officials to choose safe and appropriate sites.

 **Cincinnati Business Courier:** A Cincinnati company is taking on shipping giants like UPS and FedEx by offering low-cost distribution throughout Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky. Consolidated Postal Parcel Presort Service (C3PS) works in partnership with the U.S. Postal Service to keep costs low regionally. CEO Joe Ralstin tells me his company takes packages from companies, labels them, processes them and delivers them to postal locations close to the destination. Because of that, he gets a discount on shipping, which allows him to charge less than the big package delivery companies.


 **Roll Call:** A proposal by Sen. Rand Paul to allow guns in post offices is being met with skepticism by the chairman of the committee that oversees the Postal Service. The Republican from Kentucky floated his measure Wednesday as an amendment to a postal overhaul bill being debated by the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. The initial reaction from Chairman Thomas R. Carper, D-Del., was not positive, but it’s unclear how the votes will turn out. The panel’s scheduled to resume the markup next Thursday, at which point Paul plans to propose a revised version designed to address concerns about Postal Service facilities housed within other federal buildings. Generally speaking, the measure would allow individuals to carry guns in post offices when otherwise carrying the weapon would be in compliance with state and local regulations.


 **Bloomberg Businessweek:** People have many ideas about how to improve the U.S. Postal Service. One of the most intriguing was put forth this week by Senator Rand Paul, the Kentucky Republican, who is angling to run for president in 2016. At a hearing this week, Paul recommended overturning a federal law forbidding people to bring guns to the post office when they are mailing letters. It’s difficult to understand how this would help the Postal Service, which lost \$5 billion last year because of the rise of e-mail and a federal law requiring the agency to


prefund its retiree health benefits. Perhaps Paul is just trying to endear himself to gun owners who are likely to vote in the GOP presidential primary?


Mailers' Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC)


Presentations and notes from the January 15th MTAC meeting are available on the MTAC webpage on RIBBS. The documents are located in the MTAC Open Session and MTAC Membership Assembly/Focus Group Discussions section under MTAC Notes and Presentations, 2014. Thank you for your help updating the MTAC membership Roster. The roster is now available on the MTAC webpage on RIBBS in the MTAC Membership Information section. Here is the direct link: [MTAC Membership Roster \(February 2014\)](#).


 **Press Democrat:** The Postal Service's financial problems also stem from failures to innovate, modernize and compete. Nowhere is that better illustrated than with the agency's vehicle fleet. USPS owns and operates the world's largest civilian fleet: 192,000 mail delivery vehicles that are driven 4.3 million miles per day. Fueling all of those vehicles adds up to an astronomical cost for the agency: In fiscal year 2010, the fuel bill for all postal transportation totaled \$1.7 billion. Vehicle maintenance adds a staggering \$750 million cost to the agency's strained budget. The overwhelming majority of USPS vehicles (more than 141,000) are aging Grumman LLVs, the classic mail truck we started seeing every day in our neighborhoods around 1987. Most of them get less than 10 mpg and are at or near the end of their 24-year operational lifespan. Many are on their last leg — just ask your letter carrier. Stories are legion about letter carriers reporting problems with these failing clunkers only to be told to keep driving them until they break down — a shortsighted policy that has the opposite effect of saving money: Each year USPS exceeds its vehicle maintenance budget, and each year the problem gets worse.


 **Salon:** The Postal Service's largest union has harsh words for Rep. Darrell Issa, and is raising alarm over a pilot partnership with Staples, which it warns is a stalking horse for privatization — a goal the union alleges draws support or indifference from key Democrats. “I think Congress and the White House are pretty much working hand in hand,” American Postal Workers Union president Mark Dimondstein told Salon prior to Tuesday demonstrations outside Staples stores in San Francisco and San Jose, the first of what he said would be an escalating wave of protests. “There hasn't been a fight to defend the public good, and there hasn't been a real fight around good jobs.”


 **MyFoxPhoenix:** Eight people were taken into custody after postal inspectors and Phoenix Police raided an apartment complex near Interstate 17 and Cactus Thursday night. SWAT teams evacuated several residents at the complex as they executed a search warrant on one of the units. We're told it all stems from an investigation by the postal inspector on some sort of mail theft-related crime.


 **Nonprofit Quarterly:** Among the many topics that President Obama failed to touch on in his concern for creating and keeping U.S. jobs was the future of the U.S. Postal Service. In 2003, the USPS employed 729,025 “career employees,” but by January 2013, that number had dropped to 522,144, a decline of over 28 percent in one decade. Although less than 12 percent of the labor force, blacks occupy 20 percent of USPS jobs. This higher-than-expected proportion is due to the fact that the USPS has been historically less prone to racial discrimination than the private sector, and even other parts of government. As a result, the nation's failure to right the ship of the currently money-losing USPS means that blacks are statistically more likely to be laid off as the USPS retrenches than whites. For many people of color, public sector employment, especially at the Post Office, has been an important “ladder” into the middle class. But what if the nation were creative about the USPS? What if, instead of turning postal workers into dim, expendable caricatures of Cliff Clavin, the nation were to develop a different business plan with income-generating ideas that haven't been on the USPS table much, but are not unknown functions for the postal services in other nations.

 **American Banker:** A recent white paper by the U.S. Postal Service's Office of the Inspector General floated the idea of introducing postal banking services as a means of expanding financial inclusion. Not surprisingly, the banking industry has rushed to condemn the idea—which would create new competition for financial services—as sort of creeping socialism. But when one considers postal banking more carefully, the idea isn't so crazy, although it raises a number of real questions and challenges.

 **PRWeb:** The American Real Estate Investors Academy Radio Show interviews direct mail marketing expert Kathy Kennebrook. Kathy's interview is part of the Academy's Real Estate Guru Series featuring some of the best known real estate educators in America.

 **Alaska Dispatch:** Increased shipping costs and “troubling” delays due to staff shortages at post offices across the state have Alaskans irked by long lines, missing Christmas gifts, and groceries that arrive rotten and unsafe to eat, according to U.S. Sen. Mark Begich, who is demanding an immediate meeting with the nation's postmaster general to get some answers. In a letter to Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe, Begich says he's “alarmed” by the “sudden and persistent volume of complaints” his office has received from across the state related to postal delivery. Begich notes that some Alaskans have recently been told that parcel post service is no longer available and their only option is shipping by priority mail. “If this change has in fact been made, Alaskans could be facing a rate increase of over 30 percent on packages,” as well as “substantially higher grocery prices,” wrote Begich in the letter dated Thursday. *[EdNote: Dear Senator, Get used to it. The USPS wants to be an unregulated monopoly.]*

 **PR.com:** Canada Post has upgraded its online postal code finder using AddressComplete, the new search-based address service launched with address management experts, Postcode Anywhere. Providing easy access to Canada Post's property level Postal Code Address Database (PCAD), citizens in Canada can confirm shipping details by simply entering the full or partial address details in AddressComplete to obtain the properly validated address.

 **Post & Parcel:** The US Senate will continue attempts to pass an important postal reform bill out of committee next week, having failed to do so on Tuesday. A number of contentious issues delayed completion of the bill mark-up this week, including debate on proposals to raise postal rates significantly to help with the Postal Service's financial position. The Committee leaders are proposing to make a temporary surcharge – representing a three-times-inflation rate increase – on postal rates permanent and change the usual inflation-based price cap to inflation plus 1%. The bill would also look to give greater powers to the USPS board of governors to set prices from 2016, taking away powers from the Postal Regulatory Commission. *[EdNote: I wonder if we could bring back the original monopoly trust-buster, Teddy Roosevelt. There are a few people from his own party that he could hit with his big stick.]*

 **From the Federal Register:**

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| Postal Regulatory Commission | |
| PROPOSED RULES | |
| Price Cap Rules for Market Dominant Price Adjustments , | |
| 5355–5363 [2014–01669] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
| Postal Service | |
| RULES | |
| Implementation of Full-Service Intelligent Mail Requirements for Automation Prices; Correction , | |



| | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| 5286–5287 [2014–01974] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
|------------------------|--------------|

The latest issue of the PostCom Bulletin is available online. In this issue:

- Here is a summary of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs markup of the Carper/Coburn Postal Reform Act of 2013, S. 1486.

- With the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs mark-up of S. 1486, the postal bill introduced by Senators Carper and Coburn, many within the industry have come out against the bill.
- According to Wendy Smith of Publishers Clearing House, “[b]eing a large USPS customer and mail owner, Publishers Clearing House would like to share our concerns about the USPS plan to elongate the Service Standards for DSCF entered letters and flats as part of a "load leveling" effort. PCH has already cut back 2014 advertising (letter) volumes as a result of the exigent price increase and the continued threat of a loss of Saturday delivery. Combining this proposed reduction in service on the heels of a steep price increase creates a recipe for an even faster decline in mail volumes.”
- According to postal commenter Kent Smith of PostalVision 2020, “no one doubts that the Postal Service urgently needs more revenue. But few like the idea of raising rates beyond the current CPI cap. Most recognize that the Postal Service has done a reasonably good job of reducing costs, in spite of Congressional resistance, while some suggest that service performance may be suffering as a result of operational cost reductions.
- A new Postal Service Office of Inspector General white paper explores how the U.S. Postal Service could offer a suite of non-bank financial services to help the financially underserved gain more financial stability and stay connected to the emerging digital economy. The paper examines how the Postal Service could partner with banks and other organizations to develop such services, which could help banks connect with new customers. The Postal Service already provides non-bank financial services like money orders and international money transfers, and many American families could benefit if the Postal Service expanded its offerings.
- Carper-Coburn postal bill S. 1486 props-up broken USPS. Competing appeals of USPS’ upcoming rate hike. The privatization ruse. TN Congressman introduces legislation to protect consumers from postal delays. USPS ends pay freeze for nonunion employees. Give a drone an inch, and it’ll fly a mile. USPS should offer loans, bank products, agency says. Postal banking proposal sets off a firestorm. Congress should enact meaningful postal reform. Amazon patents push-shipping. News websites proliferate, stretching thin ad dollars. Don’t give the USPS a blank check to exploit its monopoly powers. Cummings urges passage of legislation. Business mailers throw monkey wrench in postal reform bill. USPS slow to cut costs, quick to raise prices.
- Announcement of postal related Federal Register Notices.
- USPS announcements to the mailing industry.
- Announcement of Domestic Mail Manual changes.
- An update from the USPS Office of Inspector General.
- Postal news from around the world.
- Postal previews.

Hey! You've not been getting the weekly PostCom Bulletin--the best postal newsletter anywhere...bar none? Send us by email your name, company, company title, postal and email address. Get a chance to see what you've been missing.



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Office of the Inspector General: "Enhancing the Value of Mail Discussion Forum Slide Presentations"

- * OE-A EVOM presentation.pptx [View](#) | [Download](#)
- * USPS OIG EVOM presentation.pptx [View](#) | [Download](#)
- * Tension January 2014 Inspector General Presentation.pdf [View](#) | [Download](#)
- * Winterberry Group EVOM presentation.pptx [View](#) | [Download](#)

- * Klaus Schulz EVOM presentation emotional connection.ppt View | Download
- * QuadGraphics - Enhancing Mail for Digital Natives.pptx View | Download
- * US Blippar EVOM pdf of slides.pdf View | Download



From the Federal Register: Price Cap Rules. The Commission is proposing rules addressing the price cap for market dominant price adjustments as part of an ongoing review. This stage of the review concerns rate reductions, rate incentives, and de minimis rate increases. The Commission invites public comment on the proposals.




DMM Advisory: January DMM Update. Postal Explorer® (pe.usps.com) is your source for up-to-date mailing standards. The Domestic Mail Manual (DMM®) is fully searchable on Postal Explorer and features fly-out menus, cross-reference links, and an extensive subject index. On January 26 we updated our mailing standards to include the following changes:


- **Physical Characteristics of Stacking Pallets.** We revised 705.8.3.1 to provide an option for mailers to stack pallets up to six tiers high. We published this information in the October 31, 2013, Postal Bulletin.
- **Implementation of Full-Service Intelligent Mail Requirements for Automation Prices.** We revised various sections of the DMM to modify eligibility requirements for mailers to qualify for automation prices. We published this information in the November 14, 2013, Postal Bulletin.
- **New Standards to Enhance Package Visibility.** We revised various sections of the DMM to require the use of Intelligent Mail® package barcodes (IMpb) on all commercial parcels, and to require the transmission of supporting electronic documentation including piece-level address or ZIP+4® Code information. We published this information in the December 5, 2013, Postal Bulletin.
- **Domestic Competitive Products Pricing and Mailing Standards Changes.** We revised various sections of the DMM to reflect changes to prices and mailing standards for Competitive Products. We published this information in the December 12, 2013, Postal Bulletin.
- **Products Mailable at Nonprofit Standard Mail Prices.** We revised 703.1.6.11 to show that for 2014, the value of a low-cost item is \$10.40 or less. We published this information in the December 12, 2013, Postal Bulletin.
- **New Extra Service Labels for Items Bearing an IMpb and New Process for Registered Mail Inquiries.** We revised 503.1.0 and 503.2.0 to update the process for customers making inquiries for uninsured (with no declared value) Registered Mail™ items and to introduce two new non-barcoded labels for Registered Mail™ and Certified Mail® items that already bear an Intelligent Mail® package barcode (IMpb). We published this information in the December 26, 2013, Postal Bulletin.
- **New Mailing Standards for Domestic Mailing Services Products.** We revised the DMM to implement the changes coincident with the price adjustments. We published this information in the December 26, 2013, Postal Bulletin.
- **Revised Standards for Shipments of Cremated Remains.** We revised 601.12.0 to require mailers to use only Priority Mail Express™ service when shipping cremated remains. We published this information in the December 26, 2013, Postal Bulletin.




Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs: Business meeting. Markup of S. 1486 (postal reform) has been scheduled for Thursday, February 6.

 The Clay County News: Senators Thomas Carper (D, Delaware) and Tom Coburn (R, Oklahoma) are proposing new legislation that would remove rate regulation from the Postal Regulatory Commission and give the United States Postal Service's own Board of Governors unlimited authority to adjust postage rates for mail within its mail monopoly. Certainly the possibility of the United States Postal Service taking over full control of setting postage rates would be an outright disaster, given the fact that the Postal Service as it is...IS a disaster as we know it today. Allowing the Board of Governors to have the power to adjust postal rates whenever they wish will make the current disaster we're all enduring far worse. If the government leaders should decide to give the USPS Board of Governors the power to adjust postage rates as they see fit, when they see fit, in an attempt to "dig out" from their financial

woes, folks we will see what IS a complete disaster and make it a fiasco! It is our responsibility to step up and ask our senators to help keep the USPS a regulated government monopoly.


 The Star-Ledger: Linger on life support, the last thing the Postal Service needs is suffocating interference from an antiquated union. Advancements improve and disrupt our lives. The Internet has killed off entire industries and given rise to others. As the digital age reinvents distribution, few industries are immune from disruption. **The Internet has dealt the Postal Service a devastating blow. It's called email.** The ability of Americans to instantly send and receive letters, postcards, documents and photos has left them with less need for our government's delivery service. Social media exacerbate the agency's dilemma. So it's little wonder the Post Office, long a classic provider of the stable government job, can't pay its bills. The average postal clerk earns \$55,314. Supervisors earn up to \$73,000. The wages and growing pension obligations are passed along in the costs of packaging and stamps. Given the vast array of modern delivery options, many of them free, the old business model cannot be justified or sustained. Consumers won't pay for it. **The Postal Service cannot become a subsidized federal jobs program.** But a union that refuses to consider alternative business models races toward extinction.

 Business Standard: Nachiket Mor, head of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s committee on financial inclusion, on Thursday said the postal bank model had been a success globally. In a report by the committee, Mor had advocated differentiated banks and a new structure for priority sector lending. A former deputy managing director of ICICI Bank, Mor is also a member of an advisory committee under former RBI governor Bimal Jalan that is vetting the applications of 25 applicants for bank licences. The committee has been mandated to communicate its suggestions to the banking regulator. While India Post has applied for a bank licence, there are differences within the government on whether the entity should be allowed to enter the sector. While the communications and information technology ministry is pushing the idea, the finance ministry is opposed to the move.


International Post Corporation

International Post Corporation: The latest issue of Market Flash, IPC's bi-weekly newsletter providing a comprehensive look at new developments emerging in international postal industry has now been posted. This edition includes a Green Special on sustainability, which gathers the latest developments in sustainability initiatives among postal operators worldwide.

- AMERICAS UPS announces fourth-quarter results ■ FedEx expands in Brazil FedEx Express invests in Canadian network EUROPE Royal Mail statement on 2013 financial performance ■ Asendia UK Ltd celebrates the New Year with a legal merger ■ bpost hires agency to look for new CEO ■ SEOshop expanded with PostNL logistics solution ■ PostNL wins Best Practice Award, to acquire Dutch storage and logistics firm ■ Itella to adjust its operations to match decreasing volumes of mail ■ DHL launches temperature-controlled China-Europe rail service ■ DHL launches new risk management solution ■ DPD/GeoPost buys remaining shares in DPD Ukraine subsidiary ■ GeoPost and Neopost roll out parcel locker network ■ Marketing mail read more than emails ■ Amazon launches Sunday deliveries in UK cities ■ E-Commerce grows 28 % in Southern Europe in 2013
- GREEN SPECIAL: AMERICAS USPS programme encourages government e-waste recycling ■ FedEx Express introduces electric vehicles in Latin America ■ UPS to save fuel by optimising 10,000 delivery routes ■ Nissan and FedEx Express test Electric Compact Cargo Vehicle ASIA PACIFIC Global logistics operators launch Green Freight Asia to cut emissions EUROPE Correos plants a new forest in Mallorca ■ Swiss Post launches new sustainability strategy ■ Swiss Post completes solar power plant in Dailens ■ New biogas vehicles for Itella mail delivery ■ Deutsche Post DHL introduces more comprehensive carbon accounting and reporting ■ CTT helps kids to discover Lisbon's biodiversity ■ CTT ranked high on Carbon Disclosure Project ■ GLS opens third eco-depot in Belgium ■ TNT launches 'green fleet' for central London

 National Association of Major Mail Users: Canada Post today released guiding principles that will govern its approach to converting the remaining five million addresses with delivery at their door to community mailbox delivery over the next five years. The Crown Corporation states a commitment to ensuring that the transition of


delivery service in Canadian communities will be handled responsibly and with respect towards customers and municipalities.


 Postal Technology International: Parcel delivery firm GeoPost, a subsidiary of La Poste group, and logistics solutions provider Neopost, have signed an agreement to create and operate a network of automated parcel lockers for the delivery and return of parcels in France. The agreement entails an initial roll out of around 1,500 lockers by 2016 and more than 3,000 lockers in the long-term to be installed by Packcity France, a company jointly-owned by Neopost and GeoPost.


INDUSTRYALERT Structured Release Schedule for 2014. Webinar: February 13, 2014 11:00 AM EST

The USPS and industry members have been discussing issues relative to the manner in which changes to labeling lists, mail direction files, zone charts, and service standards are made, as well as the timing of those changes which often pose a problem in the mailing supply chain and to the USPS. Per the request of the mailing industry, MTAC Task Team # 11 was tasked to re-open and re-evaluate the structured release cycle that was implemented in 2013. This webinar will provide an update of the MTAC Task Team #11 discussions.


Instructions for participating in the webinar appear below: **Attendee Information:** U.S./Canada
Attendee Dial-in: (888) 890-1547 Conference ID: 43108255 Attendee Direct URL:
<https://usps.webex.com/usps/onstage/g.php?t=a&d=990240314> If you cannot join using the direct link above, please use the alternate login below: Alternate URL: <https://usps.webex.com>


 Daily Iowan: Individual mailboxes may become a thing of the past, because the U.S. Postal Service is moving toward clustering mailboxes in every neighborhood in order to reduce debt. At the last Iowa City City Council meeting, the council removed a distance requirement for clustered mailboxes and discussed the effect the boxes could have. Cluster mailboxes, which group all of a neighborhood's mailboxes in one structure, were previously only allowed to be within 600 feet of any residence. The councilors removed the restriction in response to the Postal Service saying it would no longer support distance limits. Though clustered mailboxes are the norm in many newer neighborhoods nationwide, older neighborhoods will have a harder time adapting to the change.

 Eye Witness News: The South African Post Office officials have set an ultimatum for striking postal service workers to return to work by 10am on Friday or face dismissal. More than 6,000 casual employees embarked on an illegal strike countrywide this week. They are demanding full-time employment in permanent positions.


 Washington Times: The struggling U.S. Postal Service began asking customers to pay an extra 3 cents for every stamp they buy this week even as it fell short on some promised cost savings and failed to more aggressively cut spending identified by Congress as excessive. Postal workers continue to get fringe benefits that are more generous than those afforded to government workers in general. **Last week, the mail service announced that it had postponed indefinitely a plan to close mail processing centers it identified in 2011 as redundant and unnecessary.**


 **From the Federal Register:** Postal Regulatory Commission *NOTICES* Meetings; Sunshine Act , 4985 [2014-02085] [TEXT] [PDF]



 Orange County Register: Postage rates for a first-class letter rose Sunday from 46 cents to 49 cents, a 6.5 percent increase. The U.S. Postal Service says it needs to raise the rate to recoup money lost during the recession but this revenue will only put a dent in the Postal Service's larger financial problems.


 Office of the Inspector General: Filling the Gap: The Postal Service and the Financially Underserved Could the U.S. Postal Service help the nearly 70 million Americans who are cut off in some way from the mainstream financial system? We're talking about people who, because they lack ready or full access to



normal banking services, paid \$89 billion in fees and interest to alternative financial service outlets such as payday lenders and check cashers in 2012 alone. They are the financially underserved – also known as the underbanked or unbanked – and many of them are one unexpected expense away from bankruptcy or homelessness.


 Des Moines Register: The U.S. Postal Service's insistence on raising rates beyond the standard cost-of-living bump will cost Meredith Corp. an estimated \$5 million to \$6 million per year. Stephen Lacy, the Des Moines publishing giant's chairman and CEO, said Wednesday that the company planned for the rate increase, which totals 6 percent. The company is challenging the increase, which went into effect Sunday, in a lawsuit. The increase consists of a 1.7 percent jump that matches the increase in the consumer price index and a 4.3 percent emergency increase. "We built it into our budget and, obviously, believe it was the wrong decision to try to push through a rate higher than the consumer price index," Lacy said during a conference call related to Meredith's quarterly earnings report.

 The Washington Post: Opposition from business mailers to a plan to allow the U.S. Postal Service to raise postage rates in the long term threw a monkey wrench Wednesday in a Senate committee's efforts to pass legislation to rescue the financially ailing agency. Leaders of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee were scheduled to approve a wide-ranging postal reform bill. But an amendment from Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), backed by the powerful mailing industry, to strike a plan allowing higher postal rates appeared to be gaining support. The committee tabled its deliberations at midday. One of the biggest impediments to new postal revenue is a 2006 law that caps rate increases to the rate of inflation. Baldwin said the plan would give the Postal Service too much power. **"No public or quasi-public entity, especially one with monopoly power, should have near-absolute control in setting its own prices," she said. "It's wrong."**

 Rep. Elijah Cummings: Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, urged the House of Representatives to consider his bill, the Innovate to Deliver Act, to authorize the United States Postal Service to expand the services it offers, including a proposal that would generate billions of dollars of new revenue by authorizing the Postal Service to provide affordable financial products to millions of Americans currently underserved by the banking sector. "This is a win-win that we can achieve quickly and at little cost," Ranking Member Cummings said. "By authorizing the Postal Service to offer these financial services, millions of Americans could save billions of dollars on exorbitant fees and interest, while the Postal Service could obtain new revenue to improve its financial footing." 

 Calgary Herald: Densely populated urban centres in the country's largest cities will be the last to lose their door-to-door delivery service, Canada Post said Wednesday.


 Government Executive: The Senate failed on Tuesday to move forward with its revised plan to overhaul the U.S. Postal Service, delaying a committee vote after a series of potential amendments threatened to derail the bill. The most significant sticking point during the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee markup arose when lawmakers discussed how the postal bill -- introduced by Sens. Tom Carper, D-Del., and Tom Coburn, R-Okla., the respective chairman and ranking member of the committee -- would deal with postal rates in the future. While the Carper-Coburn bill would keep in place the recent emergency rate hike and allow USPS to determine its own pricing starting in 2017, Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., led the charge on behalf of several Democrats who believe the agency should retain tighter oversight of its pricing structures. Baldwin offered an amendment that would keep the rate increase -- currently being challenged in court by a coalition in the mailing industry -- but strip away the ability of the Postal Service's Board of Governors to overrule its regulatory body starting in 2017, a provision in the underlying bill. In promoting her amendment, Baldwin said "no public or quasi-public entity, especially one with a monopoly" should be able to set its own prices without strict oversight. The Postal Regulatory Commission currently provides that oversight. 


 The Hill: The Senate Homeland Security Committee cut off consideration of a bipartisan postal measure on Wednesday, after lawmakers requested changes to two amendments. The panel, in an at times spirited mark-up, considered close to a dozen amendments before calling it a day, and the committee's chairman, Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.), has yet to say when they'll pick the measure up again. During the mark-up, both Carper and the committee's top Republican, Sen. Tom Coburn (Okla.), suggested it had been a struggle to get a bill ready for mark-


up. Both postal unions and the mailing industry have said they oppose the Carper and Coburn measure as currently written.

INDUSTRY ALERT The Branded Color Mobile Technology Promotion is just around the corner. The first of the USPS 2014 Mailing Promotions begins on Saturday, February 1st. The **Branded Color Mobile Technology** promotion provides participating mailers with the opportunity to receive a 2% upfront postage discount on qualifying mailpieces that utilizes creative elements such as color and/or graphics in their mobile print technology. Interested mailers should visit the Business Customer Gateway at <http://gateway.usps.com> to register for participation. Registration will continue through the end of the promotion on Monday, March 31st. Detailed enrollment user guides are available for review at: <https://ribbs.usps.gov/mobilebarcode/general.htm> Did you miss the recent Branded Color Mobile Technology webinar that provided a description of the program requirements, information about how to participate and a short overview of the upcoming 2014 promotions? It is available for viewing now at: <https://ribbs.usps.gov/mobilebarcode/general.htm> For a full description of the Branded Color Mobile Technology Promotion visit: https://ribbs.usps.gov/mobilebarcode/documents/tech_guides/BrandedColorMobileTechnology.htm and for more information about the 2014 Promotions Calendar visit: <https://ribbs.usps.gov/mobilebarcode>. [EdNote: *Then hope to heaven you don't get burned by the barcode patent troll.*]

January 29, 2014

 The Globe and Mail: Canada Post will initially avoid densely populated urban neighbourhoods as it begins the phase out of door-to-door delivery to roughly five million Canadian homes. Facing a backlash from many urban mayors, the postal service said Wednesday that the first areas to be shifted to centralized community mail boxes will be in the suburbs.

 Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Reform: Business meeting. Markup of S. 1486. Carper-Coburn Substitute | Carper-Coburn Section-By-Section. An extemporaneous, non-verbatim, summary is being posted on this site. [EdNote: *The markup session adjourned after it was clear that a compromise on Section 301 was not possible.*] Recording of the session.

 Roll Call: **Since when does creating an unregulated monopoly with total pricing power qualify as reform?** That's the "money question" as a proposed bill, scheduled to be up for a vote on Wednesday, seeks to bail out the United States Postal Service from its systemic woes with another round of band-aids, rather than real reform. If a company were failing, unable or unwilling to stop overspending and its future was in danger, what board of directors in its right mind would pump more money into its existing leadership and structure and give them a blank check to do what they want? But that's just what this bill will do. **If this new law sees the light of day, expect many more monopolistic overreaches like the 6 percent stamp rate hike (three times the rate of inflation) that the USPS put into effect last Sunday. And remember, the Post Office has a monopoly on your mailbox, too.** But the monopoly over the mailbox is no longer enough for the USPS. Now, the Postal Service is asking Congress to give it total, unchecked, unprecedented power to charge you and all other Americans whatever it wants for its "services."

The Postal Service would like you to believe its postal monopolies don't exist. Think again....Or....Enjoy the trip. Check here for important information about S. 1486 and the monopoly-protected U.S. Postal Service



🇺🇸 Government Executive: **Unions representing U.S. Postal Service employees offered a stark rebuke** of an updated, bipartisan postal reform measure, which now includes a provision to remove USPS workers from the federal employee health care system. Sens. Tom Carper, D-Del., and Tom Coburn, R-Okla., the respective chairman and ranking member of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, introduced a substitute amendment to replace the 2013 Postal Reform Act they originally put forward in August, ahead of a committee markup scheduled for Wednesday. Despite tweaking several provisions to appease postal workers, retirees and stakeholders, **the lawmakers' latest effort was greeted by stakeholders with frustration.**


🇺🇸 BeyondChron: "*Postal Workers Launch National Campaign Against USPS Services to Staples*" Members of the American Postal Workers Union, joined by community activists, held a protest on January 28 at the Staples in San Francisco against a deal between the U.S. Postal Service and Staples to move mail services into Staples stores. The protests continued at a Staples in San Jose in the afternoon.

🇺🇸 Post & Parcel: US business mailers have warned that the postal reform bill being marked up in the US Senate today could mean "dire consequences" for US mail volumes. The Senate's Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee is due to meet this morning to shape up a proposal to rescue the cash-strapped US Postal Service, but one of the proposals from committee leaders is to significantly increase postal rates in the long-term.

The Postal Service would like you to believe its postal monopolies don't exist. Think again.

Wanna deliver mail on your own? Better have one of these in your pocket.

Check here for important information about S. 1486 and the monopoly-protected U.S. Postal Service





🇺🇸 The Ripon Advance: House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Calif.) lamented the United States Postal Service's rate increase on Monday and the delayed implementation of cost-saving strategies offered by himself and others.


🇬🇧 Post & Parcel: A new survey from the UK postal regulator has found that people in the UK are still largely reliant on the postal service, and that 87% of adults are satisfied with the nation's postal service overall. The report from Ofcom, providing an annual benchmark for its monitoring of Royal Mail among other communications industry players, stated that two thirds of UK postal users were satisfied with the value for money provided by the postal service.


🇨🇦 The Southern Gazette: The Canadian Postmasters and Assistants Association is calling on the federal government to halt the erosion of postal services and to maintain and improve these services to Canadians. In October 2013, 13 rural Group Post Offices had their hours reduced up to nine hours or more a week. Bell Island Front was reduced to 20 hours a week and Rigolet was reduced to 25 hours a week. Mid January this year, Canada Post notified CPAA it was proposing to reduce approximately one-third of the hours of postal service to another 25 rural communities serviced by Group Post Offices. They include Baine Harbour, Harbour Mille and Rushoon on the Burin Peninsula. The Marystown Post Office was recently notified its service hours were being cut back 21 for its four employees.


🇳🇪 The Herald: Postal services provider, Zimpost intends to start an insurance business this year, an official said. Currently, Zimpost is an agent of insurance companies such as NicozDiamond and Champions Insurance but was planning to "go full time" as a way of diversifying revenue streams.


 Transport Topics: FedEx Express said it will begin testing a 100% electric vehicle under real conditions in Washington, D.C.

 USGovInfo.About.com: It had to happen. Showing the effects of years of massive financial losses, many U.S. Postal Service facilities are suffering from a lack of maintenance resulting in safety and security issues, according to a federal inspector general's audit. According to a November 2013 audit by the Postal Service inspector general, during 2011 and 2012, the Postal Service was unable to complete more than 19,000 necessary repairs to post offices, mail processing facilities, and annexes, more than half of which were major repairs affecting safety and security. While the Postal Service's facilities department contended that customers and postal employees are not endangered, because repairs are prioritized based on safety and security, the inspector general reported that 16% of the uncompleted repairs resulted in potential Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) violations.

 Dutch News: If the European Union gives permission, Dutch postal company PostNL could cut its deliveries to three days a week, a spokesman says in Wednesday's AD. European Union rules state post must be delivered five days a week but moves are being made to relax this, the AD says. PostNL stopped Monday deliveries at the beginning of this year. 'If the EU allows it, we will cut back to four or perhaps even three delivery days,' spokesman Werner van Bastelaar told the AD. Postal volumes are falling faster in the Netherlands than in other EU countries because of the high internet density, he said.

 The Slovak Spectator: The recently formed Office for Regulation of Electronic Communications and Postal Services should be led by Vladimír Kešjar who until recently was the vice-chair of the Slovak Telecommunication Office (TÚ). The office was established as of January 1, 2014, by merging of two regulatory offices falling under the remit of the Transport Ministry: the TÚ and the Postal Regulatory Office.


 RIA Novosti: Global postal company DHL said Wednesday that it is planning to resume deliveries to Russia after reaching an agreement with customs officials, the Prime business news agency reported. A meeting took place on Tuesday between DHL representatives and Russia's customs service during which the two sides reached a deal on aspects of the declaration process, DHL Russia executive Yury Shevchenko said, Prime reported. A series of global express carriers, including DHL and FedEx, announced last week that they had scrapped shipments to Russia because of stifling new customs regulations. DHL did not specify on Wednesday when exactly shipments to Russia might resume.

 Wall Street Journal: Big profits in online news may be as scarce as buried gold but that isn't deterring journalists and investors from rushing into the sector. In the past few months, about a dozen companies have announced new ventures related to online news, often in specialized areas such as media or technology. But ad buyers and industry executives say **the proliferation of new sites and automation in ad sales is driving down advertising pricing—by as much as 70% in some cases**—making it tougher for sites to turn a profit from traditional online advertising. More news sites means more ad space is available. *[EdNote: Well, if postal rates keep going up, the advertising could come from what historically has been the direct mail sector. Oh...I forgot. Our mail is not supposed to be that elastic.]*





At the Postal Regulatory Commission:


Current Report on Form 8-K "containing the information prescribed in Form 8-K of the Securities and Exchange Commission." 39 U.S.C. Sec 3654(a)(1)(C). [http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89071/Form%208-K%20%20\(01-28-14\)%20.pdf](http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89071/Form%208-K%20%20(01-28-14)%20.pdf)
[http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89071/Transmittal Letter 8-K \(01-28-14\).pdf](http://www.prc.gov/docs/89/89071/Transmittal Letter 8-K (01-28-14).pdf)


 Holmdel Independent: **Delayed pickups and undelivered mail** are becoming a point of frustration for local business owners who rely on the U.S Postal Service (USPS) to conduct business. The issue was brought up at the Jan. 13 Aberdeen Economic Business Council (EBC) meeting, where owners raised concerns about a backup at the Matawan post office, which has been affected by the closing of the Monmouth Processing and Distribution Center in Eatontown.


January 28, 2014


 Associated Press: The U.S. economy is showing more strength than at any time since the Great Recession began six years ago. Employers are hiring. Home prices, sales and construction have surged. Corporate profits and stocks have hit records. And consumers have picked up their spending.


 Delivering for America: President Obama's State of the Union speech this evening will doubtless touch on some crucial issues vital to the lives and wellbeing of American citizens. At the forefront will likely be the rollout of the Affordable Care Act and the ongoing ups and downs of the nation's economic recovery. What is likely to not be discussed is the current state of the United States Postal Service. Though perhaps not as front and center in the nation's mind as other topics, the USPS is a vital American institution crying out for thoughtful reform in order to speed along financial gains already in progress. Next steps to boost the USPS should not cut jobs, limit days of service or pursue any of the "slash and shrink" methods that some in Congress are advocating. Those "fixes" would only dismantle an important, and still vibrant, institution. The USPS is a reliable, longstanding and profitable organization in need of real reform that will help it continue to serve the American people for decades to come. So far, none of the proposed changes being pushed forward in Congress would do so.

 New Republic: One of the key messages of tonight's State of the Union address will be President Obama's willingness to bypass Congress to create jobs and reduce inequality. As luck would have it, yesterday a new government report detailed an innovation that would preserve one of the largest job creators in the country, save billions of dollars specifically for the poor, and develop the very ladders of opportunity that Obama has championed as of late. What's more, this could apparently be accomplished without Congressional action, but merely through existing executive prerogatives. What's the policy? Letting the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) offer basic banking services to customers, like savings accounts, debit cards and even simple loans. The idea has been kicked around policy circles for years, but now it has a crucial new adherent: the USPS Inspector General, who endorsed the initiative in a comprehensive white paper.

 Tandnews: Online retailer Amazon is expected to begin 'anticipatory shipping' in the near future, after successfully taking out a patent on the concept in December. According to the patent, Amazon may fill out partial street addresses or postcodes to get items closer to where customers need them, and later complete the label in transit. For multi-unit buildings 'a package without addressee information may be speculatively shipped to a physical address... having a number of tenants'. Amazon is planning to box and ship products that it expects customers in a specific area will want, based on previous orders and other factors it gleans from its customers' ordering patterns. Among the factors taken into account are details of previous orders, product searches, wish lists, shopping cart contents, returns and other online shopping practices. According to the patent, the packages could wait at the shippers' hubs or on trucks until an order arrives.

 American Banker: Community banking representatives met with hostility a recommendation that the U.S. Postal Service consider offering financial services. The proposal raises questions about whether the Obama administration is trying to circumvent Congress and replace payday lenders with a government entity. American Banker staffers discuss.

 Reuters: The government, which only last month persuaded Poste Italiane to invest 75 million euros (\$103 million) in struggling airline Alitalia, said on Friday it planned to sell 40 percent of the postal operator, hoping to replicate the successful flotations of similar groups in Britain and Belgium last year. The sale is the cornerstone of a privatisation drive aimed at raising 8-10 billion euros over the next two years to rein in Italy's public debt, which is expected to come in just below 133 percent of gross domestic product this year.


 **DMM Advisory: Reminder - New Service Type IDs (STIDs) for First-Class Mail Available January 26, 2014.** As a reminder, the United States Postal Service® introduced eight new Service Type IDs (STIDs) for First-Class Mail® on January 26, 2014, that provide expanded options for mailers to effectively manage ACS™ notices provided for their Undeliverable-As-Addressed (UAA) mail. The new STIDs further enhance mailing flexibility, as each existing ACS service option will have its own unique STID. If you wish to request Option 1 for


the ancillary endorsement listed, you must use the newly assigned STID on or after January 26, 2014. If you continue to use the existing STID, your First-Class Mail will receive the Option 2 treatment for that endorsement:

- **ASR:** The difference between Address Service Requested (ASR) Option 1 and Option 2 is that an ACS record will be provided on both forwarded and returned pieces with Option 2. Option 1 provides an ACS notice only for the mail that is forwarded to a new address.
- **CSR:** The difference between Change Service Requested (CSR) Option 1 and Option 2 is that forwardable pieces will be forwarded with Option 2 and mail that cannot be forwarded is disposed of as waste. Option 1 disposes of all UAA pieces as waste.


The links below direct you to a page that provides complete descriptions and details for all STIDs, including the new ones.


- Appendix A (provides a complete description of each STID):
https://ribbs.usps.gov/intelligentmail_guides/documents/tech_guides/AncillaryServices_STID_Detailed_Explanation.pdf
- STID Table (provides all available STIDs, segmented by endorsement and option):
https://ribbs.usps.gov/intelligentmail_mailpieces/documents/tech_guides/stid.pdf

 **Federal Daily:** The unions that represent rank-and-file postal employees urged members of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee to reject an amended version of a postal reform bill when it comes up for consideration by the committee this week.

 **Affordable Mail Alliance:** The members of the Affordable Mail Alliance, a broad coalition of postal customers and suppliers established to represent the mailing community in exigency litigation before the Postal Regulatory Commission, **write to express our deep concerns and opposition to the rates and governance provisions contained in Section 301 of the Substitute Amendment to S. 1486.** Section 301 as written would undermine the checks and balance system that has helped both the mailing industry and the Postal Service weather difficult economic times and under which the Postal Service has gained efficiencies, and recently, grown revenues. All attempts to modify Section 301 to a workable solution have failed. Members of the **AMA therefore stand united in supporting Senator Tammy Baldwin's amendment to strike Section 301 of the Substitute.** Should that amendment fail, the AMA urges members of HSGAC to oppose a Motion to favorably report the bill to the Senate.

 **Web Pro News:** *"Postage Increase: New Price Rates May Be a 'Lose-Lose Proposition'"*

 **Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel:** The constant threat of insolvency is obviously troubling for the Postal Service, but it is even more troubling for the American economy overall. Although the USPS is financially challenged, it is a \$65 billion business that supports a private-sector economy worth more than \$1 trillion, employing 8.4 million private-sector workers. The Postal Service's financial challenges cannot be overcome by price increases alone. Congress must act swiftly to put the Postal Service on the path to financial stability and long-term sustainability. This requires enacting meaningful postal reform legislation that drives innovation, reforms health care costs and creates a Postal Service that reflects the needs of the 21st century. U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin is working with the mailers to enact legislation that would provide an affordable rate structure that promotes the use of mail, protects current employment and helps to create an opportunity to grow jobs throughout the country.


 **Washington Post:** The Postal Service inspector general issued a report Monday recommending that the agency expand its financial services to meet the needs of underserved communities. Researchers estimate that the agency could earn \$8.9 billion in annual revenue if it captured 10 percent of the interest and fees generated by the 68 million Americans on the fringes of the banking system. But such a move would probably face opposition from banks, which are struggling to retool their small-dollar lending platforms under regulatory scrutiny. "We're deeply concerned that the U.S. Postal Service is trying to drive the creation of a new [government-sponsored entity]"


engaged in banking services, which is not subject to the same level of regulation,” said Ken Clayton, chief counsel of the American Bankers Association, a lobbying group. “This new entity could be perceived by many as a government-endorsed and preferred provider of financial products,” he said. “The impact on banks already serving these communities would be substantial.”




Office of the Inspector General:


- **Intelligence Delayed, but Not Derailed** It’s back to the future for the requirement that all letter and flat automation mailings be Full-Service Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb) compliant to obtain discounts. Mailers were expecting implementation this week of the Full-Service requirement, but the U.S. Postal Service pushed back the date until 2015 because the Postal Regulatory Commission ruled that the mandate constituted a price increase that would have busted the inflation-based price cap.
- **Providing Non-Bank Financial Services for the Underserved** The U.S. Postal Service could help the almost 70 million Americans who have little or no access to everyday financial services like checking/savings accounts or credit/debit cards. So says a new Postal Service Office of Inspector General white paper, which explores how the Postal Service could partner with banks to offer affordable, non-bank financial services that would not only help keep these Americans connected to the digital economy, but also potentially generate billions of dollars in new revenue.


 **Citizens Against Government Waste:** On Wednesday, two days after the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) increased the cost of a first-class stamp by three cents, from \$.46 to \$.49, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs will mark up S. 1486, the Postal Reform Act of 2013, sponsored by Sens. Tom Carper (D-Del.) and Tom Coburn (R-Okla.). Although S. 1486 is an improvement from S. 1789, its predecessor in the 112th Congress, it still misses the mark on several key provisions and fails to offer the kind of structural reforms needed to address the serious financial problems facing the agency. **On behalf of the more than one million members and supporters of the Council for Citizens Against Government Waste (CCAGW), I urge you to oppose this legislation.**

 **National Association of Major Mail Users:** In a statement released following the Town Hall session on Canada Post’s Five Point Plan held with Jacques Cote, Group President, Physical Delivery Network, and Association members, at the InterContinental Toronto Centre, the National Association of Major Mail users (NAMMU) urged pricing moderation to contain erosion, and further critical examination of the steps proposed in the Plan, and published in the Canada Gazette.

 **National Association of Major Mail Users:** Olivia Chow, NDP Member of Parliament for Trinity-Spadina, and Official Opposition Critic for Transport, Municipalities and Public Transit, spoke with NAMMU members at the Town Hall meeting and networking breakfast, Friday, January 24th, at the InterContinental Toronto Centre. In her brief formal remarks at the meeting outset, Ms. Chow expressed her significant interest in the postal topic and congratulated NAMMU on taking a leadership role in promoting positive discussion. She noted the stakeholders present and the significant impact of decisions taken by Canada Post on their livelihoods.

January 27, 2014

 **All Four Postal Unions:** We write on behalf of nearly 650,000 active and retired employees of the U.S. Postal Service represented by our four unions to express our strong opposition to S. 1486, as amended by the Carper-Coburn substitute. The substitute was issued late last week for consideration by the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee at a mark-up on January 29, 2014. Although we appreciate the hard work done by the Committee’s Chairman and Ranking Member to reach a compromise and acknowledge some improvements in the bill, **we must nonetheless oppose the substitute as drafted.** Unfortunately, the substitute bill suffers from many of the same shortcomings each of us pointed out when S. 1486 was originally introduced. Moreover, there are new provisions (such as one that requires the Postal Service to pre-fund \$17 billion in future workers’ compensation expenses) that are totally unfair and unnecessary.


 [Coalition for a 21st Century Postal Service](#): In advance of Wednesday’s U.S. Senate mark-up of the Postal Reform Act, **the nation’s private sector mailing industry warned of dire consequences should the bill move forward.** In a letter to Chairman Tom Carper and Ranking Member Tom Coburn, the Coalition for a 21st Century Postal Service (C21) urged the removal of provisions in the bill that would impose major and unaffordable rate hikes on an industry as badly damaged over the past several years as the Postal Service itself – or worse. The consequences for the industry and the Postal Service from considerably further reduced volume could be dramatic. **The bottom line is that one cannot get blood from a stone. Should [these provisions] of your substitute become law, mailers will move much more volume online, otherwise reduce their mailings, and some will cease to exist**





The latest issue of PostCom's [PostOps Update](#) has been posted on this site. In this issue:


| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USPS Delays Phase 2 of Network/ Service Standard Changes • Flats Strategy Still on Track for end of January 2014 • USPS Adds RIBBS Feature to Show Updated Files • USPS Moves Ahead With Load Leveling Plan • USPS Begins 24-Hour Clock Compliance Initiative • USPS Says it Will Act on Mail Barcode Patent Lawsuit • USPS to Begin testing HUB Concept in March 2014; Implement July 2014 • IMb Full-Service Non-Compliance Assessments for New Verifications to Begin in July • IMb Full-Service Verification Results Can Impact Mailer Eligibility for Other Programs • Pricing Anomalies for January 2014? • FSS Preparation Rules, Tools and Exception Process • USPS to Begin Revised Labeling List Release/Use Cycle on June 1, 2014 • 5-Digit Scheme Changes Will Benefit USPS and Mailers • Significant Mail Volumes Still Excluded from Measurement • USPS Says “Double Digit” Package Growth in Peak Mailing Season • USPS Promotions/Incentives Update • 2013 Promotions in Review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking Ahead to 2014 Promotions • New Alternate Postage Product • USPS Moving to Centralized MDA Help Desk • USPS Plans to Ramp Up Seamless Acceptance Testing • Surface Visibility Expansion • USPS Exploring Periodicals Flats Maximum Weight Limit • USPS to Expand FAST Appointment Availability • FCM Single Piece Rates to be Allowed in eDoc with no Minimum • IMpb Thresholds and Non- |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance • PARS for Flats Starting in Spring 2014 • USPS Reports No Fall MTE Issues • “Smart Stack” Bundles/Systems • MTEOR Shines with Local Mailers • Flats Equipment Modifications Update • Central Forwarding System (CFS) Site Reduction • Secure Destruction Service in Pilot Test |
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 **American Banker:** The U.S. Postal Service should consider fixing its massive budget shortfall by offering financial products such as debit cards, remittances and loans to underbanked consumers, according to a paper issued Monday by the agency's Office of the Inspector General. The white paper said the beleaguered Postal Service could raise approximately \$8.9 billion in additional revenue and reach potentially 68 million adults by offering such products, including international money orders and transfers.

 **Americans for Tax Reform:** With the United States Postal Service’s (USPS) \$5 billion deficit driving Congressional action, Sens. Carper and Coburn have put forth a bill that protects a bloated union workforce and paves the way for consumer rate increases. The USPS has acknowledged that its problems lay in its excess capacity, including workforce and facilities. While S. 1486 takes some steps to address healthcare costs for USPS employees – no small achievement – it does not do enough to fix USPS’s unnecessary overhead. Burdening ratepayers with USPS’s labor costs is not only unfair, but could undermine the entire system by driving more users out of it. Read more: <http://atr.org/carper-coburn-postal-bill-s-props-a8092#ixzz2rdi1b8Iz> Follow us: @taxreformer on Twitter

 **World Bulletin:** British postal workers agreed a 6.9 percent outline pay deal up to 2012 in their long-running dispute with state-owned Royal Mail, the Communication Workers Union said on Monday. The deal will also include a reduction in hours for workers at Royal Mail, which employs 121,000 staff. The deal must now be approved by union members.

 **Postal One! Release 37.0.1 Deployment:** *PostalOne!*® Release 37.0.1 deployment completed successfully yesterday, January 26, 2014 at 08:00AM CT. It includes a new optional client version of Mail.dat for


those customers submitting Periodicals mailings with a processing category of parcels. During the deployment, a Postal Wizard Full-Service BPM concern was identified. No other critical/financial issues have been reported from the release.


| Item ID | Release Notes | Business Impact (Workaround) | Impact Type | Target Release | Priority |
|---------|--|---|-------------|----------------|----------|
| TBD | A: Postal Wizard Bound Printed Matter Flats Full-Service Mailing, unable to enter the price line, only IMb discount line is available for mailers to complete the entry. | The Postal Wizard system will automatically check the barcode type of “IMb” and “barcode Price Indicator” of Barcoded when a full-service check box is selected by the mailers on the first page. Mailers must undo the “Barcode Price Indicator” of Barcoded checkbox on the 2 nd screen titled ‘Account Verification Information’ to enter the price category | External | TBD | Medium |

Please contact the Help Desk if you encounter any issues and we apologize for any inconvenience.





- **Blog:** [Intelligence Delayed, but Not Derailed](#). It’s back to the future for the requirement that all letter and flat automation mailings be Full-Service Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb) compliant to obtain discounts. Mailers were expecting implementation this week of the Full-Service requirement, but the U.S. Postal Service pushed back the date until 2015 because the Postal Regulatory Commission ruled that the mandate constituted a price increase that would have busted the inflation-based price cap. Many mailers welcomed the delay, as few felt the entire industry – the Postal Service included – was ready for full-service, which included the requirement that barcodes keep their unique sequence of numbers for at least 45 days before the barcode sequence is used again. A number of large mailers have been Full-Service IMb compliant for months and have taken advantage of the benefits of IMbs, including tracking of service performance, identifying bottlenecks, and coordinating follow-up marketing efforts. But many mid-sized and smaller mailers were not ready for the added requirements, which include electronic submission of postage statements and use of unique IMbs on trays and containers. And concerns were growing that the Postal Service’s systems are not yet capable of handling the expected increase in IMb data.
- **White paper:** [Providing Non-Bank Financial Services for the Underserved](#).

 **Direct Marketing News:** The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs committee announced it will hold a business meeting to mark up the Postal Reform Act of 2013 this Wednesday at 10 a.m. Mailers are **vehemently opposed to Section 301** of the new version of the legislation being submitted by Senators Tom Carper (D-DE) and Tom Coburn (R-OK). Section 301 of the bill would make the recent 4.3% exigent rate increase permanent by establishing it as the baseline for further rate increases and add 1% to the annual CPI cap rate adjustment. In addition, it would remove the requirement that the Postal Regulatory Commission review and pre-approve rate changes before they're implemented and return full rate-setting powers to the U.S. Postal Service. Direct mailers will be interested to see if committee member **Tammy Baldwin** (D-WI) will succeed in altering any of the rate setting provisions of the bill. On record as being opposed to Section 301, she noted in a December speech at Quad/Graphics that Wisconsin's paper manufacturing industry depends on business from bulk mailers and “so we're very sensitive as a state economy to changes in postal rates.” The markup session can be viewed live via webstream available on the committee's website, www.hsgac.senate.gov.


 **Financial Times:** Italy's coalition government has embarked on what it calls its largest privatisation programme since the late 1990s with a plan to raise €12bn, but questions are already being raised over the value of state-owned companies to be put on the block and why only minority stakes are to be sold. “We want to hurry up and take advantage of this market window,” Fabrizio Pagani, senior economic adviser to prime minister Enrico Letta, told the


Financial Times on Sunday, confirming that the four sales would be made through initial public offerings. Details of the [privatisation programme](#) were outlined after a cabinet meeting late on Friday, with Mr Letta saying proceeds would allow Italy to reduce its crippling public debt of more than €2tn for the first time in six years. The government intends to retain controlling stakes by selling 40 per cent of postal services operator Poste Italiane and 49 per cent of air traffic controller Enav.


 [US News](#): The cost of a first-class stamp increased from 46 to 49 cents on Sunday, the largest hike in 11 years. The increase is scheduled to be in effect for 24 months, to allow the Postal Service to recover recession-related losses. Yet even as the price change has taken effect, two competing appeals are seeking to alter it. One comes from a coalition of mailing-industry organizations, which on Jan. 23 filed an appeal with the U.S. Court of Appeals. The group asked that the Postal Regulatory Commission's decision to raise prices by 6 percent, well over the 1.7 percent rate of inflation, [be reversed](#), as The Washington Post reported. Though the Postal Service is an independent government agency and does not rely upon tax dollars, it cannot raise prices above the rate of inflation without the commission's approval.

 [CBC](#): The Canadian Union of Postal Workers fighting back against cuts to service. Canada Post announced last year it will stop urban door-to-door delivery. A rally to oppose those cutbacks and job loss is planned to happen at Windsor City Hall Square on Monday afternoon.


January 26, 2014


 [Daily Kos](#): Despite suffering another multibillion dollar loss in its last fiscal year, the U.S. Postal Service is giving a raise, albeit a small one, to virtually its entire non-union workforce. Yesterday, the U. S. Postal Service announced, to its executive, supervisory, administrative and professional employees, that effective immediately an across the board 1% salary increase is taking effect. It is the first time the Postal Service has increased the pay of this segment of its workforce in three years and doesn't even fully cover the 1.5% inflation rate for 2013. Nevertheless the raise was unexpected and the announcement came without warning.


 [Edmonton Journal](#): Mailboxes vandalized and used as bulletin boards for lost cats. Traffic jams and idling cars in front of community mailboxes. Paper flyers littering the ground around the boxes. Seniors slipping and fracturing bones while fetching their letters. Charities spending more money to deliver tax receipts and donation forms than on community needs. These were just some of the concerns raised by Edmontonians Saturday at a union-organized forum against the end of door-to-door mail delivery and hikes in postage rates, announced by Canada Post on Dec. 11.


 [The Economic Times](#): Even as its application to start a commercial bank is pending, India Post has drawn a massive plan to install as many as 3,000 ATMs and 1.35 lakh micro-ATMs at the ubiquitous post offices across the country for savings account holders by September 2015, a top official has said. "We will be starting with three ATMs to be installed in New Delhi, Chennai and Bangalore on February 5 and then ramp it up gradually," postal department secretary Padmini Gopinath told a select group of reporters. She said 1,000 ATMs with the India Post branding will be put in within the first year, which will be ramped up massively to 3,000 in the next 18 months.


January 25, 2014


 [Global News](#): The Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) held a public forum Saturday, to hear how Edmontonians feel about changes to postal service in the country. The union, which represents Canada Post workers, says the company's CEO did not properly consult with the public before announcing the end of door-to-door postal service and an increase in the price of stamps.


 [Wall Street Journal](#): U.S. stocks tumbled Friday to their biggest loss in more than seven months, extending a global selloff that investors fear signals turmoil to come as financial markets adjust to a pullback in central-bank stimulus. The declines extend a dark beginning of the year for equity investors world-wide, a jarring drop for markets that climbed imperviously through 2013.


 [KSHB](#): The Kansas City Postal Service is apologizing to the city and several hundred city employees after they received only half of their W2 forms. The city mailed out about 3,800 W2 forms this week, but once they arrived at the postal sorting facility on Cleveland Avenue, some of the employees found their forms had been cut in two. Postal Service Spokesperson Richard Watkins said a piece of mail got stuck in a sorting machine and the forms behind it got cut in half.

 [Wall Street Journal](#): Commercially operated home-delivery drones have attracted a great deal of attention. A national debate began after a "60 Minutes" segment in which Amazon chief executive Jeff Bezos speculated about using drones to deliver merchandise to people's homes. Such a service would have come in handy this past Christmas, when record orders overwhelmed some delivery services, and many inconsolable small children had to be told that Santa would be arriving a few days late this year. If ever. Deliveryman drones aren't right around the corner, no matter what you may have heard. There are legal and logistical limits on the use of the devices right now, and many Americans simply hate the idea of tiny aircraft buzzing around their neighborhoods, knocking over their lawn furniture and concussing their hapless schnauzers. That said, the age of drone home delivery cannot be far off.


 [Springfield Patch](#): Despite an assurance that United States Postal Service officials had been sent to Springfield to investigate what residents have deemed "abysmal" delivery service, some say conditions are actually worsening.


 [Wall Street Journal](#): Teamsters union members at a the Western Pennsylvania bargaining unit again rejected part of a contract with United Parcel Service Inc., prolonging labor headaches for the shipping company.


 [Government Executive](#): The Postal Service has ended a pay freeze for nonbargaining employees, giving them a 1 percent raise. The raise, which will go to supervisory, managerial, postmaster and all workers outside any collective bargaining agreement, will go into effect Saturday. Those workers have endured a three-year-pay freeze.

 [Baltic Review](#): The Finnish postal service announced extensive job cuts on Thursday, and plans to lay off 1,200 letter carriers. The state enterprise only has itself to blame for its present financial difficulties, the liberal daily Savon Sanomat comments.

 [Office of the Inspector General](#): "Self-Service Kiosks" [Full Report](#) | [Highlights](#)

 [Daily Journal](#): At the St. Francois County Commission meeting Tuesday, County Collector Pam Williams presented two waive interest and penalty cases to the commission. The topic of postal service came up in discussion. In the matter of the first case, Williams said they mailed their tax payment on Dec. 31 from a St. Louis post office. "It wasn't post-marked until Jan. 6. I have found out since then that our mail is not part of their district, so they deal with their mail first, then deal with ours, so it may sit there for days before being touched," said Williams. Farmington's mail will go to Cape Girardeau and then be sent to St. Louis from there. "I think we are having a lot of postal problems. We have received mail recently in January that was post-marked December 13 and 17," said Williams.

 [Wall Street Journal](#): Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta tried to speed up his government's executive action, saying his cabinet on Friday agreed to sell a minority stake in the postal service and also offered what he described as a last-chance opportunity to repatriate undeclared assets held abroad.

 [Postalnews Blog](#): With the United States Postal Service (USPS) proposing the elimination of Saturday deliveries and other threats to the speedy delivery that consumers around the country rely on, Congressman Steve Cohen (TN-09) late last week introduced the **Postmark Payment Act of 2014** to protect Americans from being charged late fees stemming from delayed USPS deliveries. Just as the Internal Revenue Service accepts tax returns based on postmark date, the Congressman's legislation would ensure that, for any payment made through the USPS, companies accept postmarks instead of receipt date when processing the payment. Before returning to Memphis at the end of last week, Congressman Cohen also introduced the **Expanding Nonpostal Services to Americans Act** to help the USPS address its budget deficit **without additional** service cuts or **price increases**. The legislation would lift the ban on the Postal Service offering non-postal services including check cashing, public internet, and notary services.

INDUSTRYALERT *Postal rates go up Sunday.*


INDUSTRYALERT **PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS CONSUMER & INDUSTRY AFFAIRS.** Below are a series of developmental assignments within Consumer and Industry Affairs, which are effective immediately.

- **Sharon Owens**, Manager, Industry Engagement and Outreach, will begin a detail in the field after the National Postal Forum. She will begin preparing for her assignment by becoming greenbelt certified and leading a project in the Northern Virginia district.
- During this transition period, **Dale Kennedy**, Manager, Business Customer Support & Service, will have an executive detail opportunity as the Manager, Industry Engagement and Outreach. Dale currently is the Manager, Business Customer Support & Service responsible for the Business Service Network operations nationwide and customer service support for all commercial customers. Dale has 29 years of service with the Postal Service after beginning his career in Little Rock AR. He has worked in Plant/Mail Processing, Retail, Sales, and the Business Service Network at the local, District, and Area levels before moving to Postal Headquarters in 2011.

Other detail assignments within Consumer and Industry Affairs include:


- Rick Renn, Manager, Consumer and Industry Contact in the Cap Metro Area, detailing into the Manager, Industry Engagement Strategy position;
- Debbie Branagan Goldman, Customer Outreach Specialist, detailing into the Manager, Customer Outreach position; and
- Thomas Hughes, Business Customer Service & Support Specialist, detailing into the Manager, Business Customer Support & Service.


The team will lead programs and activities that facilitate dialog between the mailing industry and Postal decision makers, such as the Business Service Network (BSN), Mailers Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC), Postal Customer Councils (PCCs) and the National Postal Forum (NPF).


 **DMM Advisory:** **IMb™ Services Update January 26, 2014 Mailing Services and Shipping Services Price Change Update — Plant-Verified Drop Shipment** — Mailing Services and Shipping Services prices are changing on January 26, 2014, so plant-verified drop shipment (PVDS) mailings will be verified and accepted as follows: (1) **Current Prices** — PVDS mailings verified and paid for before January 26, 2014, using the current prices, will be accepted at destination entry postal facilities through February 9, 2014, when presented with appropriate verification and payment documentation. (2) **New Prices** — PVDS mailings may be verified and paid for beginning January 13, 2014, using the new prices, provided the shipments are not deposited at destination entry postal facilities until January 26, 2014, or later, when presented with appropriate verification and payment documentation. (a) For mailings with electronic documentation, mailers must enter a Mail Arrival Date that is on or after January 26, 2014. (b) For mailings with hard copy postage statements, USPS acceptance employees must enter a Mail Arrival Date that is on or after January 26, 2014. ;

January 24, 2014


INDUSTRYALERT **Network Rationalization Phase II Postponed.** The Postal Service has postponed moving forward with Phase II of Network Rationalization. The Postal Service filed a Federal Register notice on Jan. 17 announcing the postponement of the implementation date for the revised service standards that were scheduled to take effect on Feb. 1, as part of Phase II of the Network Rationalization initiative. The new implementation date will be announced by the Postal Service in the Federal Register at least 90 days before it takes effect. The Postal Service will continue working with its mailers and customers on this issue to ensure a smooth transition and to give customers ample time to make changes. [*EdNote: The Postal Service apparently is waiting to see what Congress may do.*]


 [U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs](#) Chairman Tom Carper (D-Del.) and Ranking Member Tom Coburn (R-Okla.) will hold a business meeting on Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. in room SD-342 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, D.C. For more information or to watch a live stream of the meeting, please click [HERE](#). (Note: Please refresh the hearing webpage at the scheduled start time. Streaming will start once the hearing begins.) At the business meeting, members will consider the following legislation: S. 1486, Postal Reform Act of 2013 Wednesday, January 29, 2014 10:00 a.m. SD-342, Dirksen Senate Office Building


 [Tatango](#): While not exactly scientific with only 100 single women aged 18-28 surveyed, the guys at Pickup Metrics have unearthed some interesting trends when it comes to using text messaging in the dating world. From their survey, they determined that 73% of women would like to receive a text message from a guy they just met, which trumps other communication methods such as calling (19%), Facebook'ing them (6%), or even messaging them through a messaging app (2%).


 [Popwuping](#): (*A guide to mobile culture and mobile lifestyle*) The continuing decline of telephone culture: A recent Pew report showed that in 2012, 80 percent of cellphone users used their phones for texting; in 2007, just 58 percent did. In late 2007, according to Nielsen, monthly texts outpaced phone calls for the first time. [*EdNote: Hmm. Can you imagine what they'd say about letter writing?*]


AmericaPost™ -- a trademark registered by the Association for Postal Commerce since 1993.

 [Save the Post Office](#): According to Mark Jamison a retired postmaster, "if one looks not at stated intentions but at actions and consequences, it's clear that Mr. Donahoe, with the support of the Board of Governors and many in Congress, is less interested in providing an essential public service, fulfilling the universal service obligation, and preserving a valuable national infrastructure than he is in treating the Postal Service as if it were a corporation in the delivery business. And that, by any name imaginable, is privatization.....The PMG may say he has no intention of privatizing the Postal Service, but the obvious consequences of the agenda he has set, the policies he has promoted, and the actions he has undertaken is privatization. Mr. Donahoe may not want to be Apple or UPS or FedEx, but he wants the kind of independence that a private corporation enjoys."


 [WTHI](#): The same Polar Vortex that dumped snow, ice and bone-chilling temperatures on the Wabash Valley, and much of the nation, halted even door-to-door mail delivery for up to five days in some spots.


 [The Western Star](#): Frustrated with more cuts to Canada Post, Judy Foote is calling on the federal government to commit to protecting rural postal services by providing a reliable mail service. In a prepared release, Foote said government should be implementing a reliable rural service instead of working toward a mandate to close, amalgamate or privatize post offices. Foote, who is member of Parliament for Random-Burin-St. George's, says the Harper government's continued cuts to postal services, especially in rural communities, are leaving people without the support and employment opportunities that come with providing the services. She said the Canadian Postmasters and Assistants Association was recently informed by Canada Post the Crown corporation plans on further reducing postal services in 38 rural communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

 [Columbus Dispatch](#): The U.S. Postal Service, like any business should, continues to try to find ways to stay competitive faced with a changing landscape and financial losses. Predictably, though, those protecting what they see as their own self-interest continue to try to thwart such innovation. The latest volley comes as the Postal Service has launched a partnership with dozens of Staples office-supply stores throughout the country, in which Staples employees do such routine things as sell postage and mail packages — things the postal union considers to be union-only jobs.

 [Washington Post](#): The Postal Service is asking the U.S. Court of Appeals in the District to make the increase permanent and prevent it from being phased out in two years. That's about how long regulators said it would take for the agency to recover its losses from the recent recession, the justification postal officials used when requesting an emergency increase, the largest in 11 years. The mailing industry, which depends on the Postal Service to cap rates to keep profits healthy, is asking the same court to overturn the Dec. 24 ruling by the Postal Regulatory

Commission, saying the agency's request for a hike based on recessionary losses is masking other structural problems. "We hope the legal system will see through the Postal Service's fuzzy math," Mary G. Berner, president of the Association of Magazine Media, said in a statement Thursday. The mail-dependent publishing industries had lobbied against an increase, saying that it would depress mail volume and burden consumers.

 **Reuters:** Royal Mail Group, sold off last October in Britain's biggest privatisation in decades, said underlying sales for the nine months to Dec. 29 rose 2 percent, helped by strong parcel demand over Christmas. The postal firm, whose sale was fiercely opposed by unions and opposition lawmakers and has been criticised since for potentially short-changing the taxpayer, on Friday said strong Christmas demand and price changes had helped UK parcels revenue grow 8 percent in the period on flat volumes. The performance in parcels, which make up half of group sales, helped offset a 3 percent like-for-like revenue decline in UK letters, as volumes slowly erode due to the rising use of email and social media. Royal Mail said the trading performance had been in line with its expectations.

 **The Telegraph:** Royal Mail said it delivered the equivalent of 417,000 parcels every hour on December 18, the busiest day in the run up to Christmas. The 500 year old postal service has benefited from the boom in online shopping with an 8pc rise in revenues from parcels over nine months ended December 29. The postal service delivered more than 10m parcels on December 18, and about 115m throughout the month of December. "The Christmas card is alive and well," said a spokesperson for the postal service as a rise in stamped letter volumes during December was revealed.

 **From the Federal Register:**

| | |
|---|--|
| Postal Regulatory Commission | |
| NOTICES | |
| New Postal Products , | |
| 4184-4185 [2014-01378] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
| 4185-4186 [2014-01380] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
| 4183-4184 [2014-01381] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
| Postal Service | |
| RULES | |
| Service Standards for Market-Dominant Mail Products , | |
| 4079-4082 [2014-01382] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
| NOTICES | |
| Product Changes: | |
| Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement , | |
| 4186 [2014-01383] | [TEXT] [PDF] |



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| 4186 [2014-01384] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
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The latest issue of the [PostCom Bulletin](#) is available online. In this issue:

- The Association of Postal Commerce, along with other major mailer associations, has petitioned the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit for review of the Postal Regulatory Commission's exigent decision.

- According to postal commentator Gene Del Polito, it is possible for the Postal Service to thrive, let alone survive, within a framework that limits market-dominant services postal rate increases within the bounds of inflation. All it takes is a little creativity on the Postal Service's part -- and a keen desire not to punish its customers with higher than necessary postal costs and rates.
- Staples' selling postal products without USPS workers stirs fears of privatization. NALC applauds Congress for keeping six-day mail delivery in spending bill. MTAC presentations available. UPS announces expected 4Q results. In a revised Senate postal bill, exigency is forever. Mailers up in arms over proposed hike. USPS explains increase in headquarters staffing. Congress wants delay in selling of historic POs until federal report is completed. USPS confirms 2014 direct mail promotions and incentives. Outbox shuts down its mail digitizing service. PostCom and USPS to hold Full Service webinars. Reality check: postal hike. Postal Service, mailers poised to challenge exigent rate decision. USPS creates late fee dilemma for Mount Carroll.
- Announcement of postal related Federal Register Notices.
- An update from the USPS Office of Inspector General.
- Postal news from around the world.
- Postal previews

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[Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs](#): Business Meeting, Markup of Postal Reform Bill January 29, 2014, 10:00 a.m., SD-342. [Don't forget!]



[AGI](#): A note from Poste Italiane indicated that 87 Roman postal offices will remain open until 7:05 p.m., starting on Friday, January 24.



[Washington Times](#): *Letter to the Editor* -- "The American Postal Workers Union, 200,000 strong, is rightfully fearful that Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe is looking for ways to stop the bleeding ("Unions angered by Postal Service's Staples outlets," Web, Jan. 20). Our current postal system loses on the order of \$3.2 billion a quarter, or roughly \$12 billion a year. Unfortunately, the primary reason for this shameful waste of American taxpayers money is because of the annual \$5.5 billion pledged to fund future postal retirees. This unsustainable cost plus the union-garnered average wage of \$25 an hour is not only a drain on the American taxpayers, it also makes the Postal Service noncompetitive. I'm not anti-postal worker, as I have friends and family in the Postal Service, but I do know that a business has to be competitive to be successful. High wages, health care benefits, retirement funds and any kind of employee benefits are wonderful, but somebody has to pay for them."





[Financial Times](#): Italy's coalition government says it is going ahead with a 40 per cent sale of state-owned postal services operator Poste Italiane as part of a wider privatisation plan to reduce public debt. Fabrizio Saccomanni, finance minister, was quoted by Italian media as saying in Davos that the cabinet would approve a privatisation decree on Friday. "It will begin with 40 per cent of Poste and then we will see," he said.




[Coalition for a 21st Century Postal Service](#): *To the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs* -- The members of the Coalition for a 21st Century Postal Service (C21) have had the opportunity to review the proposal in your substitute concerning rates and governance. We are greatly disappointed that we have been unable to persuade you...[more]

January 23, 2014


 [Adweek](#): "The evidence used to secure this increase, more than three times the rate of inflation, is fundamentally flawed and thus inherently inaccurate," said Mary Berner, president and CEO of the MPA. "Increased rates will only result in more lost volume for the postal service. Businesses will suffer and good people will lose their jobs." The U.S. Postal Service is also expected to file for an appeal to try and make the increase permanent. Potentially making matters even worse for the mailing media, Sens. Tom Carper (D-Del.) and Tom Coburn (R-Okla.), chairman and ranking member of the homeland security and government affairs committee, are moving postal reform legislation that would make the exigent 4.3 percent increase permanent and give carte blanche to the postal rate commission to set rates. The bill would also preempt any appeal of the rates. The committee is set to consider the bill Jan. 29.


 [Reuters](#): Express delivery companies DHL and FedEx said on Thursday they had suspended foreign shipments to individual customers in Russia because of stricter customs procedures, making it harder for internet users to buy goods from abroad. President Vladimir Putin ordered a campaign late last year to "put into order" a booming e-commerce sector. One of the proposed measures was lowering a value threshold for purchases in foreign online stores that are subject to customs duty. According to DHL Express, part of Deutsche Post, Russian authorities from January 2014 expanded the list of documents required to ship goods to individual customers, which has significantly slowed customs clearance.


 [Foster's Daily Democrat](#): "Can U.S. Postal Service be saved?"


Attention Postal One! Users:


- **PostalOne!® Release 37.0.1 Deployment** — This release repairs known issues in PostalOne!® and will be deployed during the scheduled maintenance window of 4:00AM CT through 8:00AM CT on Sunday, January 26, 2014. This will be done in a rolling fashion with no planned outage during the software deployment. There is an optional Mail.dat client available with the release, for those customers submitting Periodicals mailings with a processing category of parcels.
- **PostalOne! Release 37.0.1 Deployment to Test Environment for Mailers (TEM)** — will occur also on Sunday, January 26, 2014, within the same release window as PostalOne!® Prod release 4:00AM CT thru 8:00AM CT.


 [U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia](#): The Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers, American Catalog Mailers Association, **Association for Postal Commerce**, Association of Marketing Service Providers, Direct Marketing Association, Inc., The Envelope Manufacturers Association, Greeting Card Association, Major Mailers Association, MPA—Association of Magazine Media, National Association of Presort Mailers, National Postal Policy Council, National Newspaper Association, Newspaper Association of America, Printing Industries of America, Quad/Graphics Inc., Saturation Mailers Coalition, and Software & Information Industry Association/American Business Media **petition this Court for review of Postal Regulatory Commission ("PRC") Order No. 1926, Order Granting Exigent Price Increase, in PRC Docket No. R2013-11, Rate Adjustment Due to Extraordinary or Exceptional Circumstances.**


 [Federal Times](#): In granting a emergency postal rate hike last month, the Postal Regulatory Commission left both sides unhappy: The mailing industry, represented by an umbrella group known as the Affordable Mail Alliance, was displeased that the five-member commission agreed to any increase above the inflation rate; U.S. Postal Service leaders were frustrated that the boost will be temporary, ending once \$2.8 billion is raised. Now, the two camps are both preparing to appeal the decision in court. The Postal Service will file its challenge with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit by Thursday's deadline, spokesman Dave Partenheimer said in a Wednesday email, while proceeding with implementation of the increase on Jan. 26 (this coming Sunday), as previously announced. Also on Thursday, the mailers alliance will file an intent to appeal the commission's decision, an industry source said.


 **PostCom Members!!** The latest PostCom [Postal Executive Summary, January, 2014, Volume 2 Issue 38](#) has been posted on this site. Please feel free to use this information or pass it along to others, including executives within your company.


 **YLE**: Finnish postal company Itella is starting redundancy negotiations with up to 1,200 positions on the line. The company says the postal business declined more dramatically than expected last year.

 **Wall Street Journal**: The Justice Department on Wednesday accused the government's largest private security background check contractor of defrauding the country of millions of dollars by methodically filing more than 660,000 flawed background investigations—40% of the cases it sent to the government over a four-year period. Prosecutors accused former top US Investigations Services LLC executives of directing improper practices that became a subject of internal jokes among company officials who helped secure millions of dollars in bonuses from the U.S. government. USIS conducted what federal officials say was a faulty 2011 background investigation of Edward Snowden, the former National Security Agency contractor who leaked classified documents on the government's surveillance programs to the international media.


 **Prarie Advocate**: Hundreds of the post cards for the water bills were late in getting to the Mount Carroll citizens this month. The United States Postal Service sorting facility in Palatine, Illinois returned the bundles of bills that the city had sent out three times. Mayor Carl Bates stated that he had contacted the Postal Service. He said they told him it was because they would have to slow down their sorting machines so it would not tear the post cards and they did not want to slow them down. City Clerk Julie Cuckler noted that the same thing happened to Savanna. The council voted unanimously to waive any late fees for the January bill.


 **Romania Insider**: Romania's state-owned postal services company Romanian Post recorded an estimated operating profit of RON 15.1 million (EUR 3.4 million) in the fourth quarter of 2013, after it implemented restructuring and reorganization measures.

 **PRNewswire**: FedEx Express, a subsidiary of FedEx Corp., and Nissan announced today at the Washington Auto Show that the two companies will begin testing the Nissan e-NV200, a 100 percent electric compact cargo vehicle, under real world conditions in Washington, D.C.

 **Fox19**: In an effort to stem its massive losses, Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe has been pushing a bold move - cutting Saturday deliver permanently. "The key thing is this. The Postal Service needs to make serious change," says Donahoe. "We need to address a number of issues, six to five days of letter mail to save two billion dollars." The USPS is facing strong opposition, starting with the Postal Union. The newly elected president is rallying his membership to fight for Saturday service. Then there's Congress, which has the final say on any change in delivery and has repeatedly refused to allow the Postal Service to drop Saturday Service. U.S. Representative Elijah Cummings, who sits on the committee that funds the USPS, says ending Saturday delivery means the elimination of up to 30-thousand employees, many of those Asian, African-American, and Hispanic, who make up about 40 percent of all Postal Service employees.


From the Federal Register: Postal Service *NOTICES* Privacy Act of 1974; System of Records , 3881–3882 [2014–01243] [\[TEXT\]](#) [\[PDF\]](#)

 **Office of the Inspector General**: "Readiness for Package Growth – Processing Capacity" [Full Report](#) | [Highlights](#)

 **The Guardian**: A politically toxic battle over the £1.5m (\$2.5 million) pay of Royal Mail boss Moya Greene looks likely to intensify as the government suggested it might block any large increases in executive remuneration. The move by Vince Cable's Department for Business comes after he previously objected to £250,000 in relocation payments awarded to the recently privatised company's boss when the mail service was wholly owned by the state. Greene, who moved from Canada to take up the post, voluntarily agreed to repay the money after she heard of Cable's concerns. The issue of Greene's pay package has re-emerged since the government privatised 70% of the company in the autumn, triggering rumours that she will now be in line for a large pay rise. It will prove an early test of the new rules allowing shareholders to throw out overgenerous executive remuneration policies – powers that were handed to investors by Cable. Royal Mail has pledged not to give Greene a large pay rise until after the current financial year, but the government's move follows Royal Mail chairman Donald Brydon telling the Daily Telegraph

this week that **Greene was the "lowest-paid chief executive in the FTSE 100"** and that a rise in her pay was necessary to keep her.


January 22, 2014


 [DirectionsMag](#): Every quarter, Maponics releases high-quality nationwide postal GIS products – so trusted that USPS.com refers customers looking for ZIP Code map data directly to Maponics. In fact, Maponics is the only postal map data provider listed on USPS.com as a resource for postal data, ZIP Code maps, carrier route reports, and other postal maps and reports. Maponics GIS postal products include ZIP Code Boundaries, Carrier Route Boundaries, and ZIP+4 centroids. Their postal products are the result of their comprehensive and proprietary algorithms and their proven methodology that optimizes direct data feeds from the U.S. Postal Service and topologically aligns boundaries using street networks.





USPS Full-Service Intelligent Mail Outreach Program. Join the Association for Postal Commerce for a **FREE webinar** as **Arlene Zisow, USPS Business Mail Support, Headquarters** presents a comprehensive session about the Full-Service program including: Benefits, getting started, performance monitoring, and reporting. This will be a great forum for you to ask questions related to any aspect of Full-Service and the reporting of data. Register for a session now by clicking a date below. Once registered you will receive an email confirming your registration with information you need to join the Webinar.

- [Tue, Feb 11, 2014 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM EST](#)
- [Tue, Apr 15, 2014 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM EDT](#)

 [Navasota Examiner](#): About 26 local residents became victims of a burglary overnight. Large parcel lockers were burglarized at the Navasota Post Office – which keeps its doors open day and night – sometime between Jan. 11, at 5 p.m., and Jan. 13, at 8:40 a.m. Navasota Police Chief Shawn Myatt said 27 lockers had items that were reported stolen. Last Friday, Navasota Postal Clerk Edward Kreeger said he is still in disbelief after about 45 parcel lockers were reported damaged at the post office. “How can this happen in a small town like Navasota? They did the same thing to post offices in College Station, Bryan and Hearne. They all got in the (lockers) the same way, so they knew what they were doing,” Kreeger said.


 [Postal Technology International](#): Swiss Post has reached an agreement with the national price regulator of Switzerland to forego various planned price increases and lower the price of individual products. The price regulator opened formal proceedings against Swiss Post in February 2013. Almost a year later, both parties have agreed on a compromise that involves a variety of measures, offers customers price advantages and makes business transactions with Swiss Post more straightforward.

 [LBC](#): An explosive executive pay row is brewing between Vince Cable and Royal Mail over the £1.5m package earned by the newly privatised company's chief executive. Sky News can reveal that the Business Secretary is preparing to face down moves by Royal Mail's board to hike Moya Greene's annual remuneration just months after the Government sold a 70% stake in the company. Mr Cable is understood to be willing to consider going as far as using his vote as the postal operator's biggest remaining shareholder to try to block any such increase. If that were to happen, it would represent a remarkable new chapter in the privatisation of Royal Mail.


 [eCommerceBytes](#): eCommerceBytes asks: "With Postal Service employees facing job losses, would there be a backlash in the form of intentional handling delays of packages left with Staples?"


January 21, 2014


 [Venturebeat](#): "Outbox was supposed to disrupt the post office, but now it's in the trash bin."


 [TechCrunch](#): Mail startup Outbox just announced that it's shutting down its current service. The company has one of those ideas that's both intriguing and slightly crazy sounding — it sent people by your home to pick up your


physical mail, then it digitized that mail, all for \$4.99 a month. After a pilot program in Austin, Outbox launched the service in San Francisco a year ago, and it raised a \$5 million Series A led by Floodgate over the summer. The company itself isn't going away. Instead, the blog post says it's "focusing our team and resources on a totally new product." Outbox says there just weren't enough people signing up to pay for the service, at least given the company's costs.


 [Reuters](#): The sale of a 30-40 percent in Italy's stake in publicly owned post office group Poste Italiane could take place by June or July, Deputy Industry Minister Antonio Catricala said on Tuesday.


 [Hispanic Business](#): Slovak state-owned postal services company Slovenska Posta (Slovak Post) is expected to post a net profit of EUR 2mn for 2013, swinging from a loss of EUR 2.7mn in 2012.


 [Brisbane Times](#): Australia Post should not be privatised: it should start providing its own banking and insurance services instead, according to the postal workers union. That would help to loosen the grip of the big four on Australia's banking system while filling the "vacuum" the banks created when they withdrew from rural and regional Australia. The suggestion has been made in a submission to the Abbott government's Commission of Audit, by the Communication Workers' Union.


 [Online PR Media](#): The U.S. Postal Service officially announced their 2014 promotions calendar aimed at increasing use of First Class, shipping, and digital technology. A 15% rate discount, the largest discount offered, is for First Class marketing pieces under their spring promotion. Other promotions being offered are for direct mail pieces that include, Branded Color-Mobile Technology, Digital Personalization or Color Print in First Class. According to the USPS, "The general intent of all promotions is to increase the value of transactional and direct mail and to retain or sustain its long-term growth. These promotions create excitement about mail, keep mail top-of-mind for marketers, reward innovative customers, show customers we want their business and encourage others in the mailing industry to provide similar sale initiatives for customers."

 [Sun News Network](#): Municipalities from coast to coast are warning residents that increased Canada Post costs will come back to hit them on their tax bill. Last month, Canada Post announced price increases for letters mailed within the country, effective March 31. Regular mail from a postage meter — a machine widely used in business to stamp mail — is increasing 15% to 75 cents.


 [Washington Times](#): The U.S. Postal Service could face \$1.4 billion in repair work if it hopes to keep its facilities safely operating, according to a report released Monday. The evaluation on the mail delivery services' infrastructure showed that the cash-strapped agency has been reducing its maintenance and repair budget in an effort to save funds, cutting \$382 million between 2009 and 2012, according to the USPS Inspector General. "The U.S. Postal Service's financial challenges have made it hard to maintain facilities," the IG said. "Our recent audit report found about half of the incomplete repairs represent safety or security issues." Investigators said some of the needed repairs could pose health hazards, but USPS officials said they are putting a priority on repairs to fix any safety and security problems first to ensure that customers and Postal Service employees are not at risk.


 [Washington Post](#): The U.S. Postal Service is facing entrenched resistance to its selling of historic post offices, with lawmakers inserting their call for a moratorium on the sales in the recently passed omnibus spending bill. From California to Connecticut, communities have been opposing the sales, accusing the agency of ignoring federal preservation guidelines and not allowing enough time for public comment. Reps. José E. Serrano (D-N.Y.) and Barbara Lee (D-Calif.), who have post offices for sale in their districts, issued statements last week noting the provisions in the spending bill that support blocking sales until a federal probe of the matter is completed. "The language in the omnibus appropriations bill is clear: The USPS needs to put sales of historic post offices on hold while we wait to see what the inspector general's report and the ACHP [Advisory Council on Historic Preservation] reports say," Serrano said. "I understand the USPS has a serious revenue problem . . . but selling off historic properties to the highest bidder without following the appropriate procedures is completely unacceptable."


 [Federal Times](#): "Postal Service explains increase in headquarters staffing"

 [Brisbane Times](#): The union representing postal workers has described as "harebrained" the prospect of residents across Australia being charged a fee to receive daily mail. Australia Post recently conducted a survey asking customers if they would prefer to have their **mail deliveries three times a week or pay an annual \$30 fee for daily delivery**, News Corp Australia reported on Tuesday. But Australia Post denies it's planning to scale back daily door-to-door deliveries, according to the report. On Tuesday, the Communications Electrical Plumbing Union (CEPU) said Australia Post "should be ashamed for raising the prospect of charging residents for their daily mail".

January 20, 2014

 [DCist](#): Postal workers will join the family of Tyson Barnette this evening—a 26-year-old postal worker who was gunned down in Prince George's County while delivering mail after dark last November—to protest mail delivery after the sun goes down. The rally will kick off at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial at 5:30 p.m. At 6 p.m. protesters will march to the U.S. Postal Service headquarters located at L'Enfant Plaza, where postal workers will speak about the dangers of delivering mail after dark.


 [Evening Standard](#): Vince Cable was potentially heading towards another political battering over the flotation of Royal Mail today as the chairman said it should give its chief executive a pay rise beyond her present £1.25 million package. Donald Brydon said because Moya Greene's deal was negotiated under a "Government-controlled pay structure" it was artificially low compared with other Footsie bosses. Now the business is a FTSE 100 company, it must pay her significantly more or risk losing her, he said.


 [News1130](#): Are you angry about Canada Post's decision to stop door-to-door mail delivery in the coming years? Postal workers are inviting you to take your anger and concerns to a town hall meeting in Surrey this Tuesday. They're hoping if enough people say "no" Canada Post will reverse its controversial decision. That decision will see the phase out of door-to-door delivery service to five million Canadians.


January 19, 2014




[Dead Tree Edition](#): For the next week, Forever Stamps will be the hottest deal going, but a year or two from now the popular stamps could actually decrease in value. The price of a First Class stamp will rise from 46 cents to 49 cents next Sunday, January 26. Someone who buys a Forever Stamp this week, for 46 cents, and uses it a month later in place of a normal First Class stamp will save 3 cents and have an annualized return on investment of 113%. No wonder some are expecting a stamp-ede of buyers stocking up on Forever Stamps this week.


 [Wall Street Journal](#): Amazon.com knows you so well it wants to ship your next package before you order it. "It appears Amazon is taking advantage of their copious data," said Sucharita Mulpuru, a Forrester Research analyst. "Based on all the things they know about their customers they could predict demand based on a variety of factors."

 [Save the Post Office](#): The Postal Regulatory Commission is currently reviewing a request by the Postal Service to change delivery service standards for a large portion of Standard mail. The plan is to "load level" the heavy volume of mail that is normally delivered on Monday by delivering some of it on Tuesday. The plan has been presented as a way to "ease the burden" on processing and delivery operations, but documents released this week to the PRC indicate that the plan may have another purpose — preparing the way for ending Saturday delivery.


 [The Hill](#): Industries that are among the cash-strapped U.S. Postal Service's biggest customers are up in arms over a new Senate proposal that could make it more expensive to use the mail. The mailing industry – representing banks, magazines, greeting cards and catalog companies, among others – says it's already reeling from a recent decision that would temporarily boost the cost of stamps from 46 cents to 49 cents later this month. But those groups say a proposal from Sens. Tom Carper (D-Del.) and Tom Coburn (R-Okla.) – the top postal negotiators in the upper chamber – could be even more of a drag on their business. Carper, the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, and Coburn, the panel's top Republican – who hope to mark up their bipartisan postal bill on Jan. 29 – propose making the looming rate hike permanent. On top of that, they're proposing a rate cap that would allow USPS, which lost \$5 billion in fiscal 2013, to raise the price of postage 1 percent quicker than the rate of inflation.


And come 2017, they're seeking to give the Postal Service greater say in revising its rate system. But Carper and some congressional aides suggest that the industry's arguments are a bit overheated. Carper and Coburn have yet to put their most recent revisions to their postal bill – first introduced last August – into legislative language, so the rate proposals aren't yet set in stone. Carper has also been forced to delay committee consideration of the bill several times in the last couple of months as he tries to marshal support on his committee, but both the chairman and his aides are hopeful this month's mark-up will remain on the calendar. If the current rate proposals stay in the measure, the mailers say they'll do everything in their power to defeat the bill. The groups do have some allies on the Homeland Security panel, including Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.).

 [IPP](#): Tanzania Posts Corporation (TPC) has called for full cooperation from the public as it starts implementation of physical address and post code system in Dar es Salaam.

 [Haaretz](#): Israel Post could become insolvent in Q3 this year Postal company CEO says company will meet obligations by selling assets.


January 18, 2014

 [Direct Marketing News](#): Three weeks after hitting them with an injurious 6% rate hike, postal decision makers in Washington continue to enrage direct mailers. On January 17 it was Senators Tom Carper (D-DE) and Tom Coburn (R-OK), whose re-draft of their Postal Reform Act would make the exigent increase permanent and add an annual 1% to the CPI cap. Carper and Coburn, meanwhile, believe that more aggressive rate hikes are necessary to turn the tide at the Postal Service. An HSGAC spokesperson told Direct Marketing News. "Chairman Carper believes that a responsible and effective solution will require shared sacrifice from postal customers, postal management, and postal employees."

 [Minot Daily News](#): Although troubles with mail delivery have eased in Minot and parts of northwestern North Dakota over the past year, the U.S. Postal Service continues to work on nagging issues that might only be resolved with more staffing. Finding and retaining employees has been difficult, but the postal service has had some success, said Karen Fredrickson, marketing manager for the U.S. Postal Service in Sioux Falls, S.D. Since June 2013, the postal service has hired 161 employees to fill vacancies or new positions in western North Dakota.

 ***From the Federal Register:***

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Postal Service | |
| RULES | |
| International Mail: | |
| | Mailing Services Price Changes , |
| | 3327 [2014-00821] [TEXT] [PDF] |
| NOTICES | |
| Privacy Act; Systems of Records , | |
| | 3423-3424 [2014-00962] [TEXT] [PDF] |

 [The Telegram](#): We should be concerned with Canada Post's plans. The corporation says it's time to make big changes to its business model or it won't be sustainable. Canada Post says it will face a \$1-billion deficit by 2020. The Conference Board of Canada says we can expect a further 25 per cent drop in mail volumes over the next seven years. Canada Post is supposed to be a public service provided to taxpayers by the government, and making a profit has no real role in meeting its mandate. Recouping costs is all well and good, but to postulate that these corporations must make a profit to protect the interests of taxpayers is a stretch.

January 17, 2014



Press Release: UPS today announced that it anticipates fourth quarter 2013 diluted earnings per share of \$1.25. Full-year 2013 adjusted diluted earnings per share are expected to be \$4.57, below the previously provided guidance of \$4.65 to \$4.85. On a reported basis, 2013 diluted earnings are expected to be \$4.61 per share. U.S. results were negatively impacted by the challenges of the compressed peak season coupled with an unprecedented level of online shopping that included a surge of last-minute orders. In an effort to maintain service standards and commitments, UPS took extraordinary measures deploying additional equipment and people. For example, the company utilized 85,000 temporary employees, 30,000 more than planned. Also, weather events in December weighed on results.



Post & Parcel: Austrian Post has ruled out laying off thousands of postal workers as it continues to adjust its network to falling mail volumes. The national postal service in Austria issued a “clear denial” of local newspaper reports today, stating that it was “simply wrong” to state that it has plans for a wave of job cuts. The newspaper reports had suggested that 9,000 mail staff were currently in fear of losing their jobs.



Fierce Government: The Postal Service could stay relevant in the digital age by utilizing technology like digitally connected mail carriers and package tracking apps, a Jan. 13 USPS inspector general-IBM white paper says. If the Postal Service equipped mail carriers with a mobile device similar to an iPad they could provide services similar to those available at the Post Office, the paper says. USPS customers could purchase stamps, get their passports processed or debit the correct postage for packages directly through their mail carriers using the mobile device.



Post & Parcel: The US Postal Service has insisted it is scanning and obtaining signatures for inbound international registered mail, after Canada Post complained that it was not. Canada Post issued a statement this week announcing that it has suspended its Registered Mail (USA) service, effective 13th January 2014, because items “may not be scanned and a signature at delivery may not be obtained” after they arrive in the US. The suspension came, Canada Post said, because USPS had changed the way it handles Registered Mail from other countries – processing them within the First Class Mail stream. Canada Post also claimed that the number of claims for lost or undelivered items from its Registered Mail (USA) service had increased “significantly” following the changes.

INDUSTRY ALERT **Mark Your Calendar: Upcoming USPS Branded Color Mobile Technology Promotion Webinar** Thursday, January 23, 2014 2:00 p.m. ET The USPS Mailing Services team will hold a webinar Thursday, January 23rd to discuss the upcoming 2014 Branded Color Mobile Technology Promotion that begins on February 1, 2014. Attention-grabbing QR codes can be the differentiator in getting consumers to become aware of and engage with your brand. This promotion was developed to encourage mailers to expand their print mobile technology usage beyond basic QR codes to include barcodes or other mobile technology with color, graphics and trademarks on their mailpieces. By participating, mailers will have the opportunity to receive a 2% upfront postage discount on qualifying mailpieces that utilize these creative elements. This webinar will provide mailers with a description of program requirements and information about how to participate in this promotion. A short overview of the upcoming 2014 promotions will also be included. Webinar pre-registration is required and lines are limited so please sign up for this informational session today. [Click here](#) to register for the webinar or go to <https://uspsmeetings.webex.com/uspsmeetings/j.php?ED=234178787&UID=3882148&RT=MIMxMQ==> A full description about the Branded Color Mobile Technology Promotion and more information about our 2014 Promotions Calendar can be found on our RIBBS website at: <https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=mobilebarcode>. If you have any questions, please contact the Program Office at mobilebarcode@usps.gov [EdNote: Questions? Why yes. How do participating mailers dodge getting sued by the patent troll plaguing the industry right as this is written?]

Mailers' Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC)

[Open Session.](#)


Presentations from the MTAC Open Session held on January 14th are available on the [Industry Outreach website on RIBBS](#). The presentations are located in the Industry Meetings section under [2014 Presentations for MTAC](#)



At the Postal Regulatory Commission:

- **ACR2013** Order No. 1972 - Notice Regarding the Postal Service's FY 2013 Performance Report and FY 2014 Performance Plan http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88974/Order_1972.docx
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88974/Order_1972.pdf
- **N2014-1** Notice of Intervention of **Association for Postal Commerce**
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88968/PCom_Intervention_N2014-1.pdf
- **N2014-1** American Catalog Mailers Association Notice of Intervention
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88965/ACMA_Intervention_N2014-1.pdf

 **International Mailers Advisory Group:** The International Mailers' Advisory Group's Board of Directors announces the appointment of postal industry veteran [Kate Muth](#) as its new executive director. Muth brings a wealth of experience to the position, getting her start in the industry nearly 20 years ago as an award-winning editor of the trade publication Business Mailers Review. She also served as vice president of the Association for Postal Commerce for four years. Muth formed her own editorial and consulting services company, Muth Communications, in 2008 and has served a range of clients both within and outside the mailing industry. She has written widely on postal topics, and is a regular contributor to trade publications, including Mailing Systems Technologies and the Prescott Report.

 **Federal Daily:** The National Association of Letter Carriers this week praised Congress for preserving six-day mail delivery service in the bipartisan omnibus spending bill released this week. "We are grateful that Congress recognizes the value of Saturday delivery to millions of American businesses that rely on the most efficient last-mile delivery system in the world," NALC President Fredric Rolando said in a statement on the union's website. Rolando said that while the union was pleased that Congress resisted calls to move to five-day mail delivery, he urged lawmakers to enact reform legislation that will enable USPS to pursue innovation and growth "without dismantling the retail, processing and delivery networks that make it a national treasure."



Office of the Inspector General:

- [Business Service Network \(BSN\)](#) The OIG is currently conducting an audit on the effectiveness of the Postal Service's Business Service Network (BSN). We would like to hear from you.
- [CIGIE Cloud Computing Initiative](#) For this nationwide project, we are reviewing the progress the Postal Service is making towards implementing cloud computing services. Specifically, we are reviewing cloud service contracts to determine if roles and responsibilities, performance standards, and other clauses are included in the contracts. We are also reviewing how the Postal Service monitors and maintains its cloud service contracts and if the cloud service providers comply with applicable standards.



According to postal commentator Gene Del Polito, it is possible for the Postal Service to thrive, let alone survive, within a framework that limits market-dominant services postal rate increases within the bounds of inflation. All it takes is a little creativity on the Postal Service's part -- and a keen desire not to punish its customers with higher than necessary postal costs and rates.



The latest issue of the [PostCom Bulletin](#) is available online. In this issue:

- Here are changes the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is considering for their mark-up on January 29.
- The USPS earlier this week made a series of announcements at the Mailers Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC) meeting, kicking off 2014 with an upcoming appeal concerning the exigency decision, potential postal reform legislative talks, a delay in Phase 2 of Network Rationalization and the associated service standard changes, and a push toward its load leveling proposal.
- The USPS at this week's Mailers Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC) Open Session reported that it will delay the next phase of its Network Rationalization initiative, which included more plant consolidations as well as service standard changes which were slated to begin in February 2014. Postmaster General Pat Donahoe told meeting attendees that there are issues that need to be resolved before moving ahead with the plan, and said that the USPS would give mailers at least 90 days notice before going ahead

with the changes. Postal officials later in the meeting discussions noted that the USPS will continue to conduct some plant consolidations through its Area Mail Processing (AMP) initiative and that the established notification time lines would apply in those situations. The USPS noted that it will publish the delay in the next phase of Network Rationalization in an upcoming Federal Register notice.

- Mailers and association representatives attending this week's MTAC meeting repeatedly advised postal officials from the Postmaster General on down through the USPS' senior representatives that the exigency price increase that will take effect on January 26, 2014, will have a negative impact on revenue and volume – and that the change may not be seen right away.
- The USPS at this week's MTAC meeting re-capped some of the information provided in its January 10, 2014, industry webinar on its Standard Mail DSCF Load Leveling plan.
- In addition to fulfilling its other primary responsibilities, Commission initiatives in FY 2013 focused on improving those regulations that enable it to carry out its mission of ensuring the transparency and accountability of Postal Service activities, and ensuring universal service. Here are the 2013 Highlights from the Postal Regulatory Commission's Annual Report.
- They got those post-exigency postal blues. Talking innovation with the USPS CMO. Postal Service bypasses union workers in deal with Staples. North Dakotans express USPS concerns. Fewer jobs, longer wait times: The new USPS slogan? House and Senate agree on spending bill. Rate hike will harm Postal Service. Why the USPS can win the battle for the sameday delivery market. Clerks hit hardest by USPS cuts, stats show, headquarters grows. Berkeley: Congress offers hope to post office activists. Neither rain . . . nor contract. PRC's Goldway tells what was behind the exigency decision. The spending bill's biggest losers. USPS on IMb patent issues. USPS reports alternative access growth. 2014 National Postal Forum shaping up.
- Industry announcements from the USPS.
- Announcement of postal related Federal Register Notices.
- An update from the USPS Office of Inspector General.
- Postal news from around the world.
- Postal previews

Hey! You've not been getting the weekly PostCom Bulletin--the best postal newsletter anywhere...bar none? [Send us by email](#) your name, company, company title, postal and email address. Get a chance to see what you've been missing.



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[Washington Post](#): Sen. Tom Coburn (R-Okla.), a doctor and outspoken fiscal conservative, announced late Thursday that he will step down after the current congressional session ends early next year.


[Washington Post](#): With its steep financial challenges, the U.S. Postal Service desperately needs to find innovative solutions, including new ways to deliver services to the public. A pilot project with Staples stores around the nation does that. But feeling ignored in this equation are postal workers left watching as their jobs go to private employers who can pay their employees less, even as postal employment plummets. **The largest postal employee union and a U.S. senator say the pilot also is a step toward privatization of the USPS, an assertion the postmaster general vehemently denies.** Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.), chairman of the federal workforce subcommittee, doesn't think USPS provides great service, and he also warns against privatization. Tester said he doesn't object to postal products being sold in stores, but he was critical of Donahoe for seeking to shut postal facilities, which Tester said would delay deliveries. Delivery standards are a personal issue with Tester, an issue he wants addressed in postal reform legislation that has bounced around Capitol Hill for years. **Donahoe "can say whatever he wants," Tester said, "but I think he wants to privatize.** And I think there's plenty of people in Congress who agree with that. I don't."




[ECNS](#). FedEx, the US-based operator of the world's largest cargo airline, will accelerate development


of logistics services for sensitive medical and pharmaceutical products as it races to catch up with other established rivals in the China market.


 [Post & Parcel](#): FedEx Express has boosted its service in western and midwestern Canada, with the expansion of an airport facility and two new daily flights. The company said today that it has completed a new facility to improve its services in and around Calgary, Alberta. FedEx Express has also added new daily flights between its World Hub in Memphis and Winnipeg, Manitoba and Vancouver Island, British Columbia. The US express giant said its expansion was driven by demand for its next-day shipping, deferred delivery, large-consignment air freight and specialised solutions, particularly among the small business sector.

 [London Southeast](#): Escher Group Holdings PLC said Friday the patent for its Electronic Business Postal System had been approved by the United States Patent and Trademark Office and the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore. The system allows two-way communication of messages between mailboxes on a secure system.


 [JTA](#): The charge that Polish Jews are discriminated against in the service of the Polish postal administration was made by Deputy Ciolkasz, member of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) at yesterday's session of the Budget Commission. The charge was substantiated in a statement made by the Jewish Deputy Rosmarin. He pointed out that in the Warsaw Jewish quarter, Nalewki, where there were Jewish mail carriers even during the Czaristic regime, the number of Jewish postal employees is negligible. The Postal Minister Miedzinski, in reply, declared that his department does not discriminate against Jewish employees. It is true that applicants for employment must state their race and religion, but the fact of the matter is that Jewish applicants are reluctant to accept the positions of post carriers because of the difficult work and low wages.


January 16, 2014


 [IPPMedia](#): The Pan African Postal Union (PAPU) is working on a project geared to connect 30,000 post offices with internet facilities in Africa, particularly in countries, where such services are yet to be established. PAPU has started providing regular training for post staff particularly on the effective use of information and communication technology (ICT).


 [ITWeb](#): International digital mapping company mapIT has built a geospatial layer that is South African Post Office (SAPO) compliant, in a bid to help businesses capture accurate customer address data. SAPO uses this information to help more than 17 000 employees in the collection, sorting and delivery of letters and parcels for more than 1.5 billion mail pieces processed every year. The data also assists with the management of over 2 400 postal outlets throughout the country.


 [MarketFlash](#): E-commerce growth boosts end-of-the-year parcel volumes and returns in Europe AMERICAS E-commerce boom creates parcel delivery records at Canada Post ■ U.S. Postal Service readies for holiday returns ■ EUROPE E-commerce, logistics drive postal growth, IPC report finds ■ Brussels tells parcel firms to improve European cross-border deliveries ■ Managerial appointments ■ Austrian Post deploys new sorting system in Linz ■ DHL Express receives 100th TAPA certification in Europe ■ Logistics companies could become the “search engines of the real world” ■ Exapaq opts for SmartWater solution ■ Itella parcel deliveries increase by one million ■ Poste Italiane buys Alitalia stake as Etihad poised to swoop ■ €111 million extra online sales in the Netherlands thanks to Christmas purchases ■ PostNL opens parcel points at GAMMA and KARWEI home improvement centres ■ Russian SPSR continues service expansion as express gains market share ■ TNT Express wins exclusive contract with Gibson


 [Kingsport Times-News](#): Imagination Library books that are delivered to the wrong address are now being shredded by the United States Postal Service instead of volunteers being allowed to pick them up. For years, the USPS would allow volunteers with Imagination Library to reclaim the books. That started to change about a year ago.


 [Intelligencer Writers Group](#): Services are customer driven, no? Canada Post intends on derailing that. CEO Deepak Chopra's comments about seniors needing exercise to community mailboxes shocked me for their detachment from reality. Canada Post assures they'll closely consult consumers as they... ignore us and plod ahead. No other industrialized countries have done this – not Britain, nor Australia. Not even the US where they retain Saturday delivery. And those with community boxes didn't just need ice cleats to get mail this winter... they described finding entire group boxes wide open because they weren't properly shut... exposing everyone's mail to theft. We've never encountered this with home delivery. Claiming community boxes are safer is utterly false.


 [Business Recorder](#): Pakistan Post launches a comprehensive Postal IT Suit catering to all their Postal needs, in collaboration with 360 Technologies and Pakistan Post foundation, meeting to the international standards defined by UPU to match the race. The solution will be comprised domestic and international mail system, complaint management system, SMS notifications with events delivery and booking as well as with the complaint lodging and closure.


 [KERO](#): Nearly two dozen indictments were handed out following a yearlong federal investigation into mail theft. Operation Broken Mailbox is an ongoing effort involving a surge of postal inspectors and analysts working with local law enforcement partners to investigate and prosecute stolen mail offenses. Operation Mailbox was initiated following postal customer complaints about mail thieves who were attacking collection boxes via “fishing” techniques, prying open boxes in post office lobbies, breaking into postal delivery trucks, and counterfeiting postal keys to compromise collection boxes. The Postal Inspection Service deployed postal inspectors and analysts with strong mail theft investigation backgrounds from around the country to the Eastern District of California beginning in April 2013 to work with postal inspectors already assigned to Sacramento, Fresno, and Bakersfield.

 [Canoe.ca](#): Canada Post's decision to stop delivering mail to Canadians' doors has prompted many carriers to quit, often just a few years short of retirement, QMI Agency has learned. Resignation letters from carriers and post-office workers suggest the cuts announced late last year have shattered morale among some workers at the Crown corporation. Canada Post announced last month that it will be phasing out door-to-door delivery in favour of community mailboxes as it faces hundreds of millions of dollars in losses. The shift to community mailboxes will affect roughly five million Canadians in mostly urban areas who still get mail at the door. The changes will be phased in over five years, beginning in late 2014. See the story from [CKNW](#) below.

 [Output Links](#): Smart mailers are moving ahead with Intelligent Mail Full-Service, despite the recent Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) ruling and the subsequent USPS decision to delay the mandatory implementation. The January 2014 mandate may have been postponed, but Full-Service is not going away.

 [Toronto Star](#): What's with Canada Post? The way it handles itself suggests a deliberate strategy of self-destruction. The post office's latest misstep is its ill-starred attempt to tack a \$5 surcharge on parcels delivered to Fort McMurray, Alberta. The ostensible reason had to do with the high wage rates paid in Alberta's oilsands. Canada Post said it couldn't afford to deliver parcels there unless customers forked over more cash.

 [Washington Examiner](#): Letter carriers stalking customers and postal employees getting personal in the back room while on duty were among the stranger incidents involving U.S. Postal Service employees in recent years, according to the agency's [inspector general](#). In perhaps the strangest case, a mail carrier in Maine became overly friendly with a female customer, showing her a photo of himself dressed as a woman and asking whether she liked men dressed in drag. When the carrier wouldn't leave her alone, the customer reported him. He hired an attorney, refused to talk to the IG, and the case was referred to the Postal Service for administrative action. The records made public are unclear as to the final outcome of the case.

 [Reporter Herald](#): Larimer County Sheriff's Office investigators are working with the U.S. Postal Inspector on recent mail thefts reported in the Bellvue area. According to a news release, several victims have reported checks and credit cards stolen from their incoming mail, which have subsequently been used fraudulent in various locations throughout Colorado. The affected area includes portions of Rist Canyon and along the Poudre Canyon highway.

[SFGate](#): Benjamin Wagner, the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of California, discusses the federal crackdown on the surge of thefts from mailboxes across the Central Valley, during a news conference in Sacramento, Calif., Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2014. Working with postal investigators and local law enforcement, at least 27 people have been charged with crimes related to **the break-in of mailboxes in post offices lobbies, neighborhood mailboxes, postal trucks and the counterfeiting of postal keys in search of checks, credit cards, personal identifying information and prescription drugs delivered by mail.**

[CKNW](#): The Canadian Union of Postal Workers says unless the federal government has a big change of heart community mailboxes and the crime that comes with them is just the way of the future. Pacific Region Rep Cindy McDonnell says **break ins at community mail boxes has been an issue for years.** She says it's just going to get worse as Canada Post moves in the wrong direction to try and improve the business from home delivery to communal boxes. "Grow the parcel industry because that's where the money is but you don't destroy the service by taking away from people. If you want to grow a corporate company, any company, you lower prices and increase services and they're doing the complete opposite."

January 15, 2014

[The Week](#): The \$1.1 trillion omnibus spending bill expected to clear Congress this week has a little something for just about everyone — except postal workers. Tucked in among the bill's 1,582 pages are instructions to the U.S. Postal Service "that 6-day delivery and rural delivery of mail shall continue at not less than the 1983 level." Also, "none of the funds provided in this Act shall be used to consolidate or close small rural and other small post offices in fiscal year 2014." That blocks for another year the USPS's bold plan (or a cry for help) from last February to end Saturday delivery. Closing little-used post offices is also a perennial suggestion by the red-ink-bleeding quasi-independent government agency. The Postal Service didn't ask Congress to approve its five-day mail plan, but Congress shut it down anyway. Members of Congress representing rural areas are especially adamant that the USPS serve their constituents. This involves maintaining money-losing post offices in places where other types of service would be more cost-effective.

[RetailAnalysis](#): Coop Danmark, Denmark's largest grocery retailer is partnering with Post Danmark and KEBA to allow customers to collect and send post in 300 Coop Danmark stores.

[Postalnews Blog](#): CFO Joe Corbett has named Scott G. Davis the new Acting Controller VP. He is replacing Tim O'Reilly, who announced his pending retirement last month. Davis previously served as SOX Management Control and Integration Manager. He also has worked as San Mateo Accounting Service Center Manager, Assets and Payables Manager, and District Finance Manager. Davis holds a doctorate and master's degree in business administration and is a certified public accountant. He is an Advanced Leadership Program graduate, a certified Lean Six Sigma Green Belt and is currently working on a project to obtain his Black Belt certification.





[Direct Marketing News](#): *"PRC's Goldway Tells What Was Behind the Exigency Decision" --*


- The point to emphasize with regard to the decision that we made in this case--and that we make in just about every case--is that we rely on established statistical and economic analysis procedures. We do not take new formulas that have been untested or not supported by substantial analysis in the general field.
- **In this case we used the established models for estimating price elasticity. Those models have been in place for over 30 years** and they consider the impact of large price increases, as well as the small ones. And there was no evidence or testimony presented to us that would have supported a different model. **That model [we used] showed fairly small price elasticity. It continued to show mail with very low price elasticity comparable to other essential items like gasoline and prescription drugs.**
- What we did do was to tell the Postal Service to report to us on a regular basis as to how much additional revenue they were receiving as a result of this rate increase, because the focus of an exigency case allows them to recoup the actual money that we can demonstrate they lost during the emergency. Our calculations showed that they should be reimbursed \$2.8 billion and they're going to show us how these new rates provide them with that \$2.8 billion and there will be a cutoff at some point in year


two based on calculations the Postal Service presents to us. The Postal Service also has the flexibility to adjust the rate downward in year two to make sure they get the \$2.8 billion but no more than that.


- We hope the Senate can move forward with legislation. Sen. Carper is working hard to move a bill into markup by the end of the month.
- I testified before Sen. Carper's committee on September 19 and my testimony, which is the view of the Commission, is that the CPI cap is one of the most positive impacts of the current law. It protects ratepayers from large, unpredictable rate increases.

 [FedWeek](#): The USPS inspector general has issued a white paper prepared with IBM looking at ways the Postal Service might better adapt to increasing market demands for information by leveraging a variety of information-gathering technologies and highlighting those most relevant to the postal industry. USPS delivers over 160 million pieces of mail a year but information about physical mail is limited and the paper suggests it could play a much larger role going forward. Mailers and consumers seek real-time information on postal products and services such as tracking and tracing of parcels and new capabilities like directing the place, date, and time of delivery, the paper argues. It said postal management could use that information to prevent service failures, align staffing and equipment to workload, increase workplace safety, and decrease mail theft. Information could also unlock additional capabilities for the public ranging from identity verification services to secure government transactions. Postal sensor nets could further assist with real-time mapping and traffic monitoring, according to the paper, available here: <http://www.uspsoig.gov/>


 [Huffington Post](#): Washington now spends about \$500 billion on private contractors -- more than double what it spent in 2000 even though a thorough investigation by the Project on Government Oversight (POGO) found that Washington pays private contractors almost twice as much as federal employees. In 33 of 35 occupational classifications, federal employees were less expensive. Last March, Senator Claire McCaskill, (D-MO) told a Senate hearing that federal contractors charged overhead of 50 percent or more, even when federal space was provided free. In 2012, contractors were allowed to charge the government as much as \$693,000 per worker. The inability of the private to compete with the public seems to matter little to those who've drunk the private-sector-is-always-better Kool-Aid.


 [Vallego Times Herald](#): The Appropriations Committee report that accompanies the bill was of particular interest to local activists, since it addresses sales of historic property. "The Committee is concerned by reports that the Postal Service is attempting to sell off many of its historic properties without regard for the preservation of these buildings," the report states, suggesting that the sales might not adhere to provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act. It calls on the postal service to "suspend the sale of any historic post office" pending the results of an investigation now underway by the Office of the Inspector General into "whether the Postal Service is complying with its statutory and regulatory requirements in the relocation of services, closure, and sale" of historic post offices.


 [Jackson Hole News & Guide](#): Postal workers may brave rain and snow to complete their appointed rounds but they can't fight a bad contract. That's what hundreds of Jackson residents are fuming about as Jackson's postal mess finally got a hearing in front of Jackson Town Council members last week. Residents have learned that packages received for delivery to post office boxes are routinely returned if addresses on them don't include a box number. The problem in Jackson begins with contracts the post office here has with United Parcel Service and FedEx. Those call for the post office to deliver packages "the last mile." In Jackson, because there is no home delivery, that means putting packages, or notices thereof, in individuals' and businesses' post office boxes. The secret that senders must know is to include both a P.O. box number and street number on the address label. This must be done regardless of what limited options are available for shipping on countless websites. Many of them specifically call only for a street address. That means ignoring Internet instructions — something we've been trained to avoid. The Postal Service has options, including rejecting a senseless contract. UPS and FedEx also could do better. Perhaps they should tell customers it's impossible to deliver in the town of Jackson under the cheapest rate.


 [Daily Mail](#): OMG! The text message is on its way out a little over 20 years after it arrived to revolutionise how the world communicates. New and cheaper 'instant message' alternatives available from smartphones connected to the web, such as Snapchat and WhatsApp, are taking over. The first text was sent on December 3, 1992, when British engineer Neil Papworth, 22, used his computer to send the message 'Merry Christmas' to a mobile phone. The number of texts sent in Britain peaked at 39.7 billion in 2011, having sparked the new language of text speak,


from OMG (Oh My God) to LOL (Laugh Out Loud) and XOXO, meaning hugs and kisses. However, this year the number is predicted to fall to 21 billion, less than half the 50 billion 'instant messages' that will be sent. The pattern is being repeated around the world, where the number of texts sent last year is thought to have fallen by seven billion to 145 billion. *[EdNote: And there hasn't been any real growth in the exchange of mail either.]*


 [Postalnews Blog](#): From Canada Post: Canada-Post-Recently, the United States Postal Service (USPS) changed the way it handles Registered Mail received from other countries. The items are now processed in the First Class mail stream once they arrive in the U.S. This change has resulted in the following: Registered Mail (USA) items may not be scanned and a signature at delivery may not be obtained. The number of claims for lost or undelivered Registered Mail (USA) has increased significantly. As a result of these issues, Canada Post is suspending the Registered Mail (USA) service effective January 13, 2014. The suspension does not apply to Registered Mail sent within Canada or to International destinations. The suspension will remain in place until Canada Post is confident that the service performance of USPS has improved enough to offer the Registered Mail (USA) service to its customers once again. In the meantime, customers who require proof of delivery and a signature are encouraged to use the Xpresspost – USA service which is also available as a prepaid envelope. Xpresspost – USA service is ideal for the difficult-to-replace, time-sensitive and/or confidential documents, such as passports or financial papers, which had previously been sent by Registered Mail (USA).

 [ABCLocal](#): Some Chicago residents say the U.S. Postal Service is delaying delivery of their packages. Postal officials say there is a reason they have been slowed down. Call it the polar vortex pileup. Last week's extremely cold weather meant the postal service was not delivering at full capacity. It caused a backlog of packages at the Wicker Park branch of the post office, which services the West Town neighborhood. Residents there have been waiting several days for deliveries.


 [Detroit CBSLocal](#): A mail carrier has been charged with deserting her job after hundreds of pieces of mail were left on Detroit streets before Christmas. Agents who interviewed Anntina Thigpen say she felt overwhelmed a few weeks before Christmas. Postal Service employees on Dec. 17 began recovering mail on Appoline Street in Detroit. The discoveries lasted for days as snow melted.


 [Federal Times](#): For career U.S. Postal Service employees, the last few years have brought an unrelenting wave of cutbacks. In its latest annual report, the agency furnishes some eye-opening numbers on how the downsizing has affected different segments of its workforce. The overall career headcount declined by more than one-fifth from 2009 to 2013 (surely one of the sharpest drops in USPS history). But the ranks of clerks and nurses plummeted by one-third and the number of employees classified as "professional, administration and technical" fell almost as steeply. Virtually all of the cuts, it should be noted, were accomplished without reductions-in-force. The one sector to grow during that time was headquarters staff (not counting field support), which increased a little more than 5 percent. FedLine asked the Postal Service earlier this month what might account for the increase.

 [WICS](#): Some Staples stores are going postal. But union members with the cash-strapped United States Postal Service aren't happy about the ins and outs of the decision. More than 80 Staples locations across the country will soon have postal counters where people can take their mail and use other USPS services. But as of now, those counters won't be staffed by USPS employees. Instead, they'll be staffed by Staples employees. That, union members say, is a problem. "They're taking a risk that it could be lost, that they could just not care when it gets delivered," James O'Connell of the American Postal Workers Union said. "They could put it somewhere else. I mean, there's a safety issue here, and that's what the qualified postal employees are all about, is protecting the mail." The union president of Lincoln Land Area 239 delivered a letter to Staples in Springfield today, voicing the unions' concerns.


 [Forbes](#): Despite a slow start to its same-day delivery program for e-commerce purchases, the U.S. Postal Service is in a strong position to challenge FedEx, UPS and other competitors in that potentially lucrative market. Same-day delivery promises to be a fierce battleground for carriers and online merchants. It is already being offered in the Bay Area and elsewhere by FedEx, UPS, Amazon.com, eBay and Google Shopping Express, among others, but demand remains tepid. But the Postal Service might be in the best position to fulfill the physical requirements of same-day service, according to Harry Whitehouse, chief technology officer and co-founder of Endicia. "Starting around 4 p.m., it has vehicles largely sitting in parking lots," he said. Google and eBay, by contrast, have had to invest in cars

and staff their fleets with new hires. In addition to its existing fleet and experience in reaching every residential address, the Postal Service is not tied to any particular seller. "It has the ability to be a player whenever this market opens up," Whitehouse said.

 **Wall Street Journal:** A federal appeals court on Tuesday opened the way for broadband providers to charge content companies for faster speeds, striking down federal rules that had required equal treatment of Internet traffic. The court said the FCC regulations were impermissible because they required broadband providers to serve the public indiscriminately, leaving companies with little or no flexibility over how to manage their networks. The court also threw out an FCC rule that barred providers from blocking Internet traffic outright. The concept of net neutrality was part of President Barack Obama's campaign platform in 2008. The FCC and its backers said allowing Internet providers to charge content companies more for faster service could threaten future innovation by making it harder for startups and others without deep pockets to reach consumers effectively.

 **The Hill:** Let's face it, the U.S. Postal Service is facing a large financial problem, and everyone agrees that it must be fixed. However, the exigency rate increase on the price of postage, recently approved by the Postal Regulatory Commission, amounts to little more than a short-term stopgap measure. Even worse, it will ultimately cause further damage to the long-term viability of the Postal Service. Sure, the agency might see some short-term increases in revenue. But in an industry already fraught with competitive pressures, it makes no sense to add another negative feature that will lead to lower mail volume levels, while failing to bring about comprehensive postal reform. Read more: <http://thehill.com/opinion/op-ed/195443-rate-hike-will-harm-postal-service#ixzz2qQ3pEoZl>
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January 14, 2014



[Welcome to another PostCom Postal Podcast](#)

*Join PostCom President Gene Del Polito and **Michael Ravnitzky**, chief counsel to the Chairman of the Postal Regulatory Commission in a discussion on the role played in PRC proceedings by the Public Representative.*



Attention Postal One! Micro Strategy Report Users: During the 9.3.1 MicroStrategy Upgrade occurring over the weekend of 1/17/14 thru 1/20/14, we anticipate the following outage schedule:

Internal BMA project:

5-10 minute outage on Friday 1/17/2014 at 8PM CST


5-10 minute outage on Sunday 1/19/2014 at 8PM CST


Saved reports and history list will not be available from 1/17/2014 at 8PM CST to 1/19/2014 at 8PM CST


All other functionality will remain available


External MQR project:


All reports will be unavailable from Friday 1/17/2014 at 8PM CST to Saturday 1/18/2014 at 8PM CST

 **Slate:** The omnibus spending agreement reached by congressional appropriators last night includes specific language requiring the USPS to continue delivering the mail on Saturdays and prohibiting it from closing rural post offices. Now if Congress had decided to appropriate money to keep rural post offices open, I would say that's a not-so-smart use of tax revenue. Then again, a lot of tax revenue is used on not-so-smart schemes to subsidize rural America. But Congress in its wisdom has not delivered any money. The Postal Service continues to be required to operate with an independent budget and to account for its pension obligations in an onerous way. It's just that it's also not allowed to decide which cuts to make in response to revenue shortfalls. Congress over-represents rural areas, anti-spending small government Republicans love big government spending on subsidies for rural life, and regulatory mandates on the Postal Service have hidden rather than transparent costs and so on it goes.

 [New York Times](#): House and Senate negotiators reached accord on a trillion-dollar spending plan that will finance the government through September, reversing some cuts to military veterans' pensions that were included in a broader budget agreement last month and defeating efforts to rein in President Obama's health care law. The hefty bill, filed in the House on Monday night, neutralized almost all of the 134 policy provisions that House Republicans had hoped to include, with negotiators opting for cooperation over confrontation after the 16-day government shutdown in October. Republican and Democratic leaders said they believed they would easily get majorities in the House and Senate, but not without loud protests from both the right and the left. **The bill also explicitly prohibits the Postal Service from cutting Saturday mail delivery or closing rural post offices.**


 [Postal Technology International](#): Austrian Post is installing new software for 1,350 of its postal partners and will provide better IT support for staff. The updated equipment, which is being installed throughout January 2014, will allow all cost-related transactions carried out by postal partners on behalf of Austrian Post to be processed within 24 hours. Around 400 postal partners will also receive additional hardware to efficiently handle large amounts of bank transactions.


 [Government Executive](#): Jobs at the U.S. Postal Service will disappear at a faster clip over the next eight years than in any other labor sector, according to an analysis from the Labor Department. In its 2014-2015 Occupational Outlooks Handbook, the Bureau of Labor and Statistics identified three separate USPS categories that will see a workforce reduction of more than 26 percent by 2022, the three largest declines of the nearly 600 positions from different sectors included in the projections. In other Postal Service news, the agency has asked its regulatory body to allow USPS to alter the delivery schedule for most standard mail. The Postal Service called its plan "load leveling," saying it would create "a more even distribution of mail volume delivered throughout the week." The proposal comes as a double-whammy for the Postal Service's biggest customers, who were infuriated by the recent decision to raise postal rates more than the standard inflationary amount.

 [Daily Trust](#): The Nigerian Postal Service has threatened to withhold mails for the 34 local government councils of Katsina State for failing to pay for services rendered to them.


 [Office of the Inspector General](#):


- [Enriching Postal Information: Applications for Tomorrow's Technologies J\(RARC-WP-14-005\)](#) A new Postal Service Office of Inspector General white paper identifies more than 50 applications of information-gathering technologies that could enhance U.S. Postal Service sales, transportation, delivery, and customer service. In the Digital Age, information about the mail – particularly customer-centric information – is now often as important as the mailpiece itself. The paper suggests the Postal Service examine customer-centric applications that leverage its core competencies and strengths, especially its carrier network, vehicle fleet, and Post Office network.
- [Great Expectations: Enriching Postal Information](#) What if the U.S. Postal Service tapped the vast array of available digital information technologies to enhance sales, operations, and new business development? The possibilities, it would seem, while not endless, are fairly extensive.


 [Wall Street Journal](#): The list of those waging battle with so-called patent trolls already includes big technology companies, Congress and the White House. Now, New York's attorney general is joining that group.


 [Reuters](#): The U.S. Supreme Court said on Monday it would not take on an Internet technology patent case that pitted a company accused of aggressively enforcing weak patents against another with an equally tough reputation for fighting patent infringement claims. The closely watched case involved the online shopping site Newegg Inc, which specializes in computer products, and software company Soverain Software LLC, which had accused Newegg of infringing three patents known as the "shopping cart patents," which describe a way to buy products online and pay for them. Chicago-based Soverain had filed similar lawsuits against a long list of companies, including J. Crew Group, Macy's Inc and Williams-Sonoma. Against Newegg, Soverain won in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas but lost at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, which ruled that the three online shopping patents were invalid because they were obvious. In its filing to the Supreme Court, Newegg argued that the Federal Circuit decision should be upheld. "Petitioner's notorious 'shopping cart' patent merely applies the common


sense concept of a shopping cart to the Internet," Newegg said. Newegg's chief legal officer, Lee Cheng, applauded the decision. Patrick Leahy, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, has sponsored legislation aimed at targeting patent assertion entities (PAEs) - companies often known derisively as "patent trolls" - which buy or license patents and then extract licensing fees or file infringement lawsuits seen as frivolous. The U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill in December that would encourage judges to award fees to the winner of an infringement lawsuit if the judge deems the lawsuit unfounded. The White House urged Congress last June to take steps to curb abusive patent lawsuits that have sprung up in recent years, especially in the technology sector.


 [Financial Times](#): The Post Office has tripled the number of branches offering current accounts to customers as it moves to the next phase of its plan to compete with high street banks. The Post Office is one of several "challenger" banks vying to break up the UK's highly concentrated banking sector by offering a current account, considered the cornerstone of a bank's relationship with customers.

 [The Globe and Mail](#): Bowing to an online uproar, Canada Post is cancelling a \$5 surcharge for all Fort McMurray-bound parcels. The Crown corporation announced it was dropping the surcharge on Monday afternoon, the same day the levy was scheduled to be slapped on commercial parcels. The fee was set to hit all other incoming parcels on Feb. 10.

 [Chicago Tribune](#): A dose of polar cold kept some Chicago-area letter carriers from completing their appointed rounds last week, but the mail was back on schedule this week, a U.S. Postal Service spokesman said.

 [The News-Gazette](#): The U.S. Postal Service processing facility on North Mattis Avenue faces \$144,000 in fines after the Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited the plant for eight violations.


 [Washington Blade](#): The same advocates who worked for years to convince the United States Postal Service to issue its first Harvey Milk postage stamp have launched an all-out effort to win approval for a new stamp honoring Bayard Rustin, the openly gay organizer of the iconic 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The official launch of the Bayard Rustin USA/National Stamp Campaign will be announced at the 2014 Creating Change Conference (Jan. 29-Feb. 2 in Houston) by none other than Rustin's longtime partner, Walter Naegle, who recently also accepted the Medal of Freedom from President Obama on behalf of Rustin, who died in 1987.

 [KFDX](#): The US Postal Service delivered gifts to thousands of consumers last month who were victims of scams involving Moneygram. Millions of dollars are being returned to people who thought they lost it all.




At the Postal Regulatory Commission:


- **ACR2013** Notice of The United States Postal Service of Filing of USPS-FY13-NP28
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88921/Notice.FY13.NP28.pdf>
- **ACR2013** Notice of The United States Postal Service of Filing of USPS-FY13-43
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88922/Notice.FY13.43.pdf>


 [Bloomberg Businessweek](#): Prime Minister Enrico Letta's government will review the aid that Italy's postal system gets from the state, including annual pension relief of almost 1 billion euros (\$1.4 billion), before its partial sale planned for this year, a senior official said. Poste gets funds including those to guarantee service across the country, which in 2012 amounted to 350 million euros, according to its balance sheet. What is not included in the company's official figures is the pension relief paid by the Italian state to cover shortfalls, an amount almost equal to the company's annual profits.

January 13, 2014

 [GPB News](#): The American Customer Satisfaction Index surveys large swaths of consumers about various industries. And in last year's survey, Americans rated Internet service providers at the very bottom for satisfaction.

That puts them below the postal service, health insurance and even airlines. Critics of the telecom industry say Americans are paying too much money for slow speeds and bad service.

 [London Evening Standard](#): One of the architects of Royal Mail's controversial stock-market flotation last October today quit his job, leading to a shake-up of the postal service's board. Mark Higson, head of operations and modernisation, will leave in July after almost seven years at the company. He will be replaced public-affairs supremo Sue Whalley who will step up to become chief operations officer.


 [Lancaster Eagle Gazette](#): The U.S. Postal Service had a good holiday season, if only because UPS — and to some extent Fedex — did not. Those businesses struggled to deliver some packages in time for Christmas. But for the Postal Service's mail deliverers, it was business as usual. In fairness to the former United Parcel Service, that company handled 7.75 million packages nationwide on the Monday before Christmas. On Christmas Day, the Postal Service moved a fraction of that number, 75,000 packages. And unlike UPS and Fedex, the USPS is losing money — lots of it.


January 12, 2014


INDUSTRY ALERT


- **Going Mobile.** Since the launch of the Postal Service mobile application (app), more than 4.6 million people have downloaded the app in its iPhone, Android and BlackBerry configurations. No matter the device, customers can use the app to track packages, find Post Office locations, calculate shipping prices, look up ZIP Codes, schedule pickups, order supplies or request hold mail services. The iPhone application, released in December 2009, has been downloaded by 3.6 million customers and is ranked the 11th most popular free business application in the Apple App Store. The Android application, released in March 2011, has been downloaded about 900,000 times. Each platform application has recorded millions of visits. Customers using the iPhone version are visiting USPS online more than 1 million times each week.
- **January 2014 Postage Statements Available on Postal Explorer** The January 2014 Postage Statements are posted on Postal Explorer (<http://pe.usps.gov/>) under the January 2014 Price Change Information tab on the left-hand side.

January 11, 2014

 [Toronto Star](#): Canada Post is apologizing for failing to notify customers of delivery delays over the past three weeks, and is implementing a new alert system to keep them better informed. “We should have notified those customers, and that’s why we’re apologizing completely,” said spokesman Jon Hamilton. When asked if the apology was also on behalf of embattled Canada Post CEO Deepak Chopra, Hamilton said: “Yes, Chopra, and all of Canada Post.” Chopra has been under fire for remaining silent this week as frustrated residents, who went weeks without mail, demanded that he publicly address the delivery problems and apologize.

 [Hattiesburg American](#): Larry Speakes, who spent six years as acting press secretary for President Ronald Reagan, has died in his native Mississippi. He was 74. After resigning in 1987, Speakes worked for Merrill Lynch in New York. He returned to Washington in 1988 and worked in public relations for Northern Telecom and the U. S. Postal Service, retiring in 2008. Speakes had Alzheimer's disease and died in his sleep. The [New York Times](#) has a much longer story on Speakes.


 [KXNews](#): Concerns with the postal service are on the rise and federal cutbacks continue to threaten services--especially in rural areas. Senator Heidi Heitkamp meets with officials in Dickinson to discuss challenges the United States Postal Service face in our state. Heitkamp has heard complaints from many North Dakotans about delays in the mail service. Small communities fear their rural service is also at risk. Heitkamp says she's working to improve the current postal situation in our state and is working to make sure rural services are protected.

 [The Mirror](#): Royal Mail announced price hikes today - just months after being sold by the Government on the cheap. The newly privatised postal giant is jacking-up prices for business post by as much as 4.1% in April this year.


The increase will hit other postal operators that collect items from big customers, such as banks and energy companies, before sorting them and paying Royal Mail to deliver to homes. The blow comes amid growing fears that the firm will raise stamp prices at the same time. A first class stamp already costs 60p, having more than doubled since 2002.

At the Postal Regulatory Commission:


- **N2014-1 USPS-LR-N2014-1/7** - Load Leveling of Standard Mail Test: Standard Operating Procedures Southern MD P&DC
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88908/LR-7.pdf>
[http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88908/Preface LR N2014-1-7.pdf](http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88908/Preface_LR_N2014-1-7.pdf)


 **MultiHousing News:** Just before the end of 2013 a large shipping company submitted plans for a 1.3-million-square-foot package sorting center in Allen Township, in Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley region. The project was filed with the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission by Moon Township, PA-based FedEx Ground, a subsidiary of the FedEx Corporation that serves businesses and retailers delivering merchandise to customers in no more than five days.


 **From the Federal Register:** Postal Service RULES National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures , 2102–2103 [2014–00324] [[TEXT](#)] [[PDF](#)]


 **AllGov:** The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) has angered the union representing its employees by opening more than 80 retail post offices in Staples stores that will be manned by the company's workers, not USPS ones. The deal with Staples, which was concluded last October, is a pilot project by the Postal Service to create a "one-stop shopping" experience for customers. Depending on how the Staples experiment goes, USPS officials may expand the program with other retailers. But the effort has upset the American Postal Workers Union (APWU), which is threatening to stage demonstrations later this month.

January 10, 2014

 **Wall Street Journal:** U.S. job growth slowed sharply in December amid unusually cold weather, closing out the year on a weak note and potentially dousing the Fed's enthusiasm about the recovery as it winds down its bond-buying program.


 **Direct Marketing News:** Nagisa Manabe, CMO of the USPS, chats with Senior Editor Al Urbanski on the new reality at the Postal Service and what the future holds.

 **AFP:** Italy is planning to sell off a share of up to 40 percent in the state postal service by the end of the year, a junior minister said on Friday, as the government bids to drum up much-needed cash. The majority stake will remain with the state and 30-40 percent of the group will be privatised. [*EdNote: Raise cash?? You mean like the cash Poste Italiane gave to Alitalia to keep it from going under?*]

 **Startups.co.uk:** In the first of our interviews with bosses of small business suppliers, DHL Express' boss talks exports and the importance of being online




American Postal Workers Union: The APWU's New York Metro Area Local sent delegations to three Staples stores on Jan. 8 and 9 to deliver letters protesting the establishment of postal retail units staffed by low-wage, non-union, non-postal workers.

 **Hamilton Spectator:** Cutting back service dramatically and the elimination of home mail delivery, at the same time as a huge increase in postage rates, is not the way to go to improve the postal service in Canada. [*EdNote: Well, it also doesn't work particularly well in the United States.*]



[Office of the Inspector General: Fiscal Year 2013 Financial Testing Compliance Oversight Reviews Full Report | Highlights](#)

 **NHK:** Japan's communications minister has pledged more support to help Myanmar adopt Japanese-style postal services. Yoshitaka Shindo met Myanmar President Thein Sein in the country's capital Naypyidaw on Thursday. Thein Sein asked Japan for financial and technical assistance to enhance Myanmar's mail system. He said his country needs to improve its postal functions. Shindo said Myanmar will be the first nation to import his country's postal system as a package. He noted improving the postal services will help develop Myanmar as a whole.




The latest issue of the [PostCom Bulletin](#) is available online. In this issue:


- House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa (R-Calif.) announced the introduction of legislation to allow the U.S. Postal Service to implement a modified six-day delivery schedule and repeal reductions in military pensions made by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.
- Commissioner Acton named PRC Vice Chairman. Vice Chairman Acton is presiding officer over load leveling docket. Flexible workforce lowers USPS wages – and hurts productivity. USPS isn't protecting its intellectual property, IG says. Dates set for 2014 price change. How much longer will Netflix's DVD cash cow last? Reform needed, not higher rates. Advertising Age to reduce its print frequency. APC Postal Logistics expands operations to US west coast. 'Mobile advertising to triple' in next four years says Juniper Research. Software & Information Industry Association blasts PRC approval of USPS rate increase. Correction on IMpb implementation.
- An update from changes to the Domestic Mail Manual.
- Announcement of postal related Federal Register Notices.
- An update from the USPS Office of Inspector General.
- Postal news from around the world.
- Postal previews.


Hey! You've not been getting the weekly PostCom Bulletin--the best postal newsletter anywhere...bar none? [Send us by email](#) your name, company, company title, postal and email address. Get a chance to see what you've been missing.



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 **Post & Parcel:** Fifteen years of European countries opening up their postal markets to full competition has an “overwhelmingly negative” result, according to a new report produced for trade union groups. The report, The Liberalization of European Postal Markets and the Impact on Employment and Working Conditions, claims that liberalisation has not brought the results the EU promised, that postal services for citizens have declined while expansion has been limited to privatised business services. Produced for trade union groups UNI Europa Post and Logistics Trade Union, the report suggests that competition has failed to materialize properly in liberalised markets, and the limited competition that has appeared has fostered a climate of job losses and worsening working conditions for postal staff.

 **ITV:** Labour has accused the Government of a "botched privatisation" over its sale of Royal Mail, claiming taxpayers have been short-changed by hundreds of millions of pounds. When the sell off took place in October, Business Secretary Vince Cable said the move should not be judged until at least three months' time. Tomorrow marks three months to the day that Royal Mail shares went on sale - and they will open 70% higher than their original £3.30 price.

 **Direct Marketing News:** Joe Schick wasn't surprised by the lumps of coal left in mailers' stockings by the Postal Regulatory Commission on Christmas Eve. Like other stakeholders who'd been following the exigency drama, he'd


hoped a reduced number might be put into play by the PRC, but he didn't blink when he learned that the PRC went for the full 4.3% increase. Instead, Quad/Graphics' long-time director of postal affairs had the resigned attitude of a man whose wife had run off with his best friend and stole his car to do it. "I'm never surprised at what comes out of the Postal Service or the Commission," Schick says, though it's clear that the timing and the aggressiveness of the Christmas assault on mailers had cut to the bone.


January 9, 2014




At the Postal Regulatory Commission:

- **Annual Report to the President and Congress FY 2013**
[http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88871/AR2013_FINAL_PDF_\(2\)_3455.pdf](http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88871/AR2013_FINAL_PDF_(2)_3455.pdf)
- **Docket No. N2014-1 - DSCF STANDARD MAIL LOAD LEVELING.** The Postal Service has filed another request for a Commission advisory opinion regarding potential changes in the way the Service processes and dispatches Standard Mail that qualifies for a Destination Sectional Center Facility (DSCF) discounted rate. The Postal Service refers to their proposal as the "Load Leveling Plan". The Commission plans to expedite the advisory opinion proceeding.
<http://www.prc.gov/Docs/88/88763/Request.FINAL.pdf>

 **The Island:** Plans are underway to further develop postal ties between Vietnam and Sri Lanka. A meeting was held between Postal Services Minister Jeevan Kumaranatunga and Vietnam Ambassador Ton Sinh Thanh yesterday at the Ministry of Postal Services in Colombo. The duo discussed at length strengthening of postal services between the two countries and agreed to exchange know-how for the betterment of postal services in both countries.

 **Herald Online:** MoneyGram, a leading global money transfer and payment services company, today announced an agreement with Postal Savings Bank of China Co. Ltd (PSBC), a large commercial retail bank in China, to provide money transfer services in over 3,700 locations. With the addition of PSBC to MoneyGram's agent network, and the rollout of MoneyGram's money transfer services to mainland locations, services are now available at over 20,000 locations in China.


 **Milwaukee Journal Sentinel:** If you haven't gotten much mail since the extreme cold hit early this week, be patient, the U.S. Postal Service says: It all should start streaming in again, with temperatures starting to rise Thursday. The motto may say that neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stops the mail, but during the recent subzero weather only first-class mail got delivered. First class mail includes letters and packages under 13 ounces, and is often used for correspondence, bills or light merchandise. Spokesman Sean Hargadon said this is standard practice in extreme weather. Some other types of mail, like certified and registered mail, also got priority. Junk mail could wait.




DMM Advisory:


- **Revised Postage and Fee Refund Criteria.** On January 3, the Revised Postage and Fee Refund Criteria proposed rule was posted on the [Federal Register](#) website and on the [Postal Explorer®](#) website under [Federal Register Notices](#). The rule proposes to revise the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM®) to update the hourly charges and related postage threshold used in assessing certain types of postage refunds. The rule also proposes to provide customers with refund time periods for extra services fees that align with the revised claims filing periods being made effective on January 6, 2014. We look forward to your comments on this proposal by February 3, 2014.
- **Reminder: NCOALink® Alternative PAF Renewal Policy.** The Postal Service™ has implemented a new alternative to the NCOALink® Processing Acknowledgement Form (PAF) renewal process. This alternative method makes the PAF renewal process more effective and less time consuming for NCOALink customers. This policy became effective October 1, 2013. Click here for the full announcement: https://ribbs.usps.gov/ncoalink/documents/announcements/2013_ANNOUNCEMENTS/NewPAFReqSept272013.PDF


Click here for the Complete Guide to processing PAFs:
https://ribbs.usps.gov/ncoalink/documents/tech_guides/PAF_GUIDE.PDF


 **Post & Parcel:** Finland's national postal operator Itella has launched a new long-term personal support programme for employees to help them change jobs as the demand for postal workers reduces. The state-owned company said it is being a responsible employer providing greater support for staff as changes in the traditional postal market mean a reduced need for labour. It said the postal sector is undergoing major transformation as the switch to electronic communications gathers pace.


 **Politico:** Sen. Tom Coburn doesn't seem like a typical cancer patient. The Oklahoma Republican often arrives in his office two hours before his aides, sometimes as early as 4 a.m. He attends virtually all of his committee hearings. And in the evenings, he either dines with his senator buddies at Capitol Hill establishments or attends his weekly meetings of Christians, conservatives and others at his well-known C Street house. But for the past several months, the 65-year-old Coburn has privately been undergoing intensive treatment for a recurrence of prostate cancer, a battle that could end up cutting short his second Senate term, which is scheduled to expire in January 2017. Coburn is currently undergoing chemotherapy, and he may soon have major surgery that could temporarily — or permanently — sideline him from the Senate. When the results of medical tests return in February, Coburn will have a clearer indication of the additional treatment he needs and whether it will interfere with his Senate work.





 **Sun Sentinel:** The U.S. Postal Service has been going through turbulent times in recent years, but postal uniform maker AME's Uniforms in Fort Lauderdale had its best year ever in 2013. "Our business is picking up steam even in a shrinking industry," said Mark Forst, who bought the company in 1998 with his father, Melvin Forst. AME's Uniforms snagged increased market share by aggressively marketing to new postal employees and working with them to make their dollars stretch, Forst said.


 **Bernama:** Pos Malaysia Berhad said today it will continue using the existing address system that the public is accustomed to and will strive to improve its delivery service. The national courier also assured the people that the delivery of all postal articles will be maintained under the existing mailing address and postcode.


 **The Motley Fool:** Amazon has stated it is currently reviewing the performance of delivery companies. The company seems quite ready to take shipping matters into its own hands, as became clear from CEO Jeff Bezos' plans to use drones at some point in the future. According to Amazon, the company passed on all the deliveries to the shippers on time. Declining to give exact figures on how many customers were affected, Amazon stated that only a small percentage of shoppers faced delays. The online retail titan has plenty of cash to throw at the venture of developing its own delivery service, and the backlash it faced as a result of the Christmas delays could serve to expedite the development of these options. If major online retailers such as Amazon decide to launch their own delivery services, shippers like UPS and FedEx could potentially find themselves in a lot of trouble.


 **Reuters:** Italian government officials will meet on Thursday to discuss the sale of a non-controlling stake in the state-owned post office group to lower the country's massive debt, government sources said. Prime Minister Enrico Letta's economic advisor, Deputy Industry Minister Antonio Catricala and Poste Italiane PSTIT.UL Chief Executive Officer Massimo Sarmi are among those who will discuss selling as much as 40 percent of the postal service, sources said. The aim is to sell a stake of the umbrella group rather than shares in its individual banking or insurance units, the sources said. Italy's debt, as a percentage of output, is surpassed only by Greece in the European Union.

 **MoneyTalks News:** Now that the dust is settled and all the delayed holiday packages are (hopefully) where they're supposed to be, we couldn't help but wonder: Do UPS and FedEx guarantee on-time delivery of packages or you get your money back? Sometimes they do, but sometimes they don't, says Mouse Print, a website dedicated to looking at all of the fine print most of us can't be bothered about.

 **Green Optimistic:** For delivery companies, such as FedEx, UPS, and USPS, electric vehicles have only been useful for short routes, but the addition of a hydrogen fuel cell (HFC) range-extender could solve that problem.

 **GCN:** The U.S. Postal Service put a new face on an old system to make life easier for workers seeking access to business and productivity applications. The organization's upgraded and updated access control system, modeled on online app stores, replaces client/server vintage technology. The new technology gives users a more streamlined way to identify the apps they need and request access to them. Currently, more than 300 apps are available through the access application. USPS expects to have 400 to 500 apps available over time.

 **PR.com:** On December 24, the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) voted 2-1 to approve an exigent, or "emergency," postage rate increase of 4.3 percent, the full amount requested in September by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). This increase is to be applied in addition to the CPI increase of 1.7 percent, totaling a 6 percent increase for periodicals. In response, Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA) President Ken Wasch issued the following statement: "We remain very disappointed that the PRC has continued to ignore the lack of discipline, efficiency and overall fiscal responsibility of the USPS, and instead chose to place a continued and unjustified rate increase on the B2B industry. While the PRC at least had the good judgment to reject the USPS request to make this a permanent increase, we will begin 2014 assessing the opportunities to appeal or further limit the duration of this harmful increase."

 **Government Executive:** A union representing U.S. Postal Service employees is staging protests later this month against a pilot program that opened retail postal spaces at Staples office supply locations, complaining the resulting jobs are staffed by non-postal workers. The Postal Service reached an agreement with Staples in October 2013 to put retail units in more than 80 stores, with the possibility of expanding dramatically, to create a "one-stop shopping" experience for customers. Staples, however, has staffed the postal areas with its own employees. For the American Postal Workers Union, this represents a lost opportunity to grow services using postal employees whom USPS customers can trust.

January 8, 2014



At the Postal Regulatory Commission:

- On-Roll and Paid Employee Statistics (ORPES), December, FY 2014
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88864/Copy_of_20140106084409531.xlsx
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88864/Letter_ORPES_DecFY14_20140108153216.pdf
- Postal Service Active Employee Statistical Summary (HAT Report), Pay Period 26, FY 2014
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88863/Letter_HAT_PP26_FY14_20140108153136.pdf
[http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88863/Postal_Service_Active_Employee_Statistical_Summary_\(HAT_report\)_PP26,_FY_2014.pdf](http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88863/Postal_Service_Active_Employee_Statistical_Summary_(HAT_report)_PP26,_FY_2014.pdf)

INDUSTRY ALERT **January 2014 Pricing Implementation.** The prices as posted on Postal Explorer are now final for the January 26, 2014 implementation. The prices can be accessed at pe.usps.com. They are listed under the "**January 2014 Price Change Information**" header.



Enhancing the Value of Mail -- Discussion Forum. *Tuesday, January 21, 2014 9 - 11 a.m. EST USPS OIG Headquarters 1735 N. Lynn Street, Rosslyn, VA*
Please RSVP by Tuesday, January 14th to: Kelly Fryberger kfryberger@usps.oig.gov (703) 248-2260

"The Postal Service OIG completed a project that explored **how mail can be enhanced from the perspective of Digital Natives**. Specifically, we conducted focus groups with Digital Natives to determine how they currently use and perceive the mail. We also had them reflect on examples of mail features that may enhance the mail's value to them, such as unique designs and digitally interactive printed material. The results of this work may shed light on how the Postal Service and its stakeholders can enhance the value of mail for all recipients."

1. Go

to <https://usps.oig1.webex.com/usps.oig1/j.php?ED=218574122&RG=1&UID=0&RT=MIMxMQ%>


[3D%3D](#)

2. Register for the meeting.


Once the host approves your request, you will receive a confirmation email with instructions for joining the meeting.


Attention Postal One! Users:


- **PostalOne!® Release 37.0.0 Deployment** — will require an extended maintenance window to complete all software updates. There will be a PostalOne! outage from 12:00AM(midnight) CT through 9:00AM CT, on Sunday, January 12, 2014. A mandatory Mail.dat® client download will be available immediately following the software update. Release notes for PostalOne! Release 37.0.0 can be found on [RIBBS](#) by clicking on Major/Minor Release Schedule/ 2014 Releases in the left-hand navigation bar or by going directly on [RIBBS](#).
- **PostalOne! Release 37.0.0 Deployment to Test Environment for Mailers (TEM)** — will occur on Monday, January 13, 2014, and PostalOne! TEM will be unavailable from 5:30AM CT through 3PM CT.


 [All About Windows Phone](#): Spending on mobile advertising is set to triple over the next four years, rising from \$13 billion to \$39 billion by 2018, says the latest industry report from Juniper Research. The majority of the increase in the spend will be concentrated on major networks such as Facebook and Twitter, rather than through third party mobile advertising services. That doesn't mean that developers and publishers who rely on in-app advertising will be left out of the bonanza, there is a case to be made that the rising tide (of advertising money) will lift up everyone involved in this industry, but as more people move to mobile devices (including smartphones, but especially tablets) the general advertising spend is going to move from web and print towards the portable screens.

 [Logistics Manager](#): La Poste and Swiss Post have merged their UK operations to form a new business, Assendia UK, focused on the international mail market. The new business incorporates La Poste UK (including Pitney Bowes IMS UK), Swiss Post International (UK) and Bedfordshire-based BTB Mailflight. The head office is at Heathrow within newly extended Swiss Post International facilities.

 [SBS](#): The British may have created the world's first postage stamp, but it was one of its Australian colonies that initiated its use for pre-paying the delivery of letters. NSW Governor Sir George Gipps, unimpeded by a doubting parliament, acted on his own by announcing in November 1838 that letters affixed with a 1.5-penny stamp would be delivered free. A few months later, British postal authorities issued the famous Penny Black for official use there. The innovation was a boon for the then 300-year-old Royal Mail and its much younger colonial cousins, in the business for only 30 years. And despite the technological advances in the 175 years since, we're still sticking postage stamps on letters. The trouble for both the Royal Mail and Australia Post is that we are doing it less and less.

 [ITWeb](#): Africa: Ghana's postal service company has recorded a drop in its traditional mail service as the country's population shifts towards electronic means of communication, like email. It has been reported that the Ghana Post (GP) company experienced revenue loss as stamp sales dropped from 10.1 million Ghanaian cedi in 2011 to 8.6 million Ghanaian cedi in 2012. Abdulai Abdul Rafiu, managing director of GP said the growing internet and telecommunications sectors are dominating the postal scene in that country.

 [Bernama](#): Zimpost, the Zimbabwean postal service operator, says it has earned at least US\$300,000 in commission from transactions processed under its new money transfer facility, Zipcash, during the last quarter of 2013. The money transfer service, which was launched on Oct 21 last year, allows Zimbabweans to send money locally and internationally using an electronic platform.

 [Post & Parcel](#): US mail and parcel export specialists APC Postal Logistics have opened a new processing facility in California. The company said the facility opened just ahead of the festive break will serve as the nexus of its West Coast sales and operations in the United States. Expansion will mean enhancing the international delivery and logistics services it offers to online retailers, fulfillment companies, publishers, mail houses and printers in the

Western United States, while extending live customer service hours. The new facility is located in Bell, close to LAX Airport in the Los Angeles area, and is designed to process and export both parcels and mail.



United Parcel Service: Severe weather in the Midwest has caused a significant disruption to operations in Indiana, Michigan, New York, and Ohio, as well as at Worldport®, UPS's main hub in Louisville, Ky. As a result, some shipments may experience unavoidable delays. We have contingency plans in place to minimize service disruptions and are committed to moving shipments to their final destinations as quickly as possible. We are balancing our priorities of customer service and employee safety, and will make every effort to deliver to all areas as conditions safely permit.

Webwire: Holiday returns — an annual rite for millions of gift receivers that starts the day after Christmas — are easy with U.S. Postal Service. The improved shipping products and services from the Postal Service offer the easiest, most stress-free solution for returning gifts after the holidays.

January 7, 2014

New York Times: Advertising Age, the trade publication introduced in 1930, said Monday that it would publish its print edition 25 times a year rather than weekly. The print edition of Advertising Age had been weekly for almost its entire history, except for a period in the mid-1980s when it was published twice weekly. The decision by Crain Communications, the parent of Advertising Age and its website, adage.com, is another example of the changing economics of print publishing in an increasingly digital world. It comes after consumer publications like New York magazine reduced their frequencies in print.


The Capital Times: House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa, R-Calif., has made no secret of his desire to diminish and dismantle the U.S. Postal Service. Issa has for some time now peddled plans to end Saturday deliveries by the USPS — which continues to perform with more agility than private firms, as holiday delivery patterns illustrated — in ways that are all but certain to make the Postal Service vulnerable to privatization. Issa has a right to his opinion. But the cynical determination with which he is now advancing it is jarring.


Nogales International: The Postal Service is just one in a long list of businesses that have been facing the challenge of operating in a changing world. Most others have learned to adapt, but the Postal Service stubbornly clings to doing business essentially the same way it always has. The Postal Service's big problem is its delivery network, specifically door-to-door mail delivery for millions of homes and businesses. Sure it's great to have mail delivered to you, but would it really be that much of a hardship if everyone had to drive a few miles and pick up their mail at a post office? The longer the Postal Service and lawmakers avoid reducing core costs for the delivery network, the more pain will be inflicted upon all who use the mail. Fewer and fewer customers will be paying more and more.


Washington Post: At least five lawmakers have proposed legislation to repeal a controversial pension cut for working-age military retirees included in the budget deal that President Obama signed last month. Most of the bills would replace the estimated \$6 billion in benefits savings with cuts in other forms of spending, from tax breaks for offshore companies to funding for Egypt and Pakistan. One of the more debatable ideas came from House Oversight Committee Chairman Darrell Issa (R-Calif.), who proposed ending Saturday mail delivery from the Postal Service to replace the pension savings. Issa pitched his bill as a measure that would “restore COLAs for military retirees while doubling savings.” But the Postal Service is largely independent from the federal budget, so we wondered how the government could use savings from that agency to pay for military pensions. Setting aside any questions about whether the government can claim savings from an agency that is “off-budget,” labor groups and lawmakers from both parties have spoken out against ending Saturday mail as a way to fix the Postal Service's finances. The National Association of Letter Carriers, a union that represents postal employees, has argued that Congress should instead end a statute requiring the agency to prefund health benefits for its future retirees.


Reviewed.com: Unlike most developed nations, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) does not employ a traditional mail delivery service. Residential delivery is almost unheard of, and the municipal post services only deliver to


registered P.O. boxes. All of this is likely to change soon, with the rollout of a new address system in Dubai. And the new system is facilitated by—of all things—fridge magnets. The Dubai government has assigned a location code to each building, and plans to send fridge magnets with the location code and a scannable QR Code to all residents and business. Not only will this system allow the delivery of mail, but will also be used by other municipal operations, such as fire departments and ambulance services.

 [AllAfrica.com](#): The Sudanese Postal Services Company (SudaPost) and South Sudan's Ministry of Telecommunications and Postal Services have signed on Monday an agreement on postal exchange. The agreement would allow for the resumption of postal services between the two countries following a two-year halt.

 [Forbes](#): Last week I got a call asking me to write a Direct Mail Trends Report ...what I expect to see in 2014. I started to make a list and pretty soon it was almost as complicated as an actual direct mail program. Sorted out simply, the top items on my 2014 trend list included....

 [Federal Times](#): "Postal Service again restrained on top executives' pay in '12"


 [Bangalore Mirror](#): Postal dept to rope in retired staff and contract workers after daily carry-over of mails that need sorting reaches 5 lakh from 50,000 less than a month ago The Railway Mail Service (RMS) of the postal department is reeling under a crisis. The daily carry-over of mails that need to be sorted has shot up from the usual 50,000 to over five lakh mails per day. The net result is that mails are reaching people a day late. Employees say night sorting has been reduced, so that those engaged in sorting will work for an additional three hours during the day. This, they say, has backfired and the mails are piling up. The department, however, says that it is only a temporary problem resulting from shortage of staff. They are now roping in retired employees and contract workers to tide over the situation.


 [Proactive Investors Australia](#): TZ Limited has started the new year with integration partner FBA Italy winning a tender to supply Italian postal service Poste Italiane with its Smart Parcel Locker requirements for an initial pilot program. The Italian contract win will further boost TZ's global presence, adding to the lockers it has already deployed in Australia, Singapore and the United States. The company will supply an initial five locker banks as well as associated software and integration services.



[Commissioner Mark Acton](#) has been named Vice Chairman of the Postal Regulatory Commission.

January 6, 2014


 [The Motley Fool](#): In analyses of Netflix, the DVD segment tends to get short shrift. All things considered, this isn't very surprising: Streaming is clearly the company's main focus, while the DVD-by-mail business is in permanent decline. That said, the DVD segment still makes a critical contribution to Netflix's earnings. It is on pace to generate a contribution profit of \$430 million to \$435 million for 2013, down from \$538 million in 2012. That's more than double the company's total pre-tax profit -- in other words, without the DVD-by-mail business, Netflix would have lost money in 2013. Due to the ongoing membership decline and increasing postage costs, Netflix's DVD segment earnings are likely to fall very quickly in the next two to three years.


 [The Ann Arbor News](#): U.S. Postal Service workers are on the road and working to deliver mail Monday after a winter storm dropped nearly 11 inches of snow on the Ann Arbor area, but a company representative said mail could be delayed because of road conditions. The postal service's policy is to continue to attempt delivery unless there is an extreme situation that would prevent carriers from doing so.





Attention Postal One! Users: January 26, 2014 Mailing Services and Shipping Services Price Change Update — Plant-Verified Drop Shipment. As a reminder, Mailing Services and Shipping Services prices will change on January 26, 2014. Relative to that change, plant-verified drop shipment (PVDS) mailings will be verified and accepted as follows:

- **Current Prices** — PVDS mailings verified and paid for before January 26, 2014, using the current prices, will be accepted at destination entry postal facilities through February 9, 2014, when presented with appropriate verification and payment documentation.
- **New Prices** — PVDS mailings may be verified and paid for beginning January 13, 2014, using the new prices, provided the shipments are not deposited at destination entry postal facilities until January 26, 2014, or later, when presented with appropriate verification and payment documentation.
- For mailings with electronic documentation, mailers must enter a Mail Arrival Date that is on or after January 26, 2014.
- For mailings with hard copy postage statements, USPS acceptance employees must enter a Mail Arrival Date that is on or after January 26, 2014.


 [Fierce Government](#): The Postal Service could help sustain its advertising mail business by adding a scannable code for recipients to provide feedback to advertisers, a report from the office of inspector general says. With their mobile devices, recipients of advertising mail could scan a code or symbol, such as a QR code, to access a feedback form with questions from advertisers. Participants would receive some kind of coupon as a reward. The OIG received the idea from Marshall Van Alstyne, a Boston University management professor, and Geoff Parker, a professor at Tulane University's business school. The pair proposed the digital feedback system in a paper enclosed in the OIG report, dated Dec. 11.

 [Fierce Government](#): The Postal Service doesn't employ a formal process for patenting its inventions and even the most seasoned inventors at the agency don't know which new ideas they should present for patents, a Dec. 18 USPS inspector general white paper says. The IG retained external consultants ipCapital Group to review the Postal Service's current intellectual property strategy for the report (.pdf). Throughout its history, the Postal Service has either invented intellectual assets, such as the ZIP Code, optical character reader technology, address standards and address management techniques. Read more: USPS isn't protecting its intellectual property, Even experienced inventors at USPS find the intellectual asset management process to be unclear, the white paper says. USPS also lacks clear goals on what inventions should be patented and would add the most strategic value to the organization as a whole. The current approach utilizes informal processes between attorneys and inventors, and features a small pipeline of inventions. The IP legal team employs one full-time patent attorney and little administrative support, the paper says. Because of these patenting problems, USPS should develop a more structured and formal intellectual asset management process, the IG says. The process should include periodic, widespread internal education for employees on the importance of IP as well as best practices for generating, capturing and protecting ideas and inventions, the white paper says. Read more: USPS isn't protecting its intellectual property.


 [Sydney Morning Herald](#): Postal systems are grappling with a substantial change to their business model in a digital world. Australia is no different. Former banker Ahmed Fahour was recruited in 2009 with a mandate to manage Australia Post through the change, but this has not yet extended to privatisation. There is room for a discussion about the future of Australia Post, indeed privatisation is a natural extension of the way it has been managed for the past few years. Australia Post, with investments in commercial logistics business - Startrack Express - and a fast-growing parcels delivery arm, making it public largely in name. The sector needs to be revitalised with competition to drive an improvement in services.


 [Sydney Morning Herald](#): Labor has demanded that the federal government say whether it plans to sell Australia Post, as a former commissioner of the competition regulator says the postal service ought to be privatised. Debate flared on Monday after Rod Sims, chairman of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, was reported to be urging the Abbott government to consider selling Commonwealth-owned assets such as Australia Post and Medibank Private. In the ensuing debate, Mr Sims said he was only talking about the benefits of privatisation in general.

 [Nerdylorin.net](#): This is a great site for looking at the benefits of postal rate simplicity.


 [Wall Street Journal](#): Companies worldwide spend roughly \$5 billion a year on software that's supposed to help them mine nuggets of useful information from their troves of Big Data, according to Gartner Inc. But experts say new behavior patterns spurred by retailer promotions and bad weather across the U.S. made it nearly impossible for

analytics tools to predict the last minute scramble for Christmas gifts that left retailers and shippers red-faced with embarrassment and consumers red-faced with anger. Sucharita Mulpuru, a Forrester Research Inc. analyst who follows retail, said while CIOs can use Big Data to make predictions based on what has happened in the past, deviations from those patterns can render prognostications “completely useless.” *[EdNote: And the same could be said for hanging your hat on estimated mail price elasticities based on retrospective data rather than recognizing that disrupting technologies may render such estimates useless....Then again, what the hey....It also took the British Admiralty quite a while to recognize that forming sailing ships into a line of battle was not the wisest way to fight a war at sea.]*

 [The Motley Fool](#): Did you hear the one about the U.S. Postal Service wanting to stop delivering mail on Saturdays? Actually, that's nothing. Up in Canada, the postal service says it's planning to quit delivering mail ... period. Or at least, delivering it door-to-door. Canada's plan makes so much good sense that you could almost imagine USPS wanting to give it a try here, too. Almost.


 [Forbes](#): Simply put, the Post Office's ongoing existence as a government-operated monopoly is a constant reminder to the electorate of the impressive incompetence that is government itself.


January 5, 2014

 [Atlanta Business Chronicle](#): UPS was given a late Christmas present Dec. 27, a potential class-action lawsuit. A complaint was filed against Atlanta-based United Parcel Service Inc., claiming the delivery giant "has for years been systematically overcharging customers." The complaint filed in federal court in Michigan is seeking damages for all customers who used UPS to ship a package and paid for additional coverage for loss or damage from UPS.



[Dead Tree Edition](#): The U.S. Postal Service's shift to a more flexible workforce has reduced average hourly pay, but adding so many new employees has also hindered productivity gains. Downsizing of the workforce, consolidation of facilities and carrier routes, and greater automation are helping USPS work more productively. But the growing volume of labor-intensive parcels, though profitable, tends to mean slower deliveries, as does the increasing number of delivery points.

 [The Telegraph](#): Mark Russell's last word on the Royal Mail relates to the Government's universal service obligation on mail delivery, emphasising that the Royal Mail is the only organisation that could currently meet this. “The key objective of protecting the universal service obligation has been kept. We're not like private equity, this was not a company we cut our ties with. “If anything happened to that business, we'd have to step in . . . if we're selling it, we want it sold in a strong position.”


 [The Nation](#): House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa, R-California, has made no secret of his desire to diminish and dismantle the United States Postal Service. Issa has for some time now peddled plans to end Saturday deliveries by the USPS—which continues to perform more agilely than private firms, as holiday delivery patterns illustrated—in ways that are all but certain to make the postal service vulnerable to privatization. Issa has a right to his opinion. But the cynical determination with which he is now advancing it is jarring.


January 4, 2014


 ***From the Federal Register:***


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|-------------------------------------|--|
| Postal Regulatory Commission | |
| NOTICES | |
| Annual Compliance Report, FY 2012 , | |
| 669–671 [2013–31512] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
| Change in Postal Prices , | |


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| 671–672 [2013–31540] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
| Nationwide Change in Postal Delivery Service Standards , | |
| 672–674 [2013–31510] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
| New Postal Products , | |
| 675–676 [2013–31541] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
| 674–675 [2013–31542] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
| Postal Service | |
| NOTICES | |
| Product Changes: | |
| First-Class Package Service Negotiated Service Agreement , | |
| 676 [2013–31491] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
| Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement , | |
| 676 [2013–31490] | [TEXT] [PDF] |

 [Sierra Sun Times](#): Holiday returns — an annual rite for millions of gift receivers that starts the day after Christmas — are easy with U.S. Postal Service. The improved shipping products and services from the Postal Service offer the easiest, most stress-free solution for returning gifts after the holidays.

 [The Times of India](#): Postal Department has entered the growing market of parcel business with 'Cash on Delivery' now. This new 'Business Parcel' service aims to promote the e-commerce market in India by offering reliable and cost efficient delivery solutions. This service will provide add-on facilities to customers, which include online end-to-end tracking of consignments, cash on delivery facility, insurance, etc.

 [Bloomberg Businessweek](#): There is something politically mischievous about U.S. Representative Darrell Issa's new bill to end Saturday letter delivery. The California Republican announced yesterday that he has introduced legislation that would use the saving from eliminating Saturday delivery to restore cost-of-living adjustments for military retirees that were cut in last year's budget act. Issa is chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, which oversees the money-losing U.S. Postal Service. He has emerged as the primary advocate of postal reform in Congress. But Issa hasn't been able to pass his sweeping reform bills in the House. He can't get any Democratic support, and some of his ideas spook Republicans, too. Rank-and-file members of both parties are leery of alienating voters with service cuts.

 [Washington Post](#): House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa (R-Calif.) introduced the bill. Lawmakers have lined up with legislation to replace the pension cut with savings in other areas after the measure triggered a major backlash from veterans, military groups and many lawmakers, including those who voted for the overall budget. Thursday, saying his plan would trim the federal deficit by about \$17 billion over 10 years. The proposal is likely to draw criticism from postal-worker groups, such as the National Association of Letter Carriers, which has strongly opposed plans to end six-day mail delivery as a means of achieving savings for the financially troubled Postal Service.


 [Newsmax](#): Rep. Darrell Issa has introduced a bill to replace proposed military pension cuts by scrapping Saturday mail delivery. Issa believes that cutting Saturday service would create an estimated \$17 billion reserve over 10 years, replacing a one percent annual cost of living adjustment for some retired military veterans that was included in the 2013 bipartisan budget deal. "This legislation will restore cost of living adjustments for our military retirees and not only replace the savings but nearly triple them, saving \$17 billion over 10 years according to conservative USPS estimates," Issa (R-Ca.), chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, said in a statement. "The common sense reform will help restore the cash strapped Postal service to long-term solvency and is supported by the president and key congressional leaders in both chambers, he said, referring to President Obama's recommendation to eliminate Saturday service in his budget proposal." Package, express, and priority mail delivery would continue. But the cash-strapped Postal Service says it does not have the money to meet


its own obligation to a retiree healthcare trust fund. The USPS has tried to eliminate letter delivery on Saturday in the past, which it estimates would save about \$2 billion a year. The USPS lost \$16 billion in 2012.

January 3, 2014



The Postal Regulatory Commission has posted a position vacancy notice regarding its [office of the General Counsel](#).

 [National Association of Major Mail Users](#): The Minister of Transport and the Minister Responsible for Canada Post, the Honourable Lisa Raitt, needs to hear from business mailers and suppliers whose business activities and in many cases, livelihoods, will be significantly and negatively impacted if Canada Post is allowed to proceed with the outrageous increases to commercial Letter Mail tabled for March 2014. The Minister needs to know that Canada Post's fortunes will spiral downward quickly and certainly as they lose this commercial revenue by pricing themselves out of the market.

 [Copenhagen Post](#): Privately-owned advertisement distribution firms are accusing Post Danmark of using its state subsidies for postal distribution in order to finance its own advertisement distribution operations, financial daily Børsen reports. The allegations came about as the postal service announced plans to hike the price of postage for a standard letter to 9 kroner, yet charges less than 1 krone for an advertisement weighing the same. While not ruling out the possibility that Post Danmark was more efficient than they were, the privately owned firms argued it was unlikely the state-owned monopoly's cost were lower.



The latest issue of the [PostCom Bulletin](#) is available online. In this issue:

- The U.S. Postal Service has released its Annual Compliance Report (ACR). The report focuses mostly on the market dominant products (First-Class Mail, Standard Mail, Periodicals, Package Services, and Extra Services). The Report is submitted pursuant to 39 U.S.C. § 3652, which requires the Postal Service to file with the Postal Regulatory Commission, within 90 days after the end of each fiscal year (FY), a variety of data on “costs, revenues, rates, and quality of service,” in order to “demonstrate that all products during such year complied with all applicable requirements of [title 39].”
- The Postal Services intends to change the manner in which it processes and dispatches Destination Sectional Center Facility (DSCF) Standard Mail. This operational change would result in a nationwide change in the nature of postal service, therefore it has requested an advisory opinion from the Postal Regulatory Commission. It is proposed to widen the window of delivery for DSCF Standard Mail for pieces entered on Friday and Saturday. Instead of receiving the typical Monday and Tuesday delivery, respectively, the USPS is looking to defer this deferrable product by one day and having DSCF Standard Mail delivered on Tuesday and Wednesday,
- Included with this week's PostCom Bulletin are revised price comparison charts for the DFSS Discount, Heavy Letter adjustment, and the IMpb compliance fee from the exigency price increases scheduled to take effect on January 26, 2014.
- Senator Collins reacts to PRC exigent decision. USPS finalizes deferment of Full Service IMb. Why the Postal Service can't capitalize on Christmas shipping woes. Attention PostalOne Users. Fox promotes privatizing the USPS. Amazon, UPS offer refunds for delays. Time Inc. preparing to head out on its own. UPS Christmas debacle shows why we need a public USPS. An unlikely star of the holiday-shipping season: the USPS. USPS is testing mobile point-of-sale technology.
- Announcement of postal related Federal Register Notices.
- An update from the USPS Office of Inspector General.
- An update on postal news from around the world.
- Postal previews.

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From the Federal Register:

| | |
|--|--|
| Postal Regulatory Commission | |
| NOTICES | |
| New Postal Products , 414-415 [2013-31441] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
| Postal Service | |
| PROPOSED RULES | |
| Revised Postage and Fee Refund Criteria , 375-376 [2013-31443] | [TEXT] [PDF] |
| Service Standards for Destination Sectional Center Facility Rate Standard Mail , 376-378 [2013-31442] | [TEXT] [PDF] |

[Wall Street Journal](#): SimplyLobsters.com owner Donald Lee was expecting a good Christmas when orders for his live shellfish and other foods jumped 30% this holiday season. That was until the express-shipping system broke down under a crush of last-minute orders and delayed about 10% of his shipments. The lobsters were shipped from Maine in insulated boxes with gel ice packs and wet newspaper to help keep their shells and gills moist, he said. But the extra travel time was too much for some of them. "The ones in hotter areas—they didn't make it," Mr. Lee said. "This was the worst year in terms of delivery hiccups." [Troubles also affected the delivery of drugs and other perishable foods.]


[Washington Times](#): Companies that rent movie and video games by mail to tens of millions of Americans could see the price of delivery go up if the financially strapped U.S. Postal Service succeeds in a push to change the rules governing DVD mail. The Postal Service, which has run a multi-billion dollar deficit for years, said in regulatory filings that DVD mail ought to be changed from a so-called "market-dominant" to "competitive" classification. That, officials say, would allow the cash-strapped service to negotiate a price with companies like Netflix to recover mailing costs, ending years of what critics describe as a highly favorable deal Netflix struck early on. But officials vowed not to set too high a price that could wipe out consumer demand for the mail-DVD business, though at least one DVD company is skeptical about such assurances.

January 2, 2014

[House Oversight and Government Reform Committee](#): House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa (R-Calif.) announced the introduction of **legislation to allow the U.S. Postal Service to implement a modified six-day delivery schedule** and repeal reductions in military pensions made by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013. The military pension cuts were made to achieve \$6.2 billion in savings over 10 years. "This legislation will restore Cost-of-Living Adjustments for our military retirees and not only replace the savings but nearly triple them— saving \$17 billion over 10 years according to conservative USPS estimates," said Chairman Issa. "This common sense reform will help restore the cash-strapped Postal Service to long-term solvency and is supported by the President and key Congressional leaders in both chambers." USPS is forced to deliver paper mail, like bills and advertisements, six days a week by an unfunded mandate included in annual appropriations legislation. If the mandate is lifted, the Postmaster General has announced that USPS would modify its current delivery schedule to deliver packages 6 days a week and paper mail 5 days a week. Express and priority mail delivery would not change, and post offices would remain open on Saturdays. Chairman Issa recently outlined the benefits of ending

the unfunded mandate in a letter to House Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers (R-Ky.) [Full text of H.R. 3801, can be viewed here.](#)

"SEC. 2. NATIONWIDE MAIL DELIVERY SCHEDULE. 5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 404 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by inserting after subsection (e) 7 the following: 8
“(f)(1) The Postal Service may establish a general, nationwide mail delivery schedule of 5 days per week. “(2) The Postal Service shall ensure that, under any schedule established under paragraph (1), there shall not occur more than 2 consecutive days on which mail is not delivered, including as a result of Federal holidays. “(3) For a period not to end before January 1, 2019, the Postal Service shall provide domestic competitive product service 6 days per week to each street address that was scheduled to receive package service 6 days per week as of September 30, 2012. “(4) Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize a reduction, or to require an increase, in frequency of mail delivery for any address for which the Postal Service provided delivery on fewer than 6 days per week as of January 1, 2013.”. (b) MAILBOX ACCESS.—If the United States Postal Service establishes a general, nationwide mail delivery schedule of 5 days per week, the Postal Service shall amend the Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service (as set forth in the Domestic Mail Manual) to ensure that the provisions of section 508.3.2.10 of such Manual, as in effect on September 30, 2012, shall apply on any day on which the Postal Service does not deliver mail under the established delivery schedule."

 [Federal Times](#): A key lawmaker is continuing to press for ending Saturday mail delivery after Congress again failed to approve a broader overhaul of U.S. Postal Service operations. “We must act now if the Postal Service is to endure as an independent, self-funding agency,” Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Calif., said in a letter urging an end to a long-standing congressional requirement for six-day mail delivery. The requirement is renewed each year as part of a spending bill; the letter asks House Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers, R-Ky., to drop the provision from a fiscal 2014 spending package likely to be introduced in the next two weeks. Issa’s office released a copy of the letter, dated Dec. 19, this week; a Rogers spokeswoman declined comment Thursday. Also on Dec. 19, Issa introduced a bill to give the Postal Service the go-ahead for five-day mail delivery while repealing cuts in future cost-of-living adjustments for working-age military retirees that are part of a budget agreement signed last month. See also [Federal News Radio](#).


SOME POINTS CONGRESS SHOULD KEEP IN MIND AS IT CONSIDERS POSTAL REFORM

Regarding the wrong-headed call for mailers to pay higher postal rates because facility closures and labor cuts have gone far enough--the "mailers should have more skin in the game" nonsense-- here are some facts Congress should keep in mind.

- The **ENTIRE** cost of providing the nation a universal mail delivery system is underwritten by the postage dollars that **MAILERS** (not management and not labor) pay. We already have substantial skin in the game.
- When management screws up or when labor decides to "grieve" every damn thing, the cost for all that waste and inefficiency is borne by **MAILERS**, not management or labor. We **REALLY** have skin in the game.
- When management compensates the wrong people for doing other than the right thing, or when labor "wins" pay, benefits, and work rules that do little to enhance the Postal Service's fiscal viability, the costs for all those snafus are paid for by **MAILERS** -- not management or labor.
- **Mailers just got stiffed** with a larger-than-inflation postal rate increase through no fault of their own -- other than being customers who are captive to the USPS' statutory monopolies over the carriage of mail and the deposit of mail in letter mail

receptacles.

Mailers are out of skin. The Postal Service already has started cutting on the muscle and bone. Congress should leave postal customers alone -- while the Postal Service still has any to pay the costs of universal mail service!


 **Post & Parcel:** Iceland's postal regulator has approved an increase in postal rates effective from the start of this month. The Post and Telecom Administration (PFS) said it approved the pricing request by Iceland Post to allow the company to respond to the continuing trend for "significant" reductions in mail volumes from year to year. Mail volumes have fallen by 37% since 2006 thanks to factors including e-substitution. In 2013, mail volumes in Iceland dropped by 6%. The regulator said expectations were that mail volumes will reduce by a further 5% in 2014. The rate increase also takes into account cost increases for Iceland's postal service seen since the last rate rise back in July 2012.





PostCom Members!! [A revised set of 2014 postal rate charts](#) has been posted on this site and will be included with the next PostCom Bulletin.


Attention Postal One! Users:

- **PostalOne!® Release 37.0.0 Deployment** — will require an extended maintenance window to complete all software updates. There will be a PostalOne! outage from 12:00AM(midnight) CT through 9:00AM CT, on Sunday, January 12, 2014. A mandatory Mail.dat® client download will be available immediately following the software update. Release notes for PostalOne! Release 37.0.0 can be found on [RIBBS](#) by clicking on Major/Minor Release Schedule/ 2014 Releases in the left-hand navigation bar or by going directly on [RIBBS](#).
- **PostalOne! Release 37.0.0 Deployment to Test Environment for Mailers (TEM)** — will occur on Monday, January 13, 2014, and PostalOne! TEM will be unavailable from 5:30AM CT through 3PM CT.


 **Washington Post:** The Postal Service faces a pretty dire budget situation, but in spite of that, officials there are still finding ways to make your visit less of a hassle. Over the holiday, USPS began experimenting with a mobile point-of-sale tool that you might more commonly expect to find at a crowded Potbelly sandwich shop. iPods loaded with package scanners and credit-card readers handled more than 100,000 transactions across 50 post offices during the season, according to USPS. The new technology lets Postal Service agents take prepaid packages, sell postage and conduct other services while walking around the store.

 **Sentinel & Enterprise:** Death, taxes and a rise in postal rates. Those seem to be the only certainties in life. On the day before Christmas, federal regulators approved the Postal Service's request for a "temporary" 3-cent increase in the price of a first-class stamp to help the USPS recover from the drop in mail usage it says stems from the Great Recession of 2008. You can bet this increase is as temporary as Lowell's Rourke Bridge over the Merrimack River, built 30 years ago.


 **Punch:** The Nigerian Postal Service intercepted counterfeit financial instruments worth N13bn in 2013, the Minister of Information, Mr. Labaran Maku, has said.


 **Gizmodo:** Door-to-door mail delivery might be on its last legs, but that isn't stopping the US Postal Service from flogging the horse. Now, it's testing a mobile point-of-sale system to reduce waiting times in its customer lines. The new technology, reports Postal News, is called Mobile Point of Sale (mPOS), and uses a modified iPod Touch and portable printer to "scan and accept prepaid packages, scan package pickups as delivered, or sell stamps, ReadyPost and other retail products." It'll also spit out Priority Mail flat-rate postage. Trialled in 50 locations over the holidays, mPOS undertook over 102,000 transactions, allowing customers to get out of line more quickly, as long as they had a credit or non-PIN debit card to hand. Whether such successes can streamline an ailing business model, though? It seems unlikely. [


January 1, 2014


 **Socialist Project:** In 2013, a fifteen year process of the liberalization of postal services in the European Union came to a preliminary end as the last member states abolished the remaining sections of the national post monopolies. [1] In theory, any private company that obtains a license from the market regulator can now provide postal services in Europe. In practice, the letter markets are still dominated by the former national post companies, some of which have been privatized, [2] and only in a few countries new competitors have acquired more than ten per cent of the market share. [3] After fifteen years of market-opening the balance sheet of post liberalization is overwhelmingly negative.

 **From the Federal Register:** Postal Regulatory Commission *NOTICES* New Postal Products , 153–154 [2013–31360] [\[TEXT\]](#) [\[PDF\]](#)

 **Forbes:** The delivery delays that plagued UPS and FedEx during the 2013 Christmas shopping season were largely the result of factors beyond the carriers' control, according to one parcel industry veteran. It was the carriers who suffered the brunt of the criticism, but many of the tardy deliveries weren't their fault, according to Jerry Hempstead, who spent decades as an executive with DHL and Airborne Express, and now heads up his own firm, Hempstead Consulting. He blamed the severe snowstorm that struck large portions of the South and East, including UPS's hub in Louisville, KY and FedEx's in Memphis, Tenn., for much of the delay.

 **Business First:** The drone deliveries envisioned by Amazon.com Inc. and United Parcel Service Inc. moved closer to reality on Monday as the Federal Aviation Administration approved six "large scale" test sites for the concept. The sites will be run by the University of Alaska, New York's Griffiss International Airport, the North Dakota Department of Commerce, the state of Nevada, Virginia Tech and Texas A&M University, ABC News reported. Companies such as Amazon and UPS could work out deals with the site operators to conduct their own testing.

 **WABE:** The Complex Litigation Group LLC has filed a potential class action lawsuit against the United Parcel Service. The law firm is accusing UPS of "systematically overcharging customers" for the first \$100 of declared value coverage. Officials with the Atlanta-based shipping giant refute the claims. "The UPS rate and service guide is in accordance with other carriers. As to these type of charges, Fed Ex and DHL, for example, assess declared value charges in the same way," says UPS spokesman Dean Foust.

 **Reason:** The U.S. Postal Service has been plagued with financial problems for years, but fewer adults now believe the federal government should sell the Postal Service. A new Rasmussen Reports national telephone survey finds that 35% of American Adults think the U.S. government should consider selling the Postal Service to a private company in order to reduce the federal budget deficit. But that's down from 40% in 2011. Forty-eight percent (48%) oppose such sale, while 17% are undecided. *[EdNote: Government doesn't need to sell the Postal Service. It only has to end its monopolies.]*