



## Association for Postal Commerce


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### Postal News from April 2012:

*April 30, 2012*

 **At the Postal Regulatory Commission:** Chris Laver has been named as the new executive assistant to Postal Regulatory Commissioner Mark Acton. Since joining the Postal Regulatory Commission Office of General Counsel in 2008, Mr. Laver has occupied key roles in numerous important dockets at the agency including serving as the Public Representative in two of the Commission's nature of service review cases and acting as lead attorney in advising the PRC concerning such varied topics as Standard Mail and the Freedom of Information Act. Mr. Laver's broad experience at the Commission also includes drafting and implementing regulations under the Administrative Procedures Act, authoring advisory memoranda for Commissioners and the General Counsel, and assisting in crafting many of the Commission reports. Prior to his service at the PRC, Chris Laver was an Associate in a private legal practice in Cincinnati, Ohio. He attended law school at the University of Cincinnati and has a bachelor's degree with focuses in economics and finance from the University of Melbourne in Australia.


 **Courier, Express, and Postal Observer:** Microsoft (MSFT) and Barnes and Noble (BKS) announced today that Microsoft will invest \$300 million and take a 17.6% equity stake of the spin-off of the digital and college businesses of Barnes & Noble. The investment along with the placement of a Nook Application in Windows 8 creates three major platforms for the distribution of digital content. This provides Windows 8 tablets and smart phone an application that makes them competitive more competitive with those from Amazon and Apple. At the same time, this action raises question about the future of the Android operating system unless equipment manufacturers tie themselves to the digital marketplaces offered by Apple, Amazon, or Barnes & Noble/Microsoft. With this investment and the incorporation of the Nook application into Windows 8 only Apple and Microsoft will have an operating system platform, with a common app environment that covers an individual's or corporation's range of computing needs from a desktop to a smart phone. For the courier express and post industry, this investment raises an interesting question abouts the future of printed periodicals and catalogs as well as the potential impact of the expanding tablet market on parcel deliveries





The U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General invites you to comment on this week's "Pushing the Envelope" blog topic:


**The Costs, Should They be a-Changin'?** The U.S. Postal Service and its customers have raised concerns regarding the accuracy of the postal cost system, which hasn't changed in many years. Suggested improvements may require a significant amount of resources. At a time when the Postal Service is under substantial fiscal stress, should it be spending money to improve its cost systems? Let us know what you think on our [blog](#). New audit projects have been started on the external website.


- [FY 2012 Cost Revenue and Analysis \(Capping\) – 12BD013FI000](#). Origin Destination Information System-Revenue, Pieces, Weight (ODIS-RPW) is the primary probability sampling system that estimates revenue, volume, and weight. The Postal Service uses data from tests to develop new rates, assist in budget preparation, conduct management studies, and support management decisions concerning mailflow. In addition, information collected from ODIS-RPW tests is used in the calculation of PIHOP. The ODIS-RPW test requires data collectors to select systematically mailpieces using a random start for all mail available on the randomly selected day. Data collectors record various mailpiece characteristics, such as revenue, weight, shape, indicia, barcode, postmark time, origin, and mail class.
- [Network Distribution Center Transportation Realignment – 12XG024NL000](#). In the 1970s, the Postal Service developed a bulk mail network of 21 bulk mail centers (BMC) to support mail distribution and transportation for surface Parcel Post, Standard Mail, and Periodicals. With mailers entering more mail near final destinations, mail volume declining, and a changing mail mix, much of the mail the BMCs previously processed has gone away. In an effort to reduce costs and excess capacities, management reorganized the 21 facilities into network distribution centers (NDCs) with a 3-Tiered structure. NDCs would consolidate the processing and dispatching of mail to achieve economies of scale and greater operational efficiency to reduce workhours and transportation costs. According to the NDC realignment plans, Tier 1 facilities would only send and receive mail to or from their parent NDC(s). We plan to review realignment of transportation service in selected Tier 1 NDCs and their respective Tier 2 NDC(s).
- [Post-Implementation Review Process – 12WG007CI000](#). This audit will evaluate the effectiveness of the Post-implementation Review (PIR) process, as outlined in Handbook PO-408, Area Mail Processing (AMP) Guidelines, and the related savings calculations. The final step in the AMP process is the completion of PIRs to assess whether planned savings, workhours, and levels of service were achieved for the consolidation of mail processing operations. PIRs evaluate the effectiveness of the consolidations by comparing the proposed savings and costs to the actual savings and costs after the implementation. PIRs completed on 103 AMPS implemented between FY 2004 through 2011 will be reviewed.


 [Post & Parcel](#): SingPost saw its group revenues increasing by 2.2% last year, as growth in its logistics and retail operations countered declining sales in its traditional postal services, but inflationary costs and investments ate into profits for 2011.

 [BBC](#): A new report recommends using post offices in Northern Ireland to their full potential. The postal watchdog, Consumer Focus Post, has said a face-to-face service is essential for the many customers who do not use the internet. It believes the executive and local councils should realise the opportunity post offices provide. The report says more government services should be offered through the post office network.


 [Mayo Today](#): Mayo Fine Gael TD Michelle Mulherin is calling on the Board of An Post to publish its plan for the provision of postal services to rural areas, including the number of post offices it plans to take out of the network in the short to medium term.


 [Denver Post](#): The plan adopted by the U.S. Senate to address the Postal Service's serious financial problems falls short of the reform really needed to make the agency solvent. Even worse, it will actually hamper efforts by the Postal Service's management to radically overhaul its operations, a necessity for an agency losing \$25 million a day. We think the House should reject much of the plan and adopt more robust budget-balancing strategies favored by management of the struggling agency. Read more: Editorial: Return postal plan to sender.


 [Philadelphia Daily News](#): In the digital age, “snail mail” is no longer as critical as it once was. And the Postal Service, like everything else, must change to meet the times. But the current crisis facing our national postal system — and by extension the rest of the country, no matter how we pay our bills or get our magazines — has essentially been manufactured by Congress. So Congress needs to fix it. Now.


 [Post & Parcel](#): Retailers and customers demand a range of delivery options and greatly improved in-transit information (“track and trace”), if they are to have more confidence in selling and buying online. Uncertainty about delivery, whether ensuring delivery at a convenient time and place or tracking delivery progress, is a critical risk

factor for those involved in e-commerce, with consumer surveys showing that nearly half of consumers may be deterred from shopping online because of delivery concerns.


 **Post & Parcel:** PineBridge Investments, the global multi-asset class investment manager and Integer.pl Group, the leading independent Polish postal group operating under the InPost brand and other courier & postal brands, today announced a joint investment to develop and roll-out an innovative parcel system, EasyPack, in Europe and CIS countries.


 **Daily Mail:** Royal Mail faces a mass exodus of angry customers as the price of a first class stamp soars by more than a third to 60p from today. A first class stamp The price rises come amid a financial crisis in the organisation, which claims it needs extra cash in order to maintain the universal service of delivering to every home for a standard price. Its troubles began with the opening up of the postal system to competition, which allowed rival firms to grab lucrative business accounts.


 **Liverpool Daily Post:** Royal Mail has defended stamp increases, pointing out that the new 50p second class rate will still be the lowest in Europe. The price is rising from 36p, while first class stamps will increase from 46p to 60p, which will be in the bottom half of most prices in other European countries. Chief executive Moya Greene said the new prices were "incredible value for money", with first class stamps around half the cost of posting letters in France and Germany.


 **Courier, Express, and Postal Observer:** Section 201 of S.1789, The 21st Century Postal Reform Act, purports to save overnight delivery. However, a closer look at the language of this section of the bill shows that an overnight delivery commitment will truly be available to fewer customers than most members of the Senate think. In particular, First Class single-piece mailers will see little benefit from the delivery standard provisions in S.1789 that were designed to ensure overnight service as they are unlikely to tender their mail to the Postal Service before the critical entry time required to ensure delivery overnight.

*April 28, 2012*


 **The Scotsman:** The postal regulator has proposed a cap on prices that Royal Mail can charge for second class large letters and small parcels, saying it wants to protect vulnerable consumers. Ofcom said the "safeguard cap" on second class letters should be extended to large letters and small parcels to further protect vulnerable consumers and small businesses.

 **Wall Street Journal:** China Postal Express & Logistics Co. said Saturday it plans to raise CNY9.98 billion (\$1.59 billion) in an initial public offering ahead of a listing in Shanghai, which could be the largest offering in China so far this year.


 **Bloomberg Businessweek:** The rising price of stamps will force "millions" of U.K. residents to stop using the postal service, the Daily Telegraph said, citing a Royal Mail memo sent to members of parliament. The government-owned Royal Mail anticipates a drop of 15 percent in second-class letters and 12 percent in first-class mail when stamp prices rise on April 30, the newspaper reported. The increased price could "spectacularly backfire" and do "irrevocable damage" to the Royal Mail, Ian Murray, the shadow postal affairs minister, said in an interview with the paper.


 **Businessweek:** The bipartisan group of U.S. senators who crafted a bill to rescue the U.S Postal Service can take pride in at least one achievement. In the hopes of pleasing as many people as possible, Tom Carper (D-Del.); Joseph Lieberman (I-Conn.); Susan Collins (R-Me.); and Scott Brown (R-Mass.) produced a piece of legislation that has alienated most of the agency's interest groups. The Postal Service's employee unions vehemently oppose Donahoe's restructuring scheme, which would have almost certainly meant staff reductions. But they don't care for the bill, either. They wanted Congress to do away entirely with the retiree health-care prepayments. The bill doesn't go nearly that far. "It does not provide sufficient relief," American Postal Workers Union President Cliff Guffey said in a statement. "As a result, the USPS will not have access to the capital it needs to meet the challenges of the future." In his own statement, National Association of Letter Carriers President Fredric Rolando concurred. "We're


disappointed," he said. "Keep your chins up, brothers and sisters. This fight to save America's Postal Service is far from over."


 [The Street](#): Let's skip the suspense right away: FedEx(FDX) founder and CEO Fred Smith is the most likely person to become America's next vice president.


*April 27, 2012*


 [Washington Post](#): Several measures that could have big consequences for federal workers began moving through Congress this week, including bills requiring employees to contribute more to their pensions and offering buyout and early-retirement incentives for 100,000 postal workers. It could be months before any of the changes become law, and some may not make it through the House and the Senate. But they reflect a growing sentiment, particularly among Republicans, that cutting government costs will involve more austerity for its workforce.


 [Tony Hammond](#) was confirmed as Commissioner of the Postal Regulatory Commission by the Senate last night. Congrats!


 [Wall Street Journal](#): Taxpayers got routed in the Senate on Wednesday when a \$34 billion bailout of the U.S. Postal Service was approved on a vote of 62 to 37. The postal unions were the big winners. They held off reforms that would have meant layoffs and benefit restructuring, at a minimum. The Postal Service is expected to lose as much as \$12 billion this year. By some estimates, it will need to reduce its work force, which currently numbers 530,000, by some 100,000 employees to have any hope of breaking even. Amazingly, even the postal management complained that the Senate bill "does not provide the Postal Service with the speed and flexibility it needs to achieve the \$20 billion in cost reductions" that it must make in coming years.


 [CNN](#): And it's looking increasingly unlikely that the House and Senate will agree on a plan to save the Postal Service by May 15, when a moratorium on closing postal processing plants expires. The Postal Service Board of Governors, the panel that runs the service, issued a statement late Wednesday, saying the Senate bill "falls short" and "would not enable the Postal Service to return to financial viability." Rep. Darrell Issa of California, who has authored a House plan to save the Postal Service, called the Senate bill "wholly unacceptable." Aides say Republican leaders don't feel pressured to take up the House bill right away, because they're not worried about postal closures. In fact, the House legislation paves the way for more closures, as well as the end of Saturday service. Without congressional help, the Postal Service will pursue its own plans to cut Saturday service, delay mail delivery and close hundreds of postal processing plants and post offices, triggering thousands of job cuts nationwide. The recession, declining mail volume and a congressional mandate to prefund retirement health care benefits have put the service in a bind. It reported a \$5.1 billion loss for the year ended Sept. 30.


 [Scoop](#): A large group of senior delegates from the Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union (EPMU) who work across the New Zealand Post Group, are holding a summit in Wellington next week with the company's executive management team in response to looming changes in the postal industry.


 [Omaha World-Herald](#): Sen. Tom Harkin was among the 62 U.S. senators who approved a bill Wednesday to help the struggling U.S. Postal Service — but more can be done, the Iowa Democrat said. What is really needed, Harkin said, are ways to increase postal revenue. For example, he said, rural post offices could set up shop in convenience stores. Retired postal workers could be encouraged to work a few hours weekly to avoid closing smaller offices, he said. Years ago, people could put money in postal savings accounts, which no longer exist.


 [Deseret News](#): Earlier this week the Senate passed a bill that would give \$11 billion to the service for buyouts and early retirement incentives, hoping to alleviate one of its biggest expenses — personnel costs. It would ignore the changes that are desperately needed in an agency that loses about \$25 million each day and has an accumulated debt of more than \$13 billion. The Postal Service is indeed the victim of some personnel problems that would kill a private business. For example, its union contract prohibits layoffs.


 [AllAfrica](#): The government is to set up a new committee next week, made up of key players in the postal and courier sector in order to come up with a solution for the defunct national addressing system formed two years ago.


 [Democrat Herald](#): What does the Saturday mail bring? Once or twice a year, at the most, it brings an Oregon election ballot. Those could easily be timed to arrive on Friday. Or Monday. Or any day. Voters get about two weeks with the ballots in their hands, so one day more or less won't make any difference at all. What part of the mail that arrives on Saturday could not wait until Monday to be delivered? If it's bills, they'll wait. If they can't wait, then the creditors can just mail them a day sooner. And if some enterprise desperately needs to have its message delivered on Saturday, it can contract with a delivery force, like that of a newspaper, for instance. The upside of no mail on Saturday: You can leave for the weekend without worrying what's waiting in the box while you are gone.

 [BBC](#): Price cap for parcels proposed by mail regulator Ofcom A price cap already exists on regular letters sent second class. The cap on prices that Royal Mail can charge for second-class post should be extended to large letters and small parcels, the regulator has proposed. Ofcom said that half the amount spent by the average family on postal services was the cost of sending large letters and small parcels. It said that the price limit would be linked to the price rise allowed for regular second-class stamps.


 [Post & Parcel](#): Russian Post is launching a pilot programme in the Moscow area in which managers within the company's head office will take personal charge of individual post offices. The state-owned postal service hopes the personal patronage system will boost the quality of customer service in 500 post offices in the Russian capital, and increase customer satisfaction. If successful, the pilot will be rolled out across the country. Each manager will take personal responsibility for supervising a post office, bringing the management skills from head office directly to the front-line retail outlets. They will identify operational weaknesses in the post offices they sponsor, make recommendations for improvement and monitor the resolution of issues. Post office "chiefs" will monitor operations at the retail outlets against certain parameters such as for customer communication, appearance and speed of service.


 [Post & Parcel](#): As of today, Portugal has opened its postal market to full competition, a year and four months later than required by the European Union. Law No. 17/2012 came into effect today, allowing private sector companies to provide postal services in competition to the universal service provider, CTT Correios de Portugal. The regulations set a new legal framework in which CTT will continue to provide the universal service across the country until 2020, delivering postal correspondence, books, newspapers and periodicals up to 2kg in weight and parcels up to 10kg in weight. The provision of direct mail will fall outside the scope of the universal service, CTT said.


 [Post & Parcel](#): Ireland's An Post said its operating profit dropped by 62% in 2011 compared to the year before as mail volumes declined 7%. In the year that Ireland's postal market opened to full competition, a 7% decline in core mail volumes contributed to a 23.5% drop in mail volumes since the peak in 2007, and the company is predicting another 7% decline in 2012. Mail revenues totalled EUR 535m, down 3% on 2010, with An Post currently facing legal action from regulator ComReg for failing to meet required delivery quality standards. An Post cut EUR 15.4m from its labour costs during 2011, with 300 jobs eliminated by voluntary exit schemes. The company has now reduced its workforce by 1,100 since 2008, and is planning to cut a further 1,500 full-time equivalent jobs by 2016.


 [Newsmax](#): Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe said it's urgent for the U.S. House of Representatives to act by next month on legislation to stem U.S. Postal Service losses running at \$25 million a day. Donahoe and the Postal Service's board hasn't embraced the Senate's version, passed April 25, because it would delay closing mail facilities. He said early House action is necessary so the two chambers can arrive at a compromise. The board criticized the Senate bill for delaying cutting a day of mail delivery each week and for keeping open "unnecessary facilities." House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa, a California Republican, is the sponsor of the House's postal legislation. He called the Senate measure "a special-interest spending binge that would actually make things worse." The "wholly unacceptable" bill would keep more than 100 "excess" facilities open, he said in an e-mailed statement April 25. Issa's proposal would create a board modeled after the Defense Department's base-closing commissions to oversee postal closures. Maine Republican Susan Collins, a co-sponsor of the Senate legislation, said on April 25 that she encouraged Issa to get his version to the House floor "as quickly as possible" so the chambers can negotiate in a conference committee.


 [From the Federal Register: Postal Service RULES Picture Permit Imprint Indicia , 25082–25083 \[2012–10014\] \[TEXT\] \[PDF\]](#)


 [Daily Caller](#): The Senate passed a postal reform bill Wednesday aimed at stopping the U.S. Postal Service from hemorrhaging \$25 million per day, but critics of the bill say it will actually make things worse. **Robert Cohen, a former Postal Regulatory Commission official, said the Senate bill would exacerbate the Postal Service's financial problems.** “It’s not clear that they’ll be held to pay their debts,” Cohen told The Daily Caller. “As they accumulate more and more deficits and they borrow more and more money from the Treasury, in the end the taxpayer is likely to pick it up.” The senators behind the effort disagree. Some say the real problem is the Postal Service’s relationship to the federal government. It is a quasi-private organization but Congress controls its purse strings. “The first step is to remove some of the government control, which this bill does not do,” A. Lee Fritschler, a former chairman of the Postal Rate Commission, told TheDC.


 [The Mainichi Daily News](#): A House of Councillors committee passed a bill Thursday to review the full privatization of Japan's postal services spearheaded in 2005 by then Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi so that it would leave the state's influence over postal banking and insurance services. The ruling Democratic Party of Japan, the main opposition Liberal Democratic Party and the New Komeito party supported the bill, which is expected to be enacted into law Friday with approval in the upper house plenary session.


 [Otago Daily Times](#): Posties are predicting job cuts after New Zealand Post said it was considering halving the number of days mail is delivered because of the decline in the amount of mail it handles. New Zealand Post says immediate changes are needed to cope with "irreversible" falls in postal revenue.


 [Business Recorder](#): Pakistan Post and Western Union have signed the renewal of a money transfer agreement.

 [Washington Post](#): *Sen. Carl Levin (D-MI)* -- "The U.S. Senate — one-half of one branch of our government and an institution crucial to resolving serious issues before our country — is routinely described as dysfunctional, gridlocked and broken. We feel obligated to do something about it. That’s why we went to the Senate floor last week to encourage our colleagues to embrace a classic virtue: self-restraint."


 [Washington Post](#): There are three ways to evaluate the Senate’s newly adopted plan to deal with the financial crisis at the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), which is losing more than \$20 million per day and has almost exhausted its \$15 billion credit line from the Treasury. **By a more important measure, what the Postal Service actually needs to be solvent, the Senate bill falls disastrously short.** In February, USPS management spelled out a five-year plan to cut \$20 billion in costs and restore long-term viability. In fact, the legislation makes some of them harder to accomplish. Albeit in exaggerated form, the Postal Service exemplifies much of what ails the American public sector. For Congress, the effort to bring this proud but technologically obsolescent entity into the 21st century is a dress rehearsal for the broader task of putting all necessary public services on a financially sustainable footing. The results so far are not encouraging.


 [Bloomberg](#): United Parcel Service Inc., the world's largest package-delivery company, fell the most in four months after first-quarter profit trailed analysts' estimates amid slowing growth in overseas shipping.


 [Courier, Express, and Postal Observer](#): Mother Jones has a brief assessment of S.1789 in Kevin Drum’s Blog. The posts reviews the key sections of the legislation like most stores do but he goes further. He asks a fairly innocuous question. Why won’t Congress allow the Postal Service charge a single piece First Class rate more in line with what other posts charge? His answer: “We are ruled by idiots.”

 [The Bozeman Daily Chronicle](#): The rapid evolution of online communications has been breathtaking. For the U.S. Postal Service, though, it has been devastating. The proliferation of email has produced a corresponding decline in snail mail. And now the Postal Service is facing bankruptcy unless drastic action is taken soon. Among the proposals under consideration are ending Saturday mail delivery and the elimination of 3,600 unprofitable post offices nationwide – including 80 in Montana. That will be a hardship for the communities those post offices serve.

Some residents of the most remote parts of Montana could be forced to drive many miles to retrieve their mail. That will mean mail will be collected less frequently or at a considerably higher cost. But the reality is the world has changed for mail delivery. And the Postal Service must make adjustments. It cannot be a drain on federal coffers simply because it is a longstanding and cherished tradition. Times change; the Postal Service must change with it. And that means those of us who depend on this service must make some adjustments too. *[EdNote: Hey, have you talked with your senators?]*

 **WDEL**: Senator Carper hopes his House colleagues will vote soon on their version of a bill designed to save the Postal Service. Carper tells WDEL News he met Thursday with California Republican Congressman Darrell Issa to urge passage of the House bill so a conference committee can hammer out a compromise measure.

 **The Star**: New Zealand Post is looking at cutting back its delivery services from six to three days a week and reducing staff numbers as it seeks to weather a sharp and "irreversible" downturn in postal revenue.

 **Investor's Business Daily**: This week the Senate passed a postal bill that throws billions at the beleaguered monopoly but does nothing to fix it. If Congress can't even manage to get this reform right, the country is doomed. To get a sense of how out of whack lawmakers' priorities are these days, consider that Congress has for years made naming post office buildings its most crucial task — passing more bills to do that than anything else. All this happened while the U.S. Postal Service was careening toward bankruptcy. And now, with that fate imminent, the Senate passes a bill that would make it virtually impossible for the USPS to shut these — or any other — post offices down, no matter how little used they are or how much money they lose. The bigger issue is this: If lawmakers don't have the stomach to let even a few post offices close because doing so might inconvenience some voters, what's the chance that they will ever be able to reform the nation's entitlement programs, or fix the tax code, or do other the other things needed to wean millions of Americans off their growing dependence on government? *[EdNote: Postage denominated in drachmas, I tell you, drachmas.]*



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

- This week the Senate passed S. 1789, the 21st Century Postal Service Act of 2012, with modification and amendments. Here are the action taken by the Senate in consideration of S. 1789.
- The U.S. Senate Wednesday passed a strong, bipartisan postal reform bill to preserve the United States Postal Service (USPS) and put it on more solid financial ground for the future. The 21st Century Postal Service Act (S.1789) was passed by a 62-37 vote. The House must now act expeditiously so the two chambers can reconcile their bills and turn around the Postal Service's daily loss of \$23 million and prevent the wholesale closings of postal facilities.
- The Postal Service's Board of Governors and Postmaster General express disappointment in S. 1789.
- The Postal Regulatory Commission has filed Order No 1320 in Docket RM2010-13, Consideration of Technical Methods to Be Applied in Workshare Discount Design, providing resolution to technical issues concerning the calculation of workshare discounts.
- The USPS on April 20, 2012, published in the Federal Register an advance notice of proposed rulemaking outlining its plan to require Full-Service Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb) for letters, cards and flats for automation prices beginning in January 2014. The USPS said its vision "is to create 100 percent visibility into the mail stream by 2014, which means that customers will know in real time where their mail or packages are in the postal network and precisely when they are delivered." The USPS requested comments on its advance notice by June 4, 2012.
- APWU responds to passage of S 1789. NALC responds to the passage of S 1789. Message to MTAC concerning S. 1789 from the USPS. USPS BOG to meet May 4. America's postal service: The way of the pony express?
- Updates from the Domestic Mail Manual.
- Updates from the Federal Register that affect the mailing industry.
- An update from the USPS Office of Inspector General.
- A review of postal news from around the world.
- Postal previews.

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[House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform](#): House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa, R-Calif., made the following statement upon the passage of the Senate attempt at postal reform, S. 1789:

“Instead of finding savings to help the Postal Service survive, the Senate postal bill has devolved into a special interest spending binge that would actually make things worse,” said Issa. “Simultaneously harming taxpayers and the Postal Service’s shrinking customer base, the Senate bill includes a \$33 billion dollar taxpayer funded bailout while increasing USPS debt by nearly \$1 billion dollars.” Issa continued: “While the Postal Service is actually trying to shutter some facilities it does not need, the Senate bill forces the Postal Service to keep over one hundred excess postal facilities open at a cost of \$900 million per year. Worst of all, the Senate bill does not stop the financial collapse of USPS, but only delays it for two years, at best, when reforms will only be more painful. The Senate’s approach is wholly unacceptable.”

The House Oversight Committee has advanced legislation that would resolve the Postal Service’s financial crisis. H.R. 2309, the Issa-Ross Postal Reform Act, would give the Postal Service the freedom to realign its network with America’s changing use of mail and mandate that USPS cut costs instead of dodging obligations to employees, retirees, or taxpayers. The House legislation directs USPS to consolidate excess facilities through a GAO-recommended process similar to the military base closure commission. [Click here for more information on the Postal Reform Act.](#)



[At the Postal Regulatory Commission: Docket No. MC2012-13](#): "The United States Postal Service hereby requests that the following changes be made to the market-dominant and competitive product lists: (1) remove Parcel Post from the market-dominant product list; (2) add a nearly identical product, titled “Parcel Post,” to the competitive product list, and; (3) leave Alaska Bypass Service, which is currently part of Parcel Post, on the market-dominant product list, as outlined in the proposed Mail Classification Schedule (MCS) language."

*April 26, 2012*



[Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#): UPS is seeing more gains in lightweight shipping, including a program that delivers packages to the U.S. Post Office for the last leg of delivery, saving shippers money. But increased lightweight shipping on next-day air means UPS is making less money on those packages than if it were shipping larger, heavier items.

[Letter from Ralph Nader](#): Ralph Nader has told Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe that "You are actively presiding over the demise of one of our country’s greatest founding institutions. What you are known for is a repeated demand to cut services and raise rates – a surefire way to destroy the USPS on the installment plan, a strategy that any business executive knows sets an accelerating downward course. You have failed in your promise to focus “on selling the business” which you announced you would do when you escalated to your present position. We do not see Mr. Donahoe getting his assistants and encouraging its thousands of postmasters to speak out and stand up for an expanding, innovative, entrepreneurial postal service. Instead, our feedback from the field is that your constant refrain of cutting services and raising rates, together with huge losses of experienced employees, has produced an emerging perilous and costly drop in morale. In a phrase, you are not up to the job!"





**FedEx BusinessWire:** As today's customers are reshaping how they use technology to access and print digital content, FedEx Office® is committed to providing professionally-printed materials through its digitally connected network of retail locations. As the leading provider of printing and shipping services, FedEx Office takes in more than 40 percent of its print business from the web and is continuing to invest in its cloud-based and mobile platforms to meet increased customer demand for convenient and flexible printing solutions. "Our continued investment in technology-based print solutions provides customers with simple, customized solutions for the full range of their on-the-go printing needs—everything from banners, flyers, presentations and more" Among the company's digital offerings is the award-winning FedEx Office® Print & Go, a self-service printing technology that allows customers to use their Web-connected devices or USB flash drives to access and send digital files for on-demand printing at more than 1,800 retail stores. FedEx Office Print & Go now works with Breezy®, enabling users to submit print jobs from their mobile devices. At the FedEx Office Print & Go self-service digital screens, customers enter a unique retrieval code to select, preview and print documents, or can choose to have their print jobs produced by professionally trained team members at the full-service counter. The company also recently made significant advancements to FedEx Office® Print Online, an intuitive print management solution with advanced preview, cloud storage and ordering features for convenient printing.



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### **DMM Advisory: IMb™ Services Update**


- **PostalOne!® Major Upgrade Outage** - The major database technology upgrade will be completed during an extended maintenance window from 6 p.m. CDT on Saturday, April 28, 2012, through 6 p.m. CDT on Sunday, April 29, 2012. During the outage, *PostalOne!* and Mail.XML® will be unavailable, including FAST® and eDOC Web Services. Saturday, May 5, 2012 through Sunday, May 6, 2012 should be considered the contingency weekend for the April 28-29 outage if issues result in a rescheduled upgrade.
- **PostalOne! TEM Major Upgrade Outage** - The major database technology upgrade will be completed on the Test Environment for Mailers (TEM) during an extended maintenance window from 4 p.m. CDT Saturday, May 5, 2012, through 8 a.m. CDT Sunday, May 6, 2012.
- **Business Customer Gateway Outage** - The Business Customer Gateway upgrade to Oracle 11 will be deployed to the Production environment on Sunday, May 6, 2012, from 4:00 am to 8:00 am CDT during the scheduled maintenance window. During this upgrade, all USPS services accessed through the Business Customer Gateway, including *PostalOne!*, FAST, Mailer ID and Program Registration will not be available.


### [S. 1789 as amended.](#)

### **Mailers' Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC)**


From the **MTAC First-Class Mail leadership:** "In mid-March the USPS presented a webinar on changes planned for the release cycles, which includes new changes to labeling list management, etc. Many within First-Class Mail were either not able to attend, or unaware of this session. I requested the USPS present a follow-up webinar. Please share this webinar opportunity with your FCM Association memberships –all are invited to attend this session planned for May 2nd at 2PM ET. We will also be discussing this change during our upcoming MTAC FCM Focus Group sessions. If you have any questions please let me know. Thank you! [Sharon J. Harrison](#)"


 **Engadget:** A joint venture of Canadian carriers Rogers, Bell and Telus called EnStream is in final talks with the country's leading banks (likely CIBC, TD, RBC, Scotiabank and BMO) to bring a mobile wallet solution to the Great White North within six months. The system, which was demoed at the CWTA Wireless Showcase last September, enables mobile payments by storing a user's financial credentials on the SIM located inside their NFC-capable phone. It aims to replace credit and debit cards at first -- perhaps even driver's licenses and loyalty programs down the road. Carriers plan to charge banks a flat rate instead of a per-transaction fee.


 [Canada.com](#): A private member's bill that returned Monday to the House of Commons may have had more than one library user excitedly checking out books and DVDs from their local library. The bill would, if passed, make it cheaper for libraries to mail materials through Canada Post. The bill from Conservative Merv Tweed would provide "a reduced rate of postage for library materials lent by a library to a borrower, including by means of an interlibrary loan," the bill reads, and "guarantee a postal rate for libraries or interchanges and to provide books to Canadians at a reduced postal rate," Tweed said when he re-introduced the bill. It would also expand the definition of "library materials" to include everything from books, magazines, records, to CDs, CD-ROMs, audiovisual cassettes, DVDs and other audiovisual material.

 [New Zealand Herald](#): New Zealand Post is looking at cutting back its delivery services from six to three days a week and reducing staff numbers as it seeks to weather a sharp and "irreversible" downturn in postal revenue.

 [From the Federal Register](#): **Postal Regulatory Commission NOTICES** New Postal Product , 24996–24997 [2012–10023] [[TEXT](#)] [[PDF](#)]

 [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#): Soon after backers of a major Postal Service reform bill pushed their plan through the U.S. Senate, the Postmaster General gave the effort a big thumbs down, saying Senators are blocking too many of his plans to save money. "Unfortunately, action by the Senate today falls far short of the Postal Service's plan," read a statement from the Postal Service Board of Governors. "**We are disappointed that the Senate's bill would not enable the Postal Service to return to financial viability,**" the board added. Also blasting the Senate's effort was a key House lawmaker. "The Senate's approach is wholly unacceptable," said Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA), who is leading reform efforts in the House. "Worst of all, **the Senate bill does not stop the financial collapse of USPS, but only delays it for two years, at best, when reforms will only be more painful,**" said Issa.

 [Express](#): More stamp price rises could follow after the boss of Royal Mail warned its business faced a "spiral of decline". Chief executive Moya Greene said competition from private delivery companies like TNT was an "immediate threat" to the future of Royal Mail. She fears they may cherry-pick the most lucrative routes, leaving it to deliver to unprofitable areas and leading to a more expensive service. The warning comes as customers prepare for Monday's price hike, which will see first-class stamps soar from 46p to 60p, and second-class from 36p to 50p. The price increases follow operating losses of £41million at Royal Mail in 2011.


 [PRNewswire](#): The following statements are in response to today's vote by the U.S. Senate to approve S 1789, the 21st Century Postal Reform Act.


### **Statement of the Board of Governors of the United States Postal Service**


**The Board**, in working with management, **has spent the past two years preparing a comprehensive business plan to make the Postal Service viable so it would not become a liability to the American people. This plan was validated by outside experts. We stand behind this plan, and we are convinced it is the right approach.** Unfortunately, action by the Senate today falls far short of the Postal Service's plan. We are disappointed that the Senate's bill would not enable the Postal Service to return to financial viability. A strong Postal Service is important to the health of the entire mailing industry and the Postal Service's ability to finance universal service for the American public. Given volume losses we have experienced over the past five years along with expected future trends, it is totally inappropriate in these economic times to keep unneeded facilities open. There is simply not enough mail in our system today. **It is also inappropriate to delay the implementation of 5-day delivery when the vast majority of the American people support this change. Failure to act on these changes will ensure that the Postal Service's losses will continue to mount.** We remain hopeful that Congress will ultimately produce legislation that will enable the Postal Service to return to financial viability.

**Patrick R. Donahoe** Postmaster General & Chief Executive Officer of the United States Postal Service


"We appreciate the hard work of the Senate in addressing postal issues, and we believe that there are important and valuable provisions contained in the legislation. We would have preferred the Senate allow the Postal Service to move further and faster in addressing its cost reduction goals. "Today the Postal Service incurs a daily loss of \$25 million and has a debt of more than \$13 billion. Based on our initial analysis of the legislation passed today, losses would continue in both the short and long term. **If this bill were to become law, the Postal Service would be back before the Congress within a few years requesting additional legislative reform.** "The Postal Service does not seek to be a burden to the American taxpayer, and we believe such an outcome is entirely avoidable. The Postal Service has advanced a comprehensive five-year plan that would enable revenue generation and achieve cost reductions of \$20 billion by 2015 — restoring the Postal Service to long-term profitability. "The plan we have advanced is a fair and responsible approach for our customers, our employees and the communities we serve. We are hopeful that the legislative process will continue and that enacted legislation will put the Postal Service on a sustainable path to the future."


 [Democratic Underground](#): The Senate passed an amended version of the 21st Century Postal Service Act (S. 1789) on April 25 by a vote of 62-37. "Although the bill is flawed, the amended version is far better than the original," said APWU President Cliff Guffey. "That is a result of the tremendous effort of APWU members, postal customers, and elected officials who appreciate the importance of the Postal Service to American life."

 [New York Times](#): Fredric V. Rolando, president of the National Association of Letter Carriers, said the unions would now turn their attention to the House, where postal legislation is pending. "We are very disappointed that the Senate approved such a flawed bill, but we are determined to continue the fight for legislation that will provide a path to long-term viability for the Postal Service," Mr. Rolando said. The House bill differs substantially from the Senate version. It would create a commission much like the one that studied and recommended military base closings to oversee the shutting down of post offices and processing centers. It would also allow the Postal Service to end Saturday mail delivery without a two-year delay.


 [ENews Park Forest](#): U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) today released the following statement after the U.S. Senate passed comprehensive legislation to reform the postal service by a vote of 62 to 37. Durbin also offered an amendment - that was accepted into the bill - which protects facilities the Postal Service recently concluded to be efficient by requiring a new audit before the Postal Service can move forward with plans to close or consolidate that facility.


"Over the last year, the Postmaster General has produced many desperate scenarios including the closure of nine Illinois processing facilities and more than 250 post offices. Today the Senate produced a bipartisan plan that will steer the Postal Service away from the worst scenario and help it adapt to current economic realities. "Our bipartisan plan is far from perfect, but it will protect Illinois postal jobs and is far better than the Postmaster General's alternative. The bill will help the Postal Service reduce long-term costs, increase efficiency and grow into a 21st century service provider. "The Senate has done its part, now it's time for the House of Representatives to act and pass legislation before the moratorium expires on May 15th. In the meantime, I will do everything I can to prevent good-paying Illinois jobs from leaving our state."


 [NBC Politics](#): The effort to keep the Postal Service from being forcibly downsized faces an uncertain future in the House where the leading Republican on the postal issue, House Government Reform and Oversight Committee chairman Rep. Darrell Issa, R- Calif., has offered a bill very different from the Senate's version. Issa's bill would create a task force along the lines of the Base Realignment and Closing Commission on military bases, which would get rid of redundant post offices and processing facilities.


 [Sen. Thomas Carper](#) (D-DE): – Upon passage of the 21st Century Postal Service Act, Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.), co-author of the bill and chairman of the Senate subcommittee that oversees the U.S. Postal Service, released the following statement:

"The financial situation facing the U.S. Postal Service is dire, but it is not hopeless. The time to act is now, and this legislation will provide the Postal Service with much needed flexibility so it can right-size, modernize, and remain competitive for decades to come. Sens. Lieberman, Collins, Brown and I have worked together to address the concerns raised by many of our Senate colleagues in a responsible manner. Our bill ensures that the Postal Service will receive the resources it needs to survive, while addressing legitimate concerns raised by communities affected when postal facilities are closed or consolidated. Our bill asks for shared sacrifice from postal management, postal employees, postal customers and even members of Congress. Make no mistake: these sacrifices are necessary to ensure that the Postal Service can become and remain financially solvent. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House of Representatives to address the challenges facing the Postal Service. It is my hope that they move forward expeditiously with consideration of Postal reform legislation. We can solve this problem if we work together and remain committed to preserving this invaluable American institution for generations to come."


 [PRNewswire](#): Catalyst Paper will host the 15th Print Delivers event in San Francisco on Wednesday, May 23, 2012 at the City Club of San Francisco from 2:30 to 6:30 pm for top advertising agency executives and media/marketing decision makers. This event showcases experts from major companies who will present case studies, research, and examples of how print energizes multi-channel marketing and targeted campaigns.

 [The Moral Liberal](#): Closing a post office is never a popular move. To some extent, there is a kind of reverse NIMBY ("Not in my backyard") effect at work: No one wants to lose the perceived benefits of a local post office. For small communities, there is a symbolic benefit to having a post office to call their own. And for Members of Congress, post offices are perhaps the oldest form of pork. Many Members have been re-elected based on bringing in a post office—which often ends up bearing his or her name. Few see an electoral advantage in closing an obsolete facility. But despite this political popularity—or perhaps because of it—many of the nation's 27,000 post offices are simply not needed in order to provide service. Fully 80 percent of post offices lose money. The problem is getting worse.


 [Washington Post](#): Small business owners have long been enormously reliant on the Postal Service, in many cases to both deliver the goods and materials they need to run their companies as well as ship their products out to their customers. The Senate proposal offers an alternative to what many consider more costly changes, like eliminating Saturday service, delaying the delivery of first-class mail and ultimately shuttering hundreds of offices resulting in the loss of thousands of jobs. But the bill faces a number of hurdles in the opposite chamber, particularly when House Republicans note the \$33.6 billion price tag attached to the measure.

 [Washington Post](#): Congress moved one step closer Wednesday to overhauling the cash-strapped U.S. Postal Service by approving sweeping reforms to rebalance the mail agency's finances and help cut the size of its delivery network. The bipartisan measure passed 62 to 37 and would give the Postal Service nearly \$11 billion to offer buyouts and early retirement incentives to hundreds of thousands of postal workers and to pay off its debts. Revised estimates on how much USPS owes to federal worker pension accounts have determined that the agency has overpaid its obligations to the fund over several years. The measure also would permit the end of Saturday mail deliveries in two years, only after USPS determines it is financially necessary. The Postal Service also could move forward with plans to shutter thousands of post offices and hundreds of mail distribution centers — but senators placed several restrictions on when, where and how outposts in rural communities could be closed. The bill also modifies mail service standards to ensure that the Postal Service preserves the overnight delivery of mail sent to nearby communities, but allows USPS to slow the delivery of mail destined for destinations farther away. Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Calif.), lead sponsor of a competing postal reform measure in the House, called the Senate bill "wholly unacceptable" because it delays the Postal Service's ability to quickly close unprofitable post offices and processing centers.

*April 25, 2012*

 [Pickeringchatto](#): **The American Postal Network, 1792–1914** Editor: *Richard R John* 4 Volume Set: 1920pp: January 2012 978 1 84893 115 2: 234x156mm: 625.00

"The American postal system is widely regarded as a prototype of modern governmental organizations. It is also considered to be a precursor for a number of large-scale businesses and was central to the communications revolution of the nineteenth century. This four-volume reset collection documents the history of this remarkable institution, locating it within the wider administrative network that coordinated the circulation of people, information and goods. It involved several modes of transportation and communication (steamboats, railroads, telegraphs) and linked the many mass distributors of print media and consumer goods. The pamphlets in this collection document major controversies over communications policy. They link the postal system with debates on cultural values, economic development, political corruption and public finance. The sources in each topic are organized chronologically and set in context with extensive editorial commentary. The collection will be of interest to specialists in the history of law, economics, business, politics and communication as well as historians of the long nineteenth century."

 **The Senate has passed S. 1789** with those approved amendments noted below by a vote of 62-37. (*Italicized items signify amendments that were defeated.*)

#### Action taken Wednesday

- Amendment 2032 (Tester): **To limit postal executive compensation to an amount no greater than that which is paid to cabinet secretaries. (Approved)**
- Amendment 2071 (Warner): To require the Postal Service to help facilitate the processing of postal employee requests for retirement and benefits. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2050 (Schumer): To preserve door delivery of mail for those that already receive it. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2074 (Rockefeller): **(Approved)** *[Heaven knows what it was about.]*
- Amendment 2073 (Rockefeller): Regarding accessibility of postal employees to Medicare. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2036 (Pryor): To approve a sense of the Senate **to direct the Postal Service NOT close any postal facilities pending passage of S. 1789. (Approved)**
- Amendment 2030 (McCaskill): To extend the hardship exemption additional time for those who have difficulty making timely submission requests. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2046 (DeMint): *To require postal unions to obtain permission from their members before using dues for political purposes. (Defeated)*
- Amendment 2072 (Landrieu): To require the Postal Service to take into account the impact of their decisions regarding postal facilities on small businesses. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2042 (Casey): *To maintain current service delivery standards for market-dominant products for at least four years. (Defeated)*
- Amendment 2039 (Paul): *To prohibit Postal Service employees from engag in in collective bargaining. (Defeated)*
- Amendment 2066 (Carper): On executive compensation and the requirement for senior executives to pay a portion of their health insurance cost. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2029 (Paul): To add to the Postal Service's long term fiscal viability plan a requirement to note whether Congress has been helpful or hurtful. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2028 (Paul): *To create a pilot program to test alternative methods of postal service deliveries.. (Defeated)*
- Amendment 2027 (Paul): To close Capitol Hill post offices retaining only one in the House and one in the Senate. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2076 (Bingaman): To require that state liaisons that don't have district offices in them be appointed and domiciled in the state they represent. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2079 (Manchin, Rockefeller, et al.): *To prohibit the Postal Service from closing post offices for at least a period of two years. (Defeated)*

#### Action taken Tuesday

- Motion **to waive the Budget Act** with respect to the Reid Substitute Amendment to S. 1789, the Postal Reform Bill. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2056 (Tester & Levin ), consider economic savings before closing postal facilities, the establishment of retail postal service standards, subject USPS closing proposals to PRC review. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2060 (Coburn): Amendment to cap spending by federal agencies on conferences and meetings. **(Approved)**
- *Amendment 2033 (McCain): To establish a commission on postal reorganizatoin (postal BRAC for postal facility consolidations and closures).* **(Defeated)**
- Amendment 2020 (Wyden et al.): To ensure postal reform does not disrupt voting by mail. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2058 (Coburn): To encourage the colocation of postal retail services at alternative retail outlets. **(Approved)**
- *Amendment 2061 (Coburn): To give the Postmaster General, after two years, the authority to impose mandatory retirement for those eligible to retire.* **(Defeated)**
- Amendment 2031 (McCaskill): To prohibit rural post office closures for a period of one year until all options to continue service have been exhausted. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2080 (Snowe): To get independent review and verification by the Postal Regulatory Commissoin of the methology and savings associated with USPS proposed mail processing facility closures. **(Approved )**
- *Amendment 2043 (Udall-NM): To stike the provision to permit the USPS to move to five-day delivery after the expiration of two years.* **(Defeated)**
- Amendment 2182 (Durbin): To subject all orders taken thus far to close postal facilities to USPS OIG review . **(Approved)**
- *Amendment 2034 (Akaka): To strike the workers compensation provisions proposed in this bill and to substitute other provisions.* **(Defeated)**
- Amendment 2047 (Bennet and Blunt): To allow a non-paid advocate to represent communities faced with possible postal facility closure, and to permit the USPS to offer other governmental services. **(Approved)**
- *Amendment 2083 (Corker): To give the USPS greater flexibility than provided in S 1789 (e.g., raise rates)* **(Defeated)**
- *Amendment 2049 (Akaka): To direct the Postal Service to observe the consultation requirement with postal supervisors and postmasters on all matters concerning the provision of their compensation and benefits.* **(Defeated)**
- *Amendment 2025 (Mr. Paul): To grant citizens the right to choose who can deposit and what can be deposited in their mailbox.* **(Defeated)**




**Courier, Express, and Postal Observer:** Today, eBay reminded its sellers that beginning the first of May it will reclassify USPS First Class Mail delivery as a standard service in all listings that state that First Class mail is the delivery method. eBay first announced this move in February and described the change as a way to set “the right buyer expectation regarding USPS First-Class service.” The timing eBay’s move corresponds with the Postal Service’s expected implementation of new slower service standards for First Class Parcels.


**Post & Parcel:** The US Senate has voted against setting up a receivership-style commission to force changes and cutbacks at the US Postal Service. [EdNote: And NALC is telling its members to OPPOSE S. 1789? Something doesn't square here.]


**Post & Parcel:** The Brazilian government has authorised Brazil’s Post and Telegraph Company to provide third party products and services through its post offices, clearing the way for it to enter the mobile phone market. The Ministry of Communications said the state-owned company would be able to expand the traditional portfolio of services available through its retail outlets through business partnerships.


**Post & Parcel:** The new president of Spain’s loss-making postal service Correos, Javier Cuesta Nuin, has said his company is planning to cut 1,900 to 2,000 jobs this year, after cutting twice that number last year. Appearing before


Spanish lawmakers in the Budget Committee last week, Cuesta said the cuts were necessary for the survival of the company in a “very difficult economic environment”. With declining demand for mail services in a market that has been fully open to competition since January 2011, Cuesta said efforts to increase revenues in recent years had not been enough to stem the company’s losses.


 [Washington Post](#): Final passage of [S.1789] is expected Wednesday [today]. The issue then moves to the House, where a Republican-backed proposal under consideration differs considerably from the Senate because it includes provisions establishing an independent financial control board to review and overhaul USPS finances. An attempt Tuesday to add the oversight panel to the Senate measure failed overwhelmingly.


 [Roll Call](#): Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) on Wednesday sang the praises of the bipartisan majority of senators who allowed work to continue on a postal reform bill, and said finishing the bill on Wednesday will show the House that the Senate can do “big things.”


 [CEP News](#) (Courier-Express-Postal), published by the [MRU Consultancy](#), has reported that:


 That’s just about the limit: PostNL’s CEO Harry Koorstra stepped down with immediate effect. ‘The co-operation with the Supervisory Board has been very cumbersome of late’, the official statement reads. He and the board had ‘differences in opinion about how to serve best the various stakeholders’ interests’. ‘Under these circumstances, I cannot and will not work’, the announcement further stated. Koorstra stressed that he left the company without any compensation.

 Posten Norge has failed with its appeal against a fine imposed by the ESA (‘EFTA Surveillance Authority’).


 China’s express and postal services saw considerable growth this year, too.

 Who owns the postal codes? Canada Post now wants to resolve this question through a court. The post sued Ottawa based one-man company Geolytica, which amongst other things provides the free download of Canadian postal codes via its website <http://geocoder.ca>.


 Poste Italiane remained Europe’s second largest postal operator in 2011 despite slightly decreased revenues.


 In the light of impending losses in the three-digit-million area Correos plans mass redundancies.


 The consultations on the redraft of the Swiss postal law were closed on Monday.


 The Russian post felt obliged to deny rumours about the resignation of CEO Alexander Kisselyov. The official memorandum states that Kiselyov’s will be in place until 2014 and only the regulatory authority could terminate the contract ahead of time. However, the authority ‘has stated no such intentions’.


 After Deutsche Post appealed against the EU-Commission’s order to repay state aid at the beginning of April (CEP-News 16/12), the German government now also filed a similar lawsuit with the EU Court of Justice.


 The regional court in Aschaffenburg passed a landmark decision for the entire German logistics industry. On Tuesday Germany’s Association of Courier, Express and Postal Service Providers (BdKEP e. V.) reported that the court decided that subcontractors in the parcel business are entitled to receive the diesel surcharge which is levied on shippers.

 FedEx’ tax ratio in the USA came under fire again. Senator Bernie Sanders (Vermont) criticised that the integrator spent over 38.6m euros on lobbying between 2008 and 2010, but only paid federal tax bills of 28.1m euros. Last year activists from the left leaning non-profit organisation Citizens for Tax Justice already pointed out that FedEx’ low tax burden was unacceptable given profits of over 4.8bn U. S. Dollars between 2008 and 2010.

 InPost, a subsidiary of Polish mail service Integer.pl, agreed on a strategic partnership with Neopost.


 The Norwegian post remained on its shopping spree in the logistics industry. At the beginning of this week it was disclosed that Posten Norge took over forwarding firm Fredrikstad Transport & Spedisjon (FTS) which is based in the vicinity of Oslo. FTS primarily specialises in cross-border shipments and their distribution in Norway.


 Cycleon, a Netherlands-based reverse logistics specialist, opened a new office in Singapore.


 The Brazilian post has been authorized to offer products and services from third-party providers in its post offices nationwide. ECT Correios received the necessary permittance from the responsible ministry of communications last week. The earnings from the utilisation of its infrastructure will be invested to improve basic postal services.





The [MRU](#), founded in 1992, is the only consultancy in Europe, which has specialised in the market of courier-, express- and parcel services. For large-scale shippers and CEP-services in particular, the MRU provides interdisciplinary advice for all major questions of the market, as there are for example market entry, product design, organisation, and EDP. *To learn more about the stories reported above, contact [CEP News](#). (We appreciate the courtesy extended by CEP News to help whet your appetite for more of what CEP offers.)*


 [National Association of Letter Carriers](#): The NALC has argued for months that S. 1789 would fail to preserve the long-term viability of the Postal Service because it embraces the downsizing plans of Postmaster General Pat Donahoe. By voting against an amendment offered by Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM) to preserve six-day delivery (by a vote of 56 to 43) and by voting to slash federal employee workers' compensation benefits (by a vote of 53 to 46), the Senate has failed to improve a deeply flawed bill. Tell your senators to vote "NO" on S. 1789.

 [The Star-Ledger](#): What many observers fail to give weight to, though, is just how burdensome the terms are under which the postal service is forced to operate. Congress has the obligation to change those terms if it wants the U.S. Postal Service to perform as a modern business. It isn't a level playing field, not at all. Every effort the postal service has made to generate business (e.g. online bill paying; shipping certain products; providing new services; banking; phone cards, money transfers; email accounts) either private companies objected (e.g. Internet industry; banks; FedEx) or Congress itself (prompted by the lobbying crowd) put a stop to it, forcing the postal service to abandon the effort.

 [DutchNews](#): Members of the executive board at postal delivery firm PostNL will not get a bonus this year, new CEO Herna Verhagen is quoted as saying by the Financier Dagblad.


 [The Atlantic](#): This week the U.S. Senate is debating the 21st Century Postal Act of 2011, a proposal to reform the U.S. Postal Service and change the way the USPS does business in order to make it more profitable. [It] will not solve the fundamental problem: Congress assumes that this vital government service will somehow become profitable. The critiques and suggestions offered as solutions for what ails the Postal Service see the problem only in terms of commercial and financial concerns.

 [Washington Post](#): The final bill (S. 1789) is expected to pass the Senate but faces an uncertain future. The House has yet to begin consideration of a different version of a postal bill, which seeks to create a national commission that would make major decisions on postal cuts and make it easier to eliminate Saturday delivery. The commission, which would have authority to do away with no-layoff clauses in postal employee contracts, is fiercely opposed by postal unions. "This of course kicks the can down the road," complained Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., who unsuccessfully pushed for a commission in the Senate bill. He argued that the current bill failed to address longer-term fixes, instead hiding behind studies and reviews that unnecessarily delayed major decisions. **"We'll be on the floor in two years addressing this issue again, because it is not a solution."** Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe also has criticized the Senate bill as a short-term answer. Noting that more people every year are switching to the Internet to send letters and pay bills, he has called the Postal Service's business model "broken." **The agency has estimated that the Senate bill would only provide it enough liquidity to continue operating for two or three years.**


 [Government Executive](#): A measure that would have required eligible postal service employees to retire without buyout incentives failed in the Senate on Tuesday. The amendment, introduced this week by Sen. Tom Coburn, R-




Okla., would have reduced the cash-strapped agency's expenses by reducing its large percentage of retirement-eligible workers. It failed in a 33-65 vote.

 [Bloomberg Businessweek](#): A Senate bill to overhaul the cash-strapped U.S. Postal Service would make it more difficult to shutter post offices considered too costly to maintain. The legislation would create an appeal process to let customers protest plans to close individual offices. The Senate began voting today on proposed amendments to the bill, S. 1789, including at least eight that would delay decisions on shutting down postal sites.

 [ABC News](#): "Thieves Follow FedEx, Snatch Packages"


 [Oman Daily Observer](#): Moving with changing times, the state postal authority, Oman Post has introduced e-Post initiative, the first-of-its-kind in the world yesterday. Under this, both digital as well as printed mail will converge into one unique digital address and each individual, both national and expatriate, will be given a distinctive identity free for life. These identity will offer the person convenience and hassle-free transactions and will also move along with the person in whichever part of the country he/she is living. Developed by Oman Post in collaboration with Vantage Post Technologies BV of the Netherlands — a global leader in digital document portals — ePost also offers every individual a virtual post box as well.


*April 24, 2012*


 Action taken thus far in the Senate's consideration of S. 1789, a postal reform bill. (*Italicized items signify defeat.*) The Senate will resume business on S. 1789 tomorrow at 2 p.m.


- Motion **to waive the Budget Act** with respect to the Reid Substitute Amendment to S. 1789, the Postal Reform Bill. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2056 (Tester & Levin ), consider economic savings before closing postal facilities, the establishment of retail postal service standards, subject USPS closing proposals to PRC review. **(Approved)**
- Amendment 2060 (Coburn): Amendment to cap spending by federal agencies on conferences and meetings. **(Approved)**
- *Amendment 2033 (McCain): To establish a commission on postal reorganizatoin (postal BRAC for postal facility consolidations and closures). (Defeated)*
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- *Amendment 2083 (Corker): To give the USPS greater flexibility than provided in S 1789 (e.g., raise rates) (Defeated)*


- *Amendment 2049 (Akaka): To direct the Postal Service to observe the consultation requirement with postal supervisors and postmasters on all matters concerning the provision of their compensation and benefits. (Defeated)*
- *Amendment 2025 (Mr. Paul): To grant citizens the right to choose who can deposit and what can be deposited in their mailbox. (Defeated)*

 **The Hill:** Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz) said Tuesday that the U.S. Postal Service needs adapt to 21st century technologies in the same way it did when Americans started moving by rail.

 **The Economist:** Walk into a post office in Europe or Asia and you're likely to see a range of services on offer, from banking to insurance to retailing. But in America, Congress has stopped the postal service from entering many of these fields, claiming the agency has an unfair advantage over the private sector due to its monopoly on first-class mail. Private businesses have also objected, running to legislators when the service encroaches on their turf. The first paragraph of this New York Times article offers a telling example. Today the Senate took up legislation aimed at saving the postal service. The measure will do no such thing. It cuts in half the number of mail processing centres the service wanted to close, and delays the closing of underused post offices. It also postpones a decision on whether to end Saturday delivery, which ought to be the first reform the service enacts. The service will recoup some \$11 billion for overpayments into a generous pension fund, but that may only prolong its decline. A number of amendments have been proposed, many watering down an already timid bill. What the Senate bill (and a more far-reaching bill in the House) really does is reinforce the fact that the postal service is not a genuine business. For no business has a 535-person board of directors that is more responsive to political pressure than market forces.


 **Red State:** Earlier in the day, Senator Sessions tried to raise a point of order against the bill, noting that it would violate the Budget Control Act by increasing the debt through reduced funding in the treasury. This is yet another example where Republicans could have blocked a bad piece of legislation by denying Democrats the 60 votes they needed to waive the point of order. But with the help of 9 Republicans, they defeated the point of order and proceeded with debate on the bill that will likely pass. Later on, Senator McCain proposed a substitute amendment (S. 1625), which would create a new postal oversight board (similar to BRAC) to close \$3 billion worth of facilities over a two-year period and seize financial authority over the Postal Service if it defaults with more than a \$2 billion deficit for more than two years. It would also allow them to make reforms, such as ending Saturday delivery. This will ensure that the USPS either succeeds on its own merits or becomes a private entity – free of government regulations, but also free of its government-sponsored monopoly on first class mail. The bill closely mirrors the Issa-Ross bill in the House. Yet, once again 16 Republicans joined with Democrats to defeat this modest reform bill.


 **Post & Parcel:** Jersey Post is increasing its postal rates to respond to changes in Royal Mail rates, changes to UK tax rules and the continuing decline in mail volumes. The company is raising the price of a local letter delivery from the first and second class rates of 37p and 45p to a unified service rate of 45p. Deliveries to the UK, other Channel Islands and the Isle of Man increases 5p to 55p, a 10% increase. Rates to Europe will go up 22% to 60p, but rates for international letters actually decrease 7% to 80p. The price changes, which also affect parcels and other services, go into effect from May 8, 2012.


 **PR Newswire:** The Board of Governors of the U.S. Postal Service will meet May 4 in open session at Postal Service headquarters, 475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW. The public is welcome to observe the meeting beginning at 8:30 a.m. in the Ben Franklin Room on the 11th floor. The Board is expected to discuss the following items: Minutes of the previous meetings Remarks of the Chairman of the Board Remarks of the Postmaster General and CEO Committee reports Financial update (the second quarter 10-Q financial results will be available on May 10) Quarterly report on service performance Tentative agenda for the June 14, 2012 meeting in Washington, DC Open session meetings of the Board of Governors are available on live audio webcasts at <http://about.usps.com/news/electronic-press-kits/bog/welcome.htm>. Three hours after the conclusion of the open session meeting, a recorded audio file will be available for listening. In compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, the audio webcast will be open-captioned.


**INDUSTRY ALERT** To Mailers' Technical Advisory Committee members: Today, the U.S. Senate began debate on Senate bill S. 1789, known as the 21st Century


Postal Reform Act, and which you may have heard about recently in the news. The bill has many provisions and amendments and is still under discussion. To help keep you informed about the process, the Postal Service is sharing with you information that was given to the bill's four Senate sponsors earlier today. Senators Joseph Lieberman, Susan Collins, Tom Carper and Scott Brown had requested details on what a potential mail processing and distribution network would look like if modeled under the proposed service standards contained in the bill to maintain overnight service for intra-SCF volume. In response to the Senators' request, the Postal Service provided a modeled network scenario. The model provided is the best estimate available on which processing plants and facilities would be needed, based solely on the proposed legislation. Further refinements to the model may possibly be necessary. Details about the modeled network request may be appearing in the news media. The Postal Service therefore wishes to clarify that the information provided to the Senate does not represent a new Postal Service proposal, and should not be interpreted as a new Network Rationalization plan. The facilities on this list could be subject to change based on a House version of the legislation, and the outcome of the subsequent committee process. Debate on the Senate bill is continuing through today, and the legislation is not final. In addition, the legislation being considered would not become final in its present form; even if this legislation were approved by the Senate today, action would still be required in the House of Representatives, and a final bill would have to be signed by the President. The Postal Service will provide more information as it becomes available.

 [Reason](#): Ah, election year. When a young old senator's thoughts turn to seniors, local businesses, and other special interests. The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) can't go on this way. Something's gotta give if the USPS is going to meet pension obligations and generally stay afloat. There are only so many times you can increase the price of a first-class stamp before post office closure, Saturday delivery termination, of slower delivery have to be seriously considered. So what has the Senate decided to do? Today, the World's Greatest Deliberative Body, will get down to the important business of holding a bunch of votes on amendments to the postal reform bill explicitly designed to give members from rural districts and areas with lots of seniors plausible deniability come Election Day


 [Atlanta Journal Constitution](#): It's not too often that we have legislation on the floor in the Congress where those of us in the Press Gallery aren't quite sure what will happen when the votes are counted - and that is true on a major postal reform bill now before the Senate. Votes on a series of amendments begin today, as the Senate could vote to keep Saturday mail delivery, get rid of it immediately or after a several year period - and that's not the only unknown. Also up in the air are amendments that would block, delay or slow down planned closures of well over three thousand local post offices which the Postal Service wants to get rid of in order to save money. Among the 38 amendments to the "21st Century Postal Service Act of 2012" (S. 1789) that could be voted on Tuesday afternoon and evening, there are some which try to limit the scope of the bill. With all Senators certainly hearing complaints from back home about threatened closures of post offices and mail delivery facilities, it's hard to predict the outcome of some of these votes. And that doesn't happen too often in the U.S. Congress.


 [Bluefield Daily Telegraph](#): The U.S. Senate is expected to take up a critical amendment today which, if approved, would ensure that 3,700 postal facilities, including 150 in West Virginia currently targeted for closure, would remain open for at least another two years. The additional time would allow the Postal Service to consider better cost-saving measures.


 [Washington Post](#): Even if they don't tote mail bags, federal employees across the government would feel the weight of the Postal Service legislation being considered by the Senate. Among a slew of provisions and proposed amendments are some that would affect all federal employees. Included are those that would fundamentally alter the structure of the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP), reduce some workers' compensation payments and limit agency spending on conferences. The largest component of Donahoe's "Plan to Profitability" would have a significant impact on health insurance for federal employees no matter where they work.

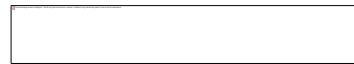
 [The Albany Herald](#): When the going gets tough in Congress, the tough lawmakers get going — on their campaigns. And that's about it. One trait of Congress that has been proven time and again is that when it comes to the job of working within a budget, it has no stomach for it. As long as there is a line of credit that will fund programs, tax breaks and perks that make the voters back home happy, America's lawmakers — the vast majority of them, at least — are more than content to secure their future by placing their nation's future at risk. They hope you won't remember that when you get their campaign circulars thinly disguised as "reports from Congress" over the next few weeks (mailed for them for free, by the way, despite the financial crisis facing the U.S. Postal Service),


listen to their recorded campaign pitches when your phone rings at suppertime, suddenly see photo ops of them all over the district, and see their names on ballots this summer and in the fall. And if voters do have short memories and refused to hold their elected officials accountable, nothing will change.


 [Alaska Dispatch](#): The Postal Service wants to rapidly shrink its network, cutting costs by \$20 billion or more by 2015. But Congress wants to slow the consolidation. The squeeze puts postal customers in a difficult spot. Do they want a leaner system? Postal Service closings? And possibly slower delivery? Or do they want one that relies on taxpayer funding? The future of the US Postal Service (USPS) might not seem like a burning issue to many Americans, whose mailboxes are stuffed with unwanted catalogs and credit-card solicitations. But the network lies at the heart of a nearly \$1 trillion mailing industry that delivers materials, packages, and bills for businesses large and small and reaches into virtually every corner of American life. It delivers almost 40 percent of the world's mail, maintains nearly as many retail locations in the United States as McDonald's has restaurants worldwide, operates one of the world's largest civilian fleets, and generates annual sales that outrank all but 34 Fortune 500 companies. How do you reform such a gargantuan institution to ensure profits? You shrink it.

 [Reuters](#): Lawmakers will fight to save post offices and other U.S. Postal Service facilities from closure as the Senate gears up to vote on amendments to a bill to overhaul the struggling mail agency. The Senate plans to begin voting on Tuesday on amendments to a bipartisan bill that would allow the agency to tap into a retirement-fund surplus and end Saturday delivery after two years. But rural-state lawmakers argue that the bill does not do enough to scale back the Postal Service's plans to close thousands of money-losing post offices and hundreds of mail processing facilities starting in mid-May. The desire to protect beloved postal facilities and jobs in their states has led some lawmakers to threaten voting against the bill, indicating a potentially tricky path forward for postal legislation.


 [The Barbados Advocate](#): THE global financial crisis calls for businesses to find new and innovative ways to stay relevant and one of the ways that post offices can do this it through direct mail. This is coming from Joel Brathwaite, Postmaster General at the General Post Office who delivered remarks at the opening ceremony of the Direct Mail Workshop recently at the Divi Southwinds. "The current adverse economic climate and the unreliable nature of financial forecast give rise to contraction in businesses, which have indirectly impacted on the Post. All businesses today are challenged to find new ways to stay relevant in the current fast-paced business environment. Finding new ways to do business is mandatory for every entity that serves customers. For the Posts, around the world, direct mail provides an opportunity to increase existing volumes, and by extension improve the bottom line". He said that this is because direct mail and direct marketing have the faculty to enhance development in traditional and value added postal products like letters, parcels and logistics. Therefore, it is important that the participants develop an understanding of these skills during this workshop. Brathwaite stated that the direct mail system in Barbados "is still in a developmental stage," and therefore, it he hopes that by participating in this workshop, postal workers would develop more knowledge and capabilities in best practice solutions so that they can improve the activities across the Caribbean and further develop their own postal business.

 [Post & Parcel](#): DHL Express says it has invested in its operations in the Chicago area of the United States in order to "significantly" enhance its international pick-up and delivery services.


 [Government Executive](#): Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., has offered an amendment that would prohibit collective bargaining, while Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del., is seeking to limit executive compensation. Paul also put forth an amendment that would provide merit pay for the postmaster general and limit the authority of USPS to award bonuses.


 [Washington Post](#): The U.S. Postal Service would like Congress to allow changes to the mail delivery schedule and other reforms to better control costs, but a set of proposals expected to come to a vote Tuesday could place even more restrictions on when, where and how Americans receive their mail. The Senate plans to vote on dozens of amendments designed to overhaul the Postal Service, by providing nearly \$11 billion to fund the buyouts of hundreds of thousands of employees and, eventually, ending six-day-a-week mail delivery. The proposals could also establish new service standards and revamp how the USPS sets aside money for its retirees. Unlike most issues under consideration this year on Capitol Hill, overhauling the Postal Service does not break along traditional


partisan or ideological lines. Lawmakers who normally work closely together — including Sens. Joseph I. Lieberman (I-Conn.) and John McCain (R-Ariz.) — find themselves on opposing sides of the debate.


 [The Hill](#): Sen. Bob Corker (R-Tenn.) on Monday said he is putting forward an amendment to a postal reform bill that would end what he calls the "corporate welfare" associated with current law that requires the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) to provide some services to companies at a loss. "Current law... actually mandates that the PO provide some services at a loss," Corker said on the floor. "It is unbelievable the calls we've been receiving in our office that basically point to the tremendous corporate welfare that is in existence." Corker said it makes "very little sense" to continue to require this corporate welfare to companies, and said his amendment to the 21st Century Postal Service act, S. 1789, would eliminate current law that limits the ability of the USPS to raise the price of some services. Corker criticized S. 1789 for calling for a two-year study on stopping Saturday delivery. "We don't need a study to tell us what we already know," he said. "The post office needs flexibility in its delivery schedule." His language would also eliminate the "no layoff" clause for postal workers in future contracts, and kill language mandating that the fringe benefits of postal workers meet the standards of benefits in 1971.


*April 23, 2012*

 [Courier, Express, and Postal Observer](#): The Hill has reported that Federal Employees will likely see an increase in their health insurance premiums if Postal Service employees and retirees are removed from the Federal Employee Health Benefit Program. The increase in premiums for Federal Employees suggests that current law effectively transfers funds from the Postal Service, and its ratepayers, to the Office of Personnel management to cover costs of health benefits for federal employees. While the size of the total subsidy is unknown, the information that the Hill article presents suggests that at a minimum, the Postal Service's participation in FEHBP reduces every Federal employee's premium by at least 2%. Ending this subsidy would seem to be a good idea for both mailers and postal employees and would remove another transfer from the Postal Service to the federal government.


 [National Newspaper Association](#): "The National Newspaper Association urges your support of S. 1789, the 21st Century Postal Act. A substitute amendment to be proposed by its sponsors strengthens this bill. It will give the Postal Service tools for restructuring and inject much needed certainty into the \$1.1 trillion mailing business. NNA, a 126-year-old organization, represents 2,350 community newspapers. Our newspapers use the mail to serve America's neighborhoods and small towns. Pew Research Center studies indicate that an overwhelming majority of Americans--both over and under 40--depend on local newspapers for political, educational and shopping information. The failure of the Postal Service to deliver newspapers and the news would put many communities at risk. It casts a shadow over the practice of democracy in America."


 [The Guernsey Press](#): AN UNNAMED Guernsey-based retailer has reportedly looked into sending goods to customers in the UK via Germany to avoid being taxed on small goods, it has been claimed. A report in the International Tax Review magazine states that the company was thinking of using the method to try to get around the UK's recent decision to shut down Low Value Consignment Relief to the Channel Islands, which allowed fulfilment firms to sell goods under £15 to the UK VAT-free. The magazine said that such a move would be fraud. But a Guernsey Post spokeswoman said the company was not aware of local businesses using the practice.

 [Rolling Stone](#): In 2006, in what looks like an attempt to bust the Postal Workers' Union, George Bush signed into law the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006. This law required the Postal Service to pre-fund 100 percent of its entire future obligations for 75 years of health benefits to its employees – and not only do it, but do it within ten years. No other organization, public or private, has to pre-fund 100 percent of its future health benefits. This is a classic example of private-sector lobbyists using the government to protect its profits and keep prices inflated.

 [Pioneer Press](#): Public health experts will test in the Twin Cities next month whether mail carriers can quickly distribute medications during a simulated emergency. On Sunday, May 6, personnel from the U.S. Postal Service will deliver a simulated supply of the antibiotic doxycycline to some 37,000 households in four ZIP codes across the Twin Cities metro. The target ZIP codes include portions of St. Paul, North Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal and Golden Valley, according to a statement from the Minnesota Department of Health. Only residential addresses will


receive the simulated antibiotics, which will take the form of an empty pill bottle. People living in the 55101, 55102, 55411 and 55422 ZIP code areas will be notified of the exercise a few days before the event takes place.


 [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#): In the wake of the rabid overspending for the GSA's 2010 Western Regions Conference, the Senate is poised this week to approve new controls on meetings sponsored by federal agencies. But they are not expected to make a lot of noise about it. An amendment by Sen. Tom Coburn, R-Okla., has been accepted by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., for consideration as part of a U.S. Postal Service reform bill, with debate expected on Tuesday. But Roll Call reported this morning that Coburn's amendment likely will be passed by unanimous consent, avoiding a recorded vote and potentially more speeches about the now-infamous \$823,000 conference that might embarrass Las Vegas, where it was held. An amendment that seeks to rein in spending on conferences figures to pass overwhelming one way or the other, after taxpayers were treated to stories this month about semi-private catered in-room parties, \$75,000 bicycle building team exercise and spending on commemorative coins and yearbook-style mementoes at the General Services Administration conference at the M Resort in Henderson.

 [Morning Star](#): Greek postal workers' union leader Georgios Vasilopoulos warned on Monday how much the financial crisis had shattered his country and attacked its workers. Unemployment was at an all-time high, with more than 50 per cent of young people without a job, while wages had been slashed by up to 32 per cent. "Through hundreds of legislative changes, the authorities are demolishing the institutional framework of industrial relations and have deregulated the labour market," he told delegates in Bournemouth. "In public services, the state has violated all collective bargaining to reduce wages and abolished decades worth of national agreements. "And in February, a new law on postal market was passed to begin the deregulation of our national postal service."





[Federal News Radio](#): An amendment to a Senate bill restructuring the U.S. Postal Service's financial framework would institute new agency reporting requirements for retiring federal workers, anticipating a "deluge of retirees," from USPS. Sens. Mark Warner (D-Va.) and Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.), introduced last week an amendment to the 21st Century Postal Service Act of 2012 (S. 1789), that requires the Office of Personnel Management to take new steps to chip away at a longstanding backlog of federal retirement claims. In a floor speech Monday, Warner said his office has received hundreds of requests from federal retirees who have faced long waits and "inordinate hardship ... while their retirement paperwork moves through the system." And the retirement backlog could grow larger. Much of the larger postal reform bill's cost-savings stem from reducing its workforce, in part through early retirements. All told, the bill sets a goal of reducing the USPS workforce by 18 percent, which would add nearly 100,000 applications to the retirement pipeline.

 [Huffington Post](#): Death, or at least a near death experience, is the likely outcome of S.1789, the bill to downsize the Postal Service that the Senate is scheduled to vote on Tuesday night. The bill would end Saturday delivery and also raise the target delivery time from 1-2 days to 2-3 days. The idea is that people won't generally care if a letter takes 3 days rather than 2 to reach its destination. While that is probably true, this will certainly increase the frequency with which a letter takes a week or more to reach its destination, and people do care about and remember these instances. This additional delay is likely to seriously reduce the standing of the Postal Service in most people's eyes, leading to a further erosion of business. The certain effect of this bill is to cut 100,000 jobs over the next three years. This is somewhat better than the 200,000 job loss that would result from a bill being pushed by Representative Darrell Issa and the House Republicans, but any final bill is likely to end up somewhere in the middle. If we assume 150,000 lost jobs, that is equivalent to more than 5 weeks of job growth at the March rate.

 [news.gnom.es](#): The Senate will resume debate on postal reform Tuesday, considering several amendments to its bill that would affect workers' pay and benefits. Measures that would prohibit collective bargaining at the U.S. Postal Service, require retirement-eligible employees to retire, and increase the amount workers contribute to their health benefits and life insurance are among the 39 amendments the Senate plans to vote on as part of the 21st Century Postal Service Act (S. 1789). Other amendments would limit executive pay at USPS, remove language scaling back workers' compensation benefits, and curtail the amount agencies can spend on government conferences. Sen. Tom Coburn, R-Okla., is shepherding a few amendments to S. 1789, including one that would force the Postal Service to dismiss workers who are eligible for retirement to reduce expenses. The legislation in its current form allows USPS to offer buyouts to eligible employees to reduce personnel costs, but Coburn believes requiring eligible workers to retire is a smarter and more cost-effective downsizing strategy. "S. 1789 would provide buyouts —

essentially cash bonuses or years of service credits — to encourage postal employees to decide to retire," said a summary of the amendment from Coburn's office. "But there is a real risk that these buyouts will go to workers who would already be planning to retire anyway. That is, these buyouts may essentially be retirement gifts to already retiring workers." Coburn's office cited USPS data stating that 30 percent of its current workforce is eligible to retire.

 **Roll Call:** Efforts to downsize the U.S. Postal Service will face a series of hurdles today when the Senate votes on up to 39 amendments to the chamber's postal reform bill, including a proposal to limit spending on government conferences in the wake of the recent General Services Administration scandal. "I hope once we work through the amendments ... we will see a strong bipartisan vote to modernize the Postal Service and save this important institution from insolvency," Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) said, adding that he expects the measure to pass.

 **Sen. Jeff Sessions:** U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-AL), Ranking Member of the Senate Budget Committee, announced today that he will be raising a budget point of order against S. 1789, the postal reform bill. The Congressional Budget Office has scored the bill as adding \$34 billion to the debt by 2022, spending more than the spending levels set in place by the Budget Control Act—levels set in law as the condition for the \$2.1 trillion debt limit increase. The point of order has a 60-vote threshold to waive.




The U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General invites you to comment on the following: This week's "[Pushing the Envelope](#)" blog topic:


**Should the Postal Service Post its Rates in Post Offices?** Many consumers don't know the prices for services offered when they visit the post office. Posting rates for common services would allow customers to make informed decisions and allow mailers to make price comparisons. How can the U.S. Postal Service present prices in the most effective way? Let us know what you think on our [blog](#).


**New Audit Projects.** New audit projects have been started on the external website.

- **[Unused Land Parcels – 12YG024DA000.](#)** The Postal Service is one of the largest real estate owners in the United States. It owns over 8,600 facilities with over 950 million square feet of land and leases over 24,600 facilities. The Postal Service may potentially own 357 land parcels nationwide that do not have structures on them. These properties are valued at approximately \$128 million. Does the Postal Service have the opportunity to generate revenue by selling land parcels that it no longer needs? Our survey objective is to assess if the Postal Service can generate additional revenue by selling unused land parcels. The Postal Service has contracted with C.B. Richard Ellis to sell off surplus real estate.
- **[Postal Service Management Over Post Office Boxes – 12BG023FF000.](#)** Post Office (P.O.) box service is an optional service that consists of delivery to uniquely addressable P.O. boxes of various sizes, rented to customers for a fee. These boxes are located at Postal Service facilities, subject to customer demand and the Postal Service's ability to provide them. The P.O. box fees are to be paid semi-annually or annually by the customer. Customers can register for P.O. Box services at a post office lobby or online. There have been allegations that some customers receive P.O. Box services even though they haven't paid the required fee in several years. This could occur if the Postal Service does not block access or change locks to P.O. Boxes once they closed. Are you aware of any instance where a customer is receiving P.O. Box services without paying the required fee? Do you think the Postal Service should look into new electronic access technologies that would automatically block access to the P.O. Box if a customer didn't pay the required fee? Although there would be an increased cost, the Postal Service could reduce work hour and expenses associated with changing locks and keys. Have any customers had issues with the online rental process for P.O. Boxes? For example, paying for the box but never receiving the service.
- **[Controls Over Employee Resource Management System \(eRMS\) – 12BG022FF000.](#)** The Enterprise Resource Management Systems (eRMS) is used to record and manage Postal employee absences. Employees call eRMS through a centralized, toll-free number to request leave and are provided a confirmation number to verify their absence request. The eRMS system transmits this data to the supervisor responsible for approving the employee's leave request. The supervisor also receives a Microsoft Office email notification of the requested absence and a leave request message within the eRMS application. The supervisor must approve or deny the request in order for the leave to be recorded. Are you directed to use


the eRMS system to call in for an absence? Have you ever had to do a payroll adjustment due to an eRMS request not being properly recorded? What issues or problems, if any, do you have with the eRMS system? If you could how would you enhance, or change, the current eRMS system?


 [New York Times](#): How vital is the United States Postal Service? The Senate is attempting to answer that this week as it debates the service's obvious need to drastically reform its business model in the age of electronic communication. Postal officials say they must close about 3,700 underused post offices (there are 32,000 nationally) while offering alternative services through local businesses. They also want to consolidate hundreds of regional processing centers and eliminate Saturday mail deliveries. Lawmakers in both houses, fearful of constituents' wrath, would prefer to procrastinate as usual. But the quasi-independent service — which receives no revenue from the federal government but is subject to tight oversight from Congress — has set a May 15 deadline to begin making cutbacks if it is to avoid bankruptcy.


 [Swazi Observer](#): Government is expected to soon establish an independent regulatory authority for postal services in Swaziland. The newly unveiled draft policy states that government must prepare the legal framework to separate postal services from telecommunications, establishing the postal business as a wholly owned, financially viable corporation like SwaziPost, thus enabling them to enter into commercial areas.


 [Washington Post](#): On Tuesday, the Senate is set to vote on up to 38 amendments to a major bipartisan bill that would reform the Postal Service, including proposals to end six-day mail delivery, continue six-day mail delivery, require USPS to wait two more years before closing small rural post offices, and to close post offices on Capitol Hill. As we've noted before, the issue is tricky to track because it doesn't break down along traditional partisan or ideological lines. Instead, postal reform pits lawmakers from smaller rural states against colleagues from larger, more urban areas. Lawmakers who normally work closely together — such as Sens. Joseph I. Lieberman (I-Conn.) and John McCain (R-Ariz.) — are on opposing sides of the issue. Senate leaders may trim the list of amendments to 20 or fewer by votes beginning Tuesday. Lieberman, Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid (D-Nev.) and Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) negotiated late last week to permit votes on the amendments as a way to keep skittish colleagues happy and to allow at least a few of them the opportunity to say they tried to protect small post offices, the concerns of senior citizens and home-state businesses that rely on or profit from the mailing industry.

*April 22, 2012*


 [Bloomberg](#): PostNL NV (PNL)'s German TNT Post unit and other postal companies operating in Germany plan to set up a joint delivery network to challenge market leader Deutsche Post AG (DPW), Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung reported in a preview of an article that will be published tomorrow, citing TNT Post. Discussions between the potential participants to establish a "nationwide alternative network" in Germany are "well under way," the German newspaper cited TNT Post Deutschland Chief Executive Officer Mario Frusch as saying. Deutsche Post controls about 90 percent of Germany's postal market, the newspaper said.


 [BBC](#): Postal workers say privatising the Royal Mail would be a disaster and have pledged to step up the fight against a sell off.


 [Evansville Courier & Press](#): A Courier & Press analysis of U.S. House records shows seven Tri-State area congressmen spent \$548,229 on such mail last year after March 31. They are among all House members who spent \$6.9 million between April 1 and Dec. 31, 2011, the only period for which the House has provided mail-only information for individual members. Some of that taxpayer money goes to partisan political consultants. Bucshon and former Democratic Rep. Brad Ellsworth, who represented the 8th District before him, paid such consultants to help produce their mailings.

 [Business Wire](#): Quad/Graphics, Inc., a global provider of print and related multichannel solutions, has entered into a strategic partnership with Manipal Technologies Ltd. (ManipalTech), India's largest print services and end-to-end business solutions provider. Under the agreement, Quad/Graphics has purchased a minority interest in Manipal Technologies, expanding Quad/Graphics' geographic reach to Asia, and broadening its product and service scope.





 [PRWeb](#): Planned price rises by Royal mail will see the cost of a first class stamp rise from 46p to 60p at the end of this month. Reviews by Ofcom, pressure on the mail service and continued financial losses have led to the product-wide price hike. The cost of sending a parcel of up to 750g will increase from a variable cost with a minimum of £1.58 to a flat rate of £2.70 per parcel, a potential rise of more than 70%. The changes, which come into force at the end of this month, could cause disaster for many small businesses and sole traders. The prices of larger parcels up to the maximum of 20kg remain unchanged, so those paying for furniture delivery for example will not be hit by the price rises. The Federation of Small Businesses revealed that some 84% of small firms are dependent on Royal Mail for their postal needs meaning that overheads could soar for a huge number of UK firms. For those businesses that rely on the postal service for high volumes of direct marketing and delivering products the direct impact will be difficult to bear meaning the cost may have to be passed to already squeezed consumers.


 [Times Herald-Record](#): Despite the popularity of electronic communications in the digital age, direct-mail advertising has shown remarkable resilience as a popular and even growing marketing tool for businesses interested in narrowing their target for customers. Marketing companies find that overloaded electronic mailboxes and the prevalence of spam filters are partially responsible for boosting the advantages of direct mail.

 [Bangor Daily News](#): Both Maine's U.S. representatives and one senator offered words of encouragement to postal employees attending the Maine State American Postal Workers Union Convention on Saturday morning and promised to fight to keep Hampden's mail distribution plant open. Reps. Mike Michaud and Chellie Pingree, along with a representative from Sen. Olympia Snowe's office, vowed to continue to work against the planned consolidation of the U.S. Postal Service Eastern Maine Processing and Distribution Facility, arguing that the plant is vital to mail service in rural Maine. Republican Sen. Susan Collins also has expressed her opposition to the consolidation of the Hampden plant both publicly and in a letter to U.S. Postmaster General Patrick Donahue. Pingree and Michaud said they would fight to preserve a six-day mail delivery schedule.


*April 21, 2012*


 [Courthouse News Service](#): Providers of postal meters must notify the U.S. Postal Service of any cyber attacks to their systems, according to new rules effective May 21. Providers have had to disclose all results of any testing on the security or revenue protection features, capabilities, or failings of any postal meter, and all potential security weaknesses or methods of tampering with the system. The new rules apply the same standard to cyber attacks against the provider's systems.


 [The Independent](#): Cash-strapped Posta Uganda is on the verge of losing vital aid from a United Nations agency that helps improve postal services in poor countries because of alleged corruption in the parastatal. Although the money involved, US\$ 76,747 (approx. Shs 190 million) is not a lot compared to amounts usually associated with corruption in Posta Uganda, the loss of the UN aid would cut off vital support which was only secured four years after a long struggle. The aid was given to Posta in 2009 by the Quality of Service Fund (QSF) of the Universal Postal Union, which is the UN body that coordinates the postal service worldwide.


 [Courier, Express, and Postal Observer](#): One of the major criticisms of the Postal Service is its inability to innovate. While management deserves some of the blame, operating under a law that prohibits almost every "non-postal" product or service severely limits its ability to innovate in ways that every modernized post world-wide has done. With these restrictions, it is not surprising that the Postal Service's "Plan for Profitability" focuses on cuts in service quality and increases in prices as a means to improve postal profitability as nearly all innovative options are not even on the table for consideration by Postal management. *[EdNote: The Postal Service's inability to innovate is akin to the teenage boy who fails to date. The whole idea of being told "no" is so frightening, the question to date (or innovate) never gets asked. What the Postal Service needs to do is grow up.]*


 [Pakistan Observer](#): Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani on Friday approved creation of 63 posts for Postal Circle of Balochistan at the Pakistan Post Office Department to facilitate the expansion of postal network in Balochistan.


 **Dead Tree Edition:** The longstanding problems of inaccurate pension estimates and slow pension payments for Postal Service and federal employees may finally be addressed by Congress. Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA) has proposed an amendment to the postal-reform bill in the Senate that would require monthly reports on the accuracy and timeliness of pension estimates, the backlog of retirement applications, and the status of the retirement systems modernization project.


 **New York Times:** Well before online bill paying was popular, the Postal Service in 2000 began operating a secure system that would have allowed it to remain the primary conduit for most Americans' monthly payments. Getty Images But the Internet industry objected, and Congress successfully pressured the Postal Service to abandon it. The same pattern has repeated several times over the last decade, with the Postal Service identifying a way to cope with the decline of traditional mail, only to have companies — and ultimately Congress — object. The agency's troubles, which could result in the closing of thousands of post offices and hundreds of mail processing centers as early as next month, have many sources. Some are the inevitable result of technological changes, and others are the result of missteps by the Postal Service. Now, with the volume of traditional mail plummeting and with the agency on the brink of running out of cash, the Senate is debating a bipartisan bill that would let it enter into several new lines of business, like shipping beer and wine. And it would create a chief innovation officer to identify new lines of electronic business. The Senate is expected to vote as early as next week on whether to advance the legislation.


 **ABA Journal:** *"Ratio of Lawyers to Americans Is 1 to 257"* The legal profession may be a victim of its own success. From 1940 to 1960, lawyers were losing ground as their inflation-adjusted income eroded, Bloomberg News reports, citing information from an upcoming book on law firm economics. The situation changed in recent years, with revenues at large firms outpacing inflation, the story says. If combined revenues at the 50-top grossing firms had increased at the rate of inflation from 1985 to 2010, the total revenue number would be \$6.9 billion in 2010. In reality, it was \$48.4 billion. Bloomberg interviewed Michael Trotter, an Atlanta corporate lawyer who wrote the upcoming book, *Declining Prospects*. "Hourly rates just went up and up," Trotter told the wire service. According to Bloomberg, "fancy lawyers charged whatever the market would bear." The Bloomberg article attributes problems in the legal profession to a variety of factors. "There's more at work here than the Great Recession," the story says. "Inept management and the weakness of the partnership model have also played crucial, if lesser known, roles. And as unsettling as this shakeout will be for employees of many large law firms, it's one that is overdue."


 **DMM Advisory:** **Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking — Implementation of Full-Service Intelligent Mail Required for Automation Prices.** *Our Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to encourage Full-Service Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb<sup>®</sup>) adoption by making it a requirement for automation rates, beginning in January 2014, appears in the [Federal Register](#).* We are very interested in your feedback, which can be mailed or delivered to Manager, Product Classification, U.S. Postal Service, 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 4446, Washington DC 20260-5015 or emailed to [mailingstandards@usps.gov](mailto:mailingstandards@usps.gov) with the subject line "Full-Service January 2014." You may inspect and photocopy all written comments at USPS<sup>®</sup> Headquarters Library, 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, 11th Floor N, Washington DC between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, by appointment only, arranged in advance by calling 1-202-268-2906. Comments are due no later than June 4, 2012. The Federal Register notice provides advance information to help mailers prepare and plan for the transition to Full-Service (use of unique Intelligent Mail barcodes applied to letters, postcards, flats, trays, sacks, and containers such as pallets and submission of electronic mailing documentation). Mailers are encouraged to provide information about any possible challenges as well as costs and benefits of moving to Full-Service.


 **National Association of Letter Carriers:** NALC opposes S. 1789 as currently drafted and will urge senators to vote "NO" on Tuesday unless three amendments are adopted: The Udall Amendment (#2043) to strike the authorization to eliminate Saturday delivery in two years; The Shumer Amendment (#2050) to preserve door-to-door delivery for 35 million to 40 million households that would be phased out under S. 1789 as drafted; and The Akaka Amendment (#2034) to delete the draconian reform of the federal workers compensation system (FECA) and replace it with the NALC-supported FECA reform bill (H.R. 2465) that already has passed the House of Representatives.


 [PIWorld](#): Postal recipients want the envelope. While the battle rages for customers in mail boxes and email inboxes, the Nielsen information and media company confirms the unique advertising effects of an envelope...even in this digital era. Today, recipients of advertising expect on the one hand the value of a real envelope and on the other hand the personal touch of an email. The demands placed by advertisers on the envelope have increased through the efficiency benefits which electronic communication offers: speed is of great importance. Customers' attention is gold currency these days. Direct, goal-orientated and individualized offers raise the chances for advertisers to be noticed. The envelope is most effective in drawing attention and generates the highest number of readers compared with the standard envelope, the self-mailer, the wrapper and the email. Printed envelopes were opened and their contents read by 84.5 percent of recipients, which made them the most opened advertising (vs. standard envelopes—75.6 percent, self-mailer—71.4 percent and wrapper—71.2 percent). While all postal mailing versions lead to readers informing themselves more about the product to a similar extent, the printed envelope outshone the competition in one specific way: no other mailing version was valued as highly.

 [Meetings Focus](#): At least three bills introduced this week—in the wake of the GSA scandal—would dramatically slash federal agency funds for conferences and off-site meetings while making it easier for Congress, watchdogs and the general public to track federal spending. **An amendment set for consideration as part of a massive bill reforming the U.S. Postal Service** would require government agencies to justify the cost and locations of any off-site meetings and to provide quarterly reports detailing the number of federal employees and other guests invited to the conference. The Conference Accountability Amendment, introduced Thursday by Sen. Tom Coburn (R-Okla.), would cap agency spending on a single conference at \$500,000 unless the agency is a primary sponsor.

 [The Hill](#): For a year in which the campaign is supposed to be slowing legislative work, it sure is getting busy in Congress. The House meets next week to consider no less than four cyber-security bills, and the Senate will occupy itself with dozens of amendments to a postal reform bill.


 [Washington Post](#): *Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT)* -- "Unfortunately, except for its secondary headline "The time for real postal reform is now," The Post's April 15 editorial "Dead letters" was completely wrong. We do need real postal reform, but we can do it without eliminating up to 200,000 jobs."


 [The Examiner](#): U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) on Thursday slammed FedEx for spending \$50.81 million on lobbying from 2008-10, compared with paying federal tax bills of \$37 million. The reason FedEx lobbies and makes political contributions is to defend itself against regulations and legislation that would do harm to its business, the company says. "FedEx actively participates in the political process with the ultimate goal of promoting and protecting the economic future of the company and our stockholders and employees" the company states in its policy on campaign contributions. "We are subject to extensive regulation at the federal and state levels and are involved in a number of legislative initiatives in a broad spectrum of policy areas that can have an immediate and dramatic effect on our operations. Through our participation and that of our employees, we promote legislative and regulatory actions that further the business objectives of FedEx and attempt to protect FedEx from unreasonable, unnecessary or burdensome legislative or regulatory actions at all levels of government."


 [DMM Advisory](#): **Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking — Implementation of Full-Service Intelligent Mail Required for Automation Prices.** Our Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to encourage Full-Service Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb<sup>®</sup>) adoption by making it a requirement for automation rates, beginning in January 2014, appears in today's [Federal Register](#). We are very interested in your feedback, which can be mailed or delivered to Manager, Product Classification, U.S. Postal Service, 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 4446, Washington DC 20260-5015 or emailed to [mailingstandards@usps.gov](mailto:mailingstandards@usps.gov) with the subject line "Full-Service January 2014." You may inspect and photocopy all written comments at USPS<sup>®</sup> Headquarters Library, 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, 11th Floor N, Washington DC between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, by appointment only, arranged in advance by calling 1-202-268-2906. Comments are due no later than June 4, 2012. The Federal Register notice provides advance information to help mailers prepare and plan for the transition to Full-


Service (use of unique Intelligent Mail barcodes applied to letters, postcards, flats, trays, sacks, and containers such as pallets and submission of electronic mailing documentation). Mailers are encouraged to provide information about any possible challenges as well as costs and benefits of moving to Full-Service.


*April 20, 2012*


 [Daily Finance](#): Citing examples drawn from postal systems around the world, the National Association of Letter Carriers (the postal workers' union) argues that the only way to close the gap between the USPS's costs and the revenue it brings in is to raise the price of a postage stamp. According to the NALC, the 45-cent price Americans pay to mail a first-class letter is "among the lowest" in the world -- and they have a point. While it's true there are countries that charge less than what we pay here, for the most part, those countries are islands such as Bermuda and the Caymans -- places so small that most letters could be delivered by paper airplane. Examining just "real" countries, though, if you compare the costs of mailing a letter within the U.S. to what our neighbors to the north pay, you'll find Canadian mail is about 20% more costly than our own. Frenchmen pay two-thirds more for a first-class postage stamp, while in Germany the cost is 82% higher -- and that's just the start. Japan charges twice as much as the USPS, while the Danish fork over three times as much as Americans to send a letter.

 [The Hill](#): The 39 amendments that the Senate will vote on Tuesday are all related in some way to Postal Service reform. For the most part, Democrats are submitting amendments that would make it harder to close post offices in order to save the mail service, while Republicans are proposing a range of amendments aimed at cutting mail service costs and curtailing rights for unionized employees.

 [Post & Parcel](#): Russian Post is working to step up its customer service standards, particularly for small and medium-sized businesses. The company is planning on introducing special areas within its post offices for SMEs and corporate customers, which it believes will also help cut waiting times for other customers. It is also prioritising a new system of uniform customer service standards across the country, and will be using ideas like a "mystery shopper" scheme to ensure quality control. And, Russian Post said it is also looking to further develop its hybrid mail capabilities for business customers. It will take forward efforts started in 2010 to provide a network of print facilities so that businesses can send mail electronically, to be printed locally to recipients, who would receive it as physical mail. The Post said hybrid mail would mean sending letters "significantly faster" than the conventional means, since it would bypass much of the postal processing network.

 [LifeHealthPro](#): Members of the Senate are showing bipartisan interest in changing U.S. Postal Service benefits programs as they try to shore up Postal Service finances. The bill also could let the Postal Service work with unions and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to get postal workers out of the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) and put them in a new, leaner health benefits program. Policymakers interested in health reform often have pointed to the FEHBP as an example of what a successfully reformed U.S. health care system could be like, but Postal Service officials argue that the FEHBP is richer and more expensive than it ought to be. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates S. 1789 would add \$6.3 billion to the federal budget deficit during the 10-year period starting in 2012. The Postal Service inspector general estimates that, if more accurate assumptions and scoring rules were used, the bill would cut the real deficit by about \$18 billion.

 [The Hill](#): Thousands of federal workers could see a double-digit jump in their healthcare premiums under the Senate's postal reform bill. The bill would change the way postal workers get their health benefits, and those changes could have a ripple effect across the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP), which provides coverage for the massive federal workforce and their families. The postal bill would lead to premium hikes of at least 10 percent in three of the largest plans in the entire FEHBP, according to an estimate that the Office of Personnel Management provided to congressional aides.

 [At the Postal Regulatory Commission](#): [The Postal Regulatory Commission today issued Order No. 1320, Docket No. RM2010-13](#), evaluating and resolving several key issues related to the pricing of workshare discounts the Postal Service offers to mailers who prepare their mail in ways that reduce the Service's sorting and

delivery costs. First, the Commission determined that changing mailing patterns have caused the need for a new, broader benchmark for calculating discounts for presorted First-Class Mail. The Commission concluded that the recent shift of small-volume mailers away from metered mail to "information-based indicia" mail makes such mail a better benchmark for estimating the savings achieved by presorting. Second, the Commission found that savings from specific kinds of worksharing activities which depend on closely-related mailer preparation activities should be taken into account in the Postal Service's savings estimates. Third, the Commission discussed the potential benefits of "bottom-up" costing proposed by certain mailer organizations, and what Postal Service data would need to be collected to make that costing approach succeed. The Commission also found that the Postal Service saves some collection costs when First-Class Mail belonging to the new benchmark category is converted to the presort category.

Read the order here: [Order No. 1320 - Order Resolving Technical Issues Concerning the Calculation of Workshare Discounts](#)



#### **Attention PostalOne!® Users:**

- **PostalOne!® Maintenance Outage** — from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. CDT on Sunday, April 22, 2012, to prepare for a major database technology upgrade. **PostalOne!® Major Upgrade Outage** — The major database technology upgrade will be completed during an extended maintenance window from 6 p.m. CDT Saturday, April 28, 2012, through 6 p.m. CDT Sunday, April 29, 2012. During this outage,
- **PostalOne! and Mail.XML®** will be unavailable, including FAST and eDOC Web Services. If the April 28-29 upgrade has to be rescheduled, it will occur on the weekend of Saturday, May 5, 2012, through Sunday, May 6, 2012.
- **PostalOne! TEM Major Upgrade Outage!** - The major database technology upgrade will be completed on the Test Environment for Mailers (TEM) during an extended maintenance window from 4 p.m. CDT Saturday, May 5, 2012, through 8 a.m. CDT Sunday, May 6, 2012.

**INDUSTRY ALERT** The Postal Service would like to hear from the mailing industry about our plans to encourage Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb)


Full-Service adoption by making it a requirement for automation rates, beginning in 2014. In addition to having discussed these plans at MTAC and various association meetings, and hosting a listening session at National Postal Forum, we have issued an Advance Notice published today in the Federal Register seeking formal comments: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-04-20/html/2012-9537.htm>


Mailers' comments will give the Postal Service important insights regarding the perceived challenges involved in moving to Full-Service adoption, including the anticipated cost of moving to full participation, and what the actual costs have been for those already using this offering. The Postal Service would also like to hear about the steps it could take to assist mailers with this move, and the potential benefits of Full-Service adoption, including, for example, the retirement of permit fees, Mail Anywhere/Pay Anywhere capabilities, Seamless Mail Acceptance, and eInduction. The Postal Service needs input from all mailers – current Full-Service users as well as non-users – to help inform the plan to require IMb Full-Service for automation discounts. The Advance Notice lists specific topics on which the Postal Service would like mailers to comment during the 45-day comment period (ending June 4, 2012). Please take this opportunity to share your comments about the plan, and encourage other mailers to respond, to help the Postal Service understand industry concerns and develop appropriate ways to address them. Comments and questions can be emailed to [mailingstandards@usps.gov](mailto:mailingstandards@usps.gov) using the subject line "Full-Service January 2014," or mailed to: Manager, Product Classification U.S. Postal Service 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW., Room 4446 Washington, DC 20260-5015




**Logistics Manager:** DHL was included in the Times' top fifty employers for women, and about 21.3 per cent of its 35,000 UK employees are women.

**South Florida Business Journal:** Fort Lauderdale fuel company SMF Energy is under federal investigation for years of over-charging the U.S. Postal Service for its products, according to court documents filed in SMF's Chapter 11 bankruptcy. The company has admitted the problem and handed control over to a chief restructuring officer, Soneet Kapila. But its acknowledgment came after the investigation began.

 **Wall Street Journal:** Shares of Dutch postal service PostNL NV fell Friday after its chief executive unexpectedly resigned citing disagreements with the board. The exit of Harry Koorstra is clear negative, brokerage Rabobank said in a note. "Koorstra was an excellent executor on the strategic, political and negotiating front. Given the difficult situation around pensions, restructuring and labour unions, his departure raises the risk for PostNL," it said. Rabobank rates the shares at hold with an EUR5.20 target price. Another brokerage KBC Securities said the loss of Koorstra could dent the business in the short-term. The challenges the business faces include getting its parcels and international activities back to profitability, a return to a cash dividend, and the restructuring of the Dutch Mail activities for future growth, it added.

 **Federal Times:** As its workforce shrinks, the U.S. Postal Service's reliance on employee overtime is surging. Last year, the mail carrier spent some \$3.3 billion on overtime pay, up more than one-third from \$2.4 billion in 2009, according to figures provided by the Postal Service's inspector general. During the same period, the number of career postal workers dropped about 10 percent from 623,000 to 557,000. But a large amount of that overtime is unauthorized, a new inspector general's report indicates.

 **Courier, Express, and Postal Observer:** Section 101 of S.1789, the 21st Century Postal Service Act of 2011, requires the Office of Personnel Management to both 1) calculate the surplus in the Federal Employee Retirement System Account (FERS) account and 2) transfer that amount to the Postal Service for each of fiscal years 2011 through 2014. To minimize the impact on the Federal budget, the bill restricts the use of these funds to payments of other Postal Service obligations to the Federal Government. While this is a step in the right direction it is not a permanent solution and will need to be addressed by a future Congress. The problem with S.1789 is that it assumes that the FERS surplus is a short-term problem. However, there is no reason to suspect that overfunding the FERS account will end in 2014 especially with the FERS contribution rate rising to 11.9% in FY 2012.



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

- This week the Senate held a vote to permit Senate floor consideration of S. 1789 was passed 74-22. Next stop, full Senate consideration and debate. Here are some highlights from the substitute amendment S. 1789, The 21st Century Postal Service Act of 2012.
- The lead sponsors of a reasonable and bipartisan postal reform bill unveiled a new draft Tuesday that incorporates changes suggested by fellow Senators, particularly regarding post office and processing plant closures and overnight delivery standards.
- This report discusses (1) key actions USPS has taken over the past 5 years to restructure its retail network, (2) concerns raised by stakeholders, and (3) the challenges USPS faces in changing its retail network. GAO analyzed USPS documents, interviewed USPS officials and stakeholders, and observed public meetings on retail facility closures.
- According to the National Association of Letter Carriers, "Lazard outlined the basic elements of a reform plan that would aim to revitalize the Postal Service, rather than the approach being advocated by the Postal Service — an approach based on massive, and ultimately counterproductive, reductions in service. Lazard indicated that based on its analysis and experience, the Postal Service's "shrink to survive" strategy will simply facilitate the decline of this vital American institution."
- According to PostCom, "before the Postal Service's notice on this matter was ever filed at the Commission, our association was asked whether or not it thought the idea of picture permit imprint indicia was attractive to business mailers. We said it was, and we encouraged the Postal Service to move forward with the proposal. Of course, the question that was put to us was whether the idea of permitting pictures with indicia was a good one. No information was shared with us, however, on how or whether the Postal Service intended to fashion this proposal as a way of generating new revenue. Our comments, then, should be viewed within this framework, as we now offer some additional thoughts on the proposal."
- US Court of Appeals remands 2010 ACD back to PRC. Coalition supports S. 1789. FedEx & UPS vs big labor vs big envelopes. The time for real postal reform is now. USPS: Privatize or reform? Postal Service must trim fat to stay financially viable. One in five US adults does not use the internet. PRC submits congressional budget justification. New CPI figure available. Arbitration ahead for USPS and NALC. One online petition's goal: ending junk mail. USPS plans for workforce cuts as Senate expected to take up


reform bill. Reid cites seniors' love of junk mail to argue for passage of postal reform bill. Future service standards published. CCAGW denounces Senate for "mailing in" USPS bailout. Senate postal bill could pave way for credit union hikes. Blunt skeptical of McCaskill postal amendment.

- Updates from the Domestic Mail Manual.
- Updates from the Federal Register that affect the mailing industry.
- An update from the USPS Office of Inspector General.
- A review of 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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 [Forbes](#): "One Man's War On Junk Mail"




A new report has been posted on the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General website (<http://www.uspsoidg.gov>). If you have additional questions concerning a report, please contact Wally Olihovik at 703-248-2201 or Agapi Doulaveris at 703-248-2286. [Unclaimed Funds \(Report Number FF-AR-12-003\)](#). Our audit determined the U.S. Postal Service could more efficiently and effectively collect unclaimed funds as they are not using all available search methods to collect funds that are due. Opportunities exist to improve identification and collection of unclaimed funds by registering as a member of an online searchable database, incorporating additional search terms, and establishing points of contact with state treasuries.


 [Washington Post](#): Senators spent most of the week debating a measure to overhaul the Postal Service by giving it \$11 billion to offer buyouts to hundreds of thousands of employees, to eventually end six-day mail delivery — if it is deemed financially necessary — and to possibly end delivery of mail to door-side mailboxes in favor of more centralized locations. Late Thursday, Senate leaders agreed to a list of at least 38 amendments — but aides said the list likely will be shortened to fewer than 20 in time for votes on the amendments and final passage of the bill next Tuesday. But speed and flexibility are lacking from several of the amendments proposed this week-- Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.): Don't touch Maryland's mail; Sens. Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.), Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) and others: Don't touch rural post offices; Sens. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) and Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.): What about vote-by-mail? Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.): Do what House Republicans want; Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.): Preserve six-day mail delivery; Sen. Bob Corker (R-Tenn.): Switch to five-day delivery; Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.): Cap postal executive pay; Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.): Egypt, mailboxes and Capitol Hill post offices. *[EdNote:: Now remember. As you're getting upset, your mother told you long time ago that lawmaking was like sausage-making, and that you really didn't want to watch as it was being done.]*


 [Wheeling News-Register](#): Much like the old West judges who promised to give defendants fair trials, then hang them, the U.S. Postal Service decides what it wants to do - then holds public hearings before going ahead. That has been the pattern during recent years on changes in the mail service and closing of Postal Service facilities. For that reason, we doubt a "town hall" meeting next week will have any effect on the agency's plans to close some post offices in Belmont County.


 [Billings Gazette](#): U.S. Senate leaders Thursday reached an agreement to move forward on a bill to help the financially strapped Postal Service, including amendments that would protect rural post offices. Votes on the bill and various amendments are tentatively scheduled next Tuesday, according to Senate staffers.


 [The Hill](#): **Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) announced that the chamber had reached a compromise over which amendments would be voted on to add to the U.S. Postal Reform bill (S.1789) on Tuesday.** After spending most of Thursday negotiating which amendments would be considered, Reid announced


that, with a 60-vote threshold, 39 amendments would be considered Tuesday to add to the bill. Reid also announced that there would be a final 60-vote threshold on the actual bill. Most of the amendments under consideration are related to Postal Reform. A pair of them would end the service's monopoly on first class mail and prohibit collective bargaining for union postal service employees, respectively. Another one would bar any reforms from closing postal service offices. The compromise came after Reid invoked a procedural measure to block Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) from adding an amendment to Postal Service reform bill that would have cut off American funding to Egypt. Reid said Paul's amendment was too broad. Paul's amendment did not make the list of 39 that Reid announced.


 [Journal Star](#): Nebraska Sens. Ben Nelson and Mike Johanns are on opposite sides of the postal reform bill that is stuck in the Senate. "Political obstruction and gridlock in Congress are increasing chances the U.S. Postal Service will close 3,700 rural post offices across the country, including 90 in Nebraska," Nelson said during a conference call from Washington this week. Nelson, a Democrat, helped produce the reform proposal that received an initial 74-22 vote on a motion to proceed. But the bill was stalled when Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky demanded a vote to attach an amendment that would cut off U.S. foreign aid for Egypt. Johanns, a Republican, said Thursday he opposes the bill because it doesn't resolve the postal service's long-term budget challenges and "shifts costs to taxpayers," specifically through incentives that encourage postal workers to transfer from their own prefunded long-term health care plan into expanded Medicare coverage.


 [Post & Parcel](#): Scandinavian postal operator PostNord has signed a deal to takeover the operations of a major regional newspaper distribution company in Sweden.


 [The Hill](#): Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) defended a Senate Democratic proposal to save the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), and called the House postal reform bill "unacceptable."

 [WBOC](#): U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin filed an amendment Wednesday that would keep the Easton, Md., mail processing center from moving to Wilmington, Del.

 [The Moscow News](#): Pochta Rossii, the national postal service, has announced a new media campaign to combat its poor public image. The service has become notorious for long lines, delays in delivery, and unfriendly and rude staff, but recurrent allegations of thefts from packages and a recent scandal involving microfinance lending have further tainted its reputation. The background of the campaign is the microfinance scandal from February, when lenders offering small loans at annual interest rates of 3,000 percent set up shop in post offices. Though the service claimed it was just acting as an intermediary between the customers and the lender, people were outraged and said it was simply robbing pensioners who are its most frequent clients and do not understand all the nuances of crediting. The scandal pales in comparison with complaints over handling of packages. The Internet is loaded with angry posts of people who have received stones instead of iPhones ordered at online shops, or unsealed parcels with some items lacking. Until accusations of thefts are addressed, generating a positive image will be a very tough task.


 [Reuters](#): Dutch postal group PostNL, under pressure to improve performance as mail volumes decline, said on Thursday its chief executive Harry Koorstra has resigned with immediate effect. Herna Verhagen, a member of the board of management responsible for parcels and international, was named the new CEO. "Such a decision doesn't get made overnight," Koorstra said in a company statement issued on Thursday evening. "Co-operation with the supervisory board has been very cumbersome of late, amongst others in relation to differences in opinion about how to serve best the various stakeholders' interests." The former state monopoly is the main provider of postal services in the Netherlands, where it faces intense price competition and traditional mail services are losing out to email.


 [Actmedia](#): The National Romanian Postal Company will benefit from a privatization advisor in a month at the most, and the privatization process of the institution might be concluded by the end of this year.


 [MSNBC](#): The Senate struggled Thursday to push forward a bill to restructure the U.S. Postal Service, but still lacked accord on which amendments the senators would be allowed to offer. "We're really very, very close to getting something done," said Majority Leader Harry Reid Thursday afternoon. "Our main issue now is whether there will be a 50-vote hurdle or a 60-vote hurdle," he said. Reid warned on the Senate floor Thursday, "Those of you who are holding up the bill because you don't like it, you may not like what the result of having no bill is." Leaders of each



party were working to reach a deal to allow votes on a limited number of amendments to the legislation. If there's no deal on amendments, there will be a vote to move ahead on the bill Thursday morning and Republicans might block it if they can't get the chance to vote on amendments they want. An opponent of the Lieberman-Collins bill, Sen. John McCain, R- Ariz., said, "It is very clear that Congress and the Postal Service cannot make decisions." The only solution, he said, would be an independent commission (akin to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission which closed military bases) to shut down redundant or money-losing facilities. Mocking the Lieberman-Collins bill's two-year study of cost control measures before eliminating Saturday mail delivery, McCain said sarcastically during Tuesday's floor debate, "Now isn't that marvelous! Two years to study! It's delaying what is absolutely necessary and that is to have five-day-a-week delivery."

 [The State Journal](#): Members of West Virginia's congressional delegation are doing all that they can to save the United States Postal Service. The agency, which is hemorrhaging money and has scheduled the closure of nearly 4,000 facilities— including 150 in West Virginia — is "what connects us all," said Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., who has voiced his support for Senate Bill 1789.


 [Government Executive](#): An amendment introduced during Senate debate this week would strip a comprehensive U.S. Postal Service reform bill of language scaling back workers' compensation benefits. The 21st Century Postal Service Act (S. 1789) would give workers injured on the job 50 percent of their predisability pay upon reaching retirement age. Currently, the 1916 Federal Employees' Compensation Act allows employees disabled on the job 66 2/3 percent -- or 75 percent if they have dependents -- of their basic salary tax-free, plus medical-related expenses. Many federal recipients, including those past retirement age, receive the 75 percent rate. About half the federal employees who currently receive workers' comp are postal workers. Sen. Daniel Akaka, D-Hawaii, on Thursday proposed an amendment that would replace the workers' compensation provisions in the postal reform bill with a FECA reform measure that already passed the House. The House-approved provision would ensure injuries or illnesses sustained as the result of terrorism are covered as war-risk hazards; make sure physician assistants and advanced practice nurses are reimbursed for their services and certify disabled employees for injuries; streamline the claims process for workers sustaining a traumatic injury in a designated zone of armed conflict; raise the maximum disfigurement benefit from \$3,500 to \$50,000; provide up to \$6,000 in additional support for funeral expenses; and authorize the Labor Department to collect administrative costs from agencies that employ injured or ill workers.

 [Heritage Foundation](#): USPS is pursuing a wide range of cost-cutting measures. One of these is the closure of underused post offices. Such restructuring, however, would become more difficult under S. 1789, authored by Senators Joe Lieberman (I-CT) and Susan Collins (R-ME), which would further tighten procedural rules for closures while barring any closures until USPS establishes new service standards for mail, effectively delaying action for six months. This goes in the wrong direction. Congress should give the Postal Service more flexibility to reform itself. The Postal Service, however, lacks the ability to quickly and effectively respond to changing market conditions. In fact, under current law, USPS is barred from closing any small post office because it is losing money. Instead, Postal Service rules and federal law require USPS to weigh four factors in considering possible closures: the effect on postal employees, the ability of USPS to provide universal service, the effect on the community and—lastly—the economic savings to the Postal Service.

*April 19, 2012*


**INDUSTRY ALERT** On March 26, 2012, the Postal Regulatory Commission approved the 2012 Mobile Commerce and Personalization Promotion scheduled to run July-August 2012. For business mailers who qualify, this promotion will provide an upfront 2 percent postage discount on Standard Mail<sup>®</sup> and First-Class Mail<sup>®</sup> letters, flats and cards (presort and automation only) that include a two-dimensional (2-D) barcode or print/mobile technology that can be read or scanned by a mobile device. The technology must directly lead the person to a mobile optimized website that allows the purchase of an advertised product or to a unique mobile optimized and personalized web page. New and updated documents have now been posted to the RIBBS page for this innovative promotion. Minor changes and clarifications have been made to the Program Requirements document and they are reflected in Version 2 that is now available for download from the following link: (<https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=mobilebarcode>). Additionally, we have posted a User's Guide that mailers can use to register for the promotion on the Business Customer Gateway beginning May 1, 2012. The Incentive Program link will **not** be visible prior to this date. As a reminder, mail service providers who


wish to enroll their customers in this promotion will be able to register on June 10<sup>th</sup>. Additional program updates and resources will be provided as they become available.


 **The Republic:** U.S. Sen. Max Baucus wants Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe to consult with him before any final decisions are made regarding rural post office closures.


### **DMM Advisory: RIBBS Update**


- **Street Addressing Option for Post Office (PO) Boxes in Competitive Post Office Box Service Locations** – A file listing the Competitive Post Office Box service locations that allow an optional street address


 *There are currently 79 amendments that have been introduced on the Senate floor to S 1789. I sent the latest S 1789 around earlier this week, which these 79 amendments are for. [http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/L?d112:./temp/~bdanGu3:111-79\]\(Amendments\\_For\\_S.1789\)&./temp/~bdLkgC/home/LegislativeData.php/](http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/L?d112:./temp/~bdanGu3:111-79](Amendments_For_S.1789)&./temp/~bdLkgC/home/LegislativeData.php/)*


 **KTTS:** The possible demise of many rural post offices in Missouri and around the country is on the mind of many people these days. A major mail facility in Springfield will be closing in the coming year, throwing dozens out of work. Missouri senator Roy Blunt says he and Senator Claire McCaskill will do everything they can to keep as many post offices open as possible.


 **Roll Call:** "For Some, All Politics Is Postal"

 **OpEdNews:** Republican leaders in Congress have made proposals for dismembering the US Postal Service by cutting the number of delivery days, shuttering processing centers so that it will take longer for letters to arrive, closing thousands of rural and inner-city post offices and taking additional steps that would dramatically downsize one of the few national programs ordained by the original draft of the US Constitution. That scheme won't be implemented by this Congress. But a half-step in that direction could be made. Supposedly "centrist" US Senators Tom Carper (D-DE), Joe Lieberman (I-CT), Susan Collins (R-ME) and Scott Brown (R-MA) have developed a series of proposals they describe as a "bipartisan consensus" for a death by slower cuts.


 **Tulsa World:** Finally, as thousands of postal workers face job losses and uncertain futures, Congress is mulling action to stabilize the ailing service. It's about time. The Senate is looking at providing the U.S. Postal Service with a short-term cash infusion to keep it afloat so that proposals to close postal facilities and alter services can be reviewed further.

 **ERR:** The national postal service Eesti Post has taken down 328 little-used drop boxes this spring, which makes up 10 percent of their collection box network.


 **Save the Post Office:** "How Network Rationalization speeds up Standard Mail and hastens the demise of First-Class"


 **Minot Daily News:** The Senate bill would give the Postal Service an \$11 billion cash infusion, while cutting in half the number of mail processing center closures, slow or stop many post office closings by forcing the agency to consider the needs of rural communities and requiring the Postal Service to wait at least two years before reducing mail delivery to five days a week. No doubt there are post offices and mail processing centers in the country that could or should be closed, for monetary or efficiency reasons. But the delays would give the Postal Service the time to more thoroughly study areas in unique situations, like Minot. At a time when statistics show northwest North Dakota is among the fastest growing areas in the nation, closing the processing center in Minot makes no sense. If anything, the Postal Service should be expanding its services in this part of the state, in order to make itself a more viable and useful entity to the growing population and the wave of new businesses making their way into the state as


part of the ongoing oil boom. Let's hope senators are able to be the voice of reason in this issue, at least where rural states and booming areas like northwest North Dakota are concerned, where, despite its financial problems, the Postal Service remains a vital part of everyday life for residents and businesses alike.


 [Citizens Voice](#): U.S. Sen. Bob Casey has introduced an amendment to a U.S. Postal Service reform bill that could postpone the loss of 300 jobs in Scranton. Casey's amendment would continue one- to three-day postal delivery for four years, boosting chances that up to 2,500 postal jobs in Pennsylvania would not be lost in a consolidation.


 [From the Federal Register](#): **Postal Service RULES** Requirements for Authority to Manufacture and Distribute Postage Evidencing Systems , 23396 [2012-9396] [[TEXT](#)] [[PDF](#)]


 [Federal News Radio](#): *Mike Causey on "The Incredible Shrinking Postal Service."*


 [Associated Press](#): Federal regulators have halted a plan to close a small, rural Postal Service station in Yerington this May. The Postal Regulatory Commission ruled Wednesday that the Postal Service overestimated when it predicted it would save \$210,000 by shuttering the South Valley Station, and said the agency failed to show the closure wouldn't have a negative impact on the town and its residents. The Postal Service ordered in December that the station should close as early as mid-May. The site offers retail postal services and houses 186 P.O. boxes. It's one mile from Yerington's main post office. Opponents say the closure wouldn't save on labor costs because the postmaster would simply be moved to another location, and wouldn't save on rent because the agency was locked into a long-term lease.


 [Charleston Gazette](#): Sens. Jay Rockefeller and Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., got behind amendments to U.S. Postal Service reform legislation on Wednesday to make sure that 3,700 post offices being considered for closure -- including 150 in West Virginia -- remain open for at least two years.


 [PoliticalM](#): U.S. Sen. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., is unconvinced about a plan backed by Sen. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., to place a two year moratorium on U.S. Postal Service office closures. Blunt said he wants the USPS, which is struggling to gain a financial footing as customers are increasingly relying on electronic communication, to address the fiscal issue now. "I don't want to kick the can just two years down the road," Blunt told reporters Wednesday. Tuesday, McCaskill announced an amendment to a Senate postal bill that includes a two year moratorium on office closures. Attached to the moratorium would be a set of new criteria for the USPS, after the two years, to follow if they do decide to move forward on closures. Blunt, however, is in agreement with McCaskill in opposition to the USPS's earlier proposal to slash rural facilities. Blunt said he favors the USPS cutting back on hours as a way to address the USPS's financial woes, not office closures.


 [Federal News Radio](#): "GSA Scandal in Perspective: Azeezaly Jaffer" Azeezaly Jaffer, the former vice president for public affairs and communications at the U.S. Postal Service, found himself in hot water after an inspector general report listed more than \$46,000 in questionable spending and allegations of sexual harassment and other improper conduct, according to a USA Today report. Jaffer's profligate spending included more than \$8,200 at a hotel suite and nearly \$3,500 on a steak dinner. According to The Washington Post, Jaffer resigned 11 days after the IG's report was released in June 2006, although he was still able to take a two-month paid vacation that summer. Following the revelations of Jaffer's profligate spending, USPS issued new expense guidelines, directing employees not to spend more than \$50 per person for dinner.

 [Credit Union Times](#): A 10% increase in postage rates could cost credit unions \$30 million annualized. There's no Call Report data that quantifies credit union postage costs, but CUNA Vice President of Economics and Statistics Mike Schenk gathered credit union data for Credit Union Times in an attempt to quantify how the 21st Century Postal Service Act, which is currently being debated in the Senate, could affect credit unions. S. 1789 proposes a 12% increase to first class postage stamps, but currently does not increase business class rates. However, the legislation could pave the way for future rate increases that would affect credit unions. Schenk said CUNA estimates that credit unions spent roughly \$300 million on postage in 2011, an amount equal to about 0.03% of assets.

 **Sun Herald:** Today, the Council for Citizens Against Government Waste slammed S. 1789, the 21st Century Postal Service Act, for delaying crucial United States Postal Service (USPS) reforms, including the closure of 3,700 post offices and 250 mail processing facilities, as well as ending six-day mail delivery.

 **KTVZ:** The planned closures and consolidations of rural postal facilities throughout the country poses a particularly serious risk to states like Oregon that rely on vote-by-mail for their federal and state elections, says two Oregon senators among those seeking another delay in those moves, at least until after Election Day. With the presidential election approaching and the United States Post Office moving forward with plans to close many rural facilities in states like Oregon and California, Sens. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) and Jon Tester (D-Mont.) have introduced an amendment to the postal service bill being debated in the Senate to put a moratorium on the closing or consolidation of postal facilities until after the election. The amendment is cosponsored by Senators Baucus, Bennet, Sherrod Brown, and Boxer.

 **Bloomberg Businessweek:** The Senate's intense debate over the USPS overhaul on Tuesday shows that lawmakers still disagree on how to address its fundamental problems. Among the flurry of amendments hashed out was one that would limit the compensation packages of Postal Service executives. Another would ban some post office closures in rural areas, while yet another bars USPS from ending overnight delivery services in certain areas. At least one proposed amendment had nothing to do with the Service's impending bankruptcy: Kentucky Senator Rand Paul, son of GOP presidential candidate Ron Paul, tried to slip in a proposal that would block foreign aid to Egypt. It's unclear if Congress will reach a compromise anytime soon.


 **DMM Advisory: Postal Explorer and Mobile Apps.** Please go to [Postal Explorer](#)<sup>®</sup> to easily access the latest information about Domestic Mail Manual (DMM<sup>®</sup>) and International Mail Manual (IMM<sup>®</sup>) updates, the latest labeling lists (a one click experience), the latest postage statements, and Federal Register notices. In addition, we'd like you to try the mobile application that is linked to the domestic price calculator and international price calculator on [Postal Explorer](#) (from your mobile device, go to [pe.usps.com](http://pe.usps.com), find the domestic or international price calculator near the top of the left navigation bar, and tap it...the app will open automatically for you). This app works for all mobile devices and calculates prices for all domestic and international mailing. Plus we've added the Customs Forms Indicator to the same app. Simple mobile apps designed for your ease of use—try them today.

 **RIBBS to mailers:**


It cannot be overemphasized that the degree to which service standards will actually change depends upon (a) the outcome of all AMP studies, (b) the amendments to 39 C.F.R. Part 121 that result from the market dominant product service standard rulemaking, and (c) any further modifications that result from consideration of the advisory opinion issued by the Postal Regulatory Commission conclusion of their review. The potential service standards depicted are only illustrative, and are provided solely for the purpose of indicating the nature and magnitude of the service standard changes that could potentially result from the network consolidation plan under review. This should not be interpreted as reflecting that any service change decisions associated with the proposal have been made or implemented. [Click here](#) for the Future Originating Service Standards (Market Dominant) text file.


You can still find existing service standard files at <https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=modernservice>.


*April 18, 2012*

 **Press Release:** FedEx Office<sup>®</sup> is proud to be the first national retailer to offer small businesses, mobile professionals and on-the-go consumers the ability to transform digital files into hard copies by sending

documents through Google Cloud Print™ to more than 1,800 FedEx Office stores nationwide. Combining FedEx Office® Print & Go and Google Cloud Print, customers can now access and print documents anytime, anywhere.


 [American Postal Workers Union](#): Members of the APWU and Mail Handlers Union rallied in front of post offices around the country Tuesday to alert the public to looming service cuts if Congress doesn't act to fix the Postal Service's finances by May 15. That is the day a moratorium on post office and plant closures expires. The moratorium is intended to give Congress time to come up with an alternative to the Postal Service's plans to shutter more than 200 mail processing facilities and close over 3600 post offices to save money.


 [PostEurop](#): The social partners of the European Social Dialogue Committee (SDC) for the postal sector signed a new "Joint Declaration on Postal Sector Evolution" in the presence of high-level representatives from the European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, and DG Internal Market and Services) and the members of the SDC, PostEurop and UNI. Following a successful co-operation within the SDC since 1999, this common agreement between social partners builds on the findings of "The Social Observatory of the Postal Sector" and further defines key principles to accompany change.

 [The Hill](#): Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) cited seniors' love of junk mail in urging passage of a United States Postal Service reform bill. "Madam President," Reid said to Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), the presiding officer of the Senate, "I'll come home tonight here to my home in Washington and there'll be some mail there. A lot of it is what some people refer to as junk mail, but for the people who are sending that mail, it's very important. "And when talking about seniors, seniors love getting junk mail. It's sometimes their only way of communicating or feeling like they're part of the real world."

 [Sen. Bob Corker](#) (R-TN): Some of the proposed amendments to s. 1789 that have been offered by Sen. Corker:


- To ensure that the rate for each class of domestic or outbound international market-dominant products covers the costs attributable to, and the portion of overall costs reasonably assignable to, that class of products.
- To provide that the cost-of-living price cap as applied to bulk market dominant products is adjusted to reflect changes in unit costs due solely to increases or decreases in the volume of mail.


 [Courier, Express, and Postal Observer](#): The challenges facing the Postal Service is a global story. A recent blog post on The Safe Shop's blog leaves the impression that the Postal Service's business strategy will make mail a less attractive option than it now is compared to either courier or electronic delivery. While this blog will not likely have much impact on decisionmaking of U.S. mailers, the tone of the post suggests that the cost-cutting focused strategy has left an impression that printed-delivery of communications by the Postal Service will be less effective in the future. It is no wonder that mailers are actively expanding their use of alternative print-delivery networks and accelerating their switch to electronic delivery.


 [Federal News Radio](#): This week the Senate is expected to take up legislation to reform the Postal Service. The bill (S.1789) could close post offices, end Saturday deliveries and return funds the Postal Service as pre-paid for retiree health benefits.

USPS already has started considering how it would operate with a slimmed-down workforce. Tony Vegliante, chief human capital officer for the Postal Service, said there are three ways it is trying to reduce the number of employees: Attrition, control hiring and voluntary separation incentives. Tony Vegliante, Postal Service CHCO (photo from USPS website) Vegliante said the Postal Service has received voluntary early retirement authority (VERA) from the Office of Personnel Management. However, it has not yet started offering any buyouts or early outs, he added.



 [Environmental Leader](#): DHL Global Forwarding will rely more heavily on rail in Germany to transport containers to sea freight terminals in an effort to cut its carbon emissions.

 **Time:** As the U.S. Postal Service increasingly promotes its new direct mail program, one group is trying to stop that mail from ever reaching your mailbox. If you've noticed an increase in junk mail lately, you're probably not imagining things. The post office has been intensifying its promotion of Every Door Direct Mail (you may have seen the ads), a program that has already generated \$180 million in sales in its first year. And that probably means only one thing: expect more of it. That's why Catalog Choice, a non-profit organization that helps consumers opt-out of receiving unwanted catalogs, coupons and fliers, is now trying to suppress the post office's newest program. To combat direct mail, Catalog Choice has started an online petition called Citizens for Mail Choice, which seeks to allow customers the option of opting out. The petition, which started Friday, already has around 35,000 signatures.


 **Federal Times:** Well, that didn't take long. Less than a month after National Association of Letter Carriers President Fredric Rolando said the union was "committed" to reaching agreement on a new labor contract through mediation, it's now headed to binding arbitration with the U.S. Postal Service, according to a release posted on a USPS site. The arbitration process will wrap up later this year, the Postal Service said.





## WHAT IS NEEDED FROM POSTAL LEGISLATION


Please join the Association for Postal Commerce and PostCom Executive Vice President Jessica Lowrance for a free webinar on Tuesday, May 1 at 1:00 Eastern. Topics to be discussed: (1) USPS Finances (2) Political Climate (3) How a Bill Becomes a Law (4) Active Legislation (5) USPS Plan Layout (6) Bill Comparison (7) Additional Postal Legislation (8) What is Needed


Spend an hour and you will be sure to hear the most comprehensive and detailed summary available. Title: What is Needed From Postal Legislation Date: Tuesday, May 1, 2012 Time: 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EDT Reserve your Webinar seat now at: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/465646928> After registering you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the Webinar.


 **CEP News** (Courier-Express-Postal), published by the [MRU Consultancy](#), has reported that:


 **Scrap the paper!** As one of the first governments worldwide Norway has announced that all communication between public services and citizens is to be handled via the internet in the future. Digital communication should be the norm said Norway's prime minister Stoltenberg in Oslo on Wednesday last week. He added that all citizens could opt-out of this form of communication and still receive paper based mail.

 **Dutch key account customers complain about PostNL's worsened service.**


 **Just a few months after Swiss Post launched a personalised newspaper its apparently becoming a flop.**


 **Deutsche Post will take action against the EU-Commission's order to repay state aid.**


 **Post Danmark's e-service portal e-boks is still set for growth.** Last year some 3.5m Danes (+17%) received 185m documents via the portal, up 16% from the previous year. Revenues rose considerably (11.5m euros, +16.4%) while the operating result (EBIT) stagnated at 2.9m euros (-1%).


 **French La Poste's CEO Jean-Paul Bailly announced a set of measures of 10 points in**


connection with the suicides of employees (CEP-News 12/12). First La Poste allotted a special budget of 20m euros which will be used to improve labour conditions after consultations with employees were held. Furthermore, the post plans to hire 1,000 additional workers to reduce work strain. Moreover, the place of work for employees should not be more than 30 kilometres away from their homes. La Poste will also appoint a contact person for each 100 employees and suspend all restructuring measures until the already announced talks with the unions on this matter are completed.


 Last year the Lithuanian post came into the black for the first time since 2007.

 UPS has to brace itself for opposition from the unions concerning the takeover of TNT Express.

 Austrian Post announced the acquisition of the domestic fulfilment company Systemlogistik Distribution GmbH.


 Apparently, Spanish Correos slid deep into the red on decreasing revenues in 2011.


 The pension fund deficit is becoming a major issue for Canada Post.

 Swiss companies will be able to send pay slips with IncaMail, Swiss Post's e-mail service, in the future. Last week Swiss Post announced that the most important service providers on the Swiss market have integrated IncaMail into their software.



The [MRU](#), founded in 1992, is the only consultancy in Europe, which has specialised in the market of courier-, express- and parcel services. For large-scale shippers and CEP-services in particular, the MRU provides interdisciplinary advice for all major questions of the market, as there are for example market entry, product design, organisation, and EDP. [To learn more about the stories reported above, contact CEP News.](#) *(We appreciate the courtesy extended by CEP News to help whet your appetite for more of what CEP offers.)*

 [North Platte Telegraph](#): Susan Rangel is a supporter of an amended version of U.S. Senate Bill 1789, and made her support known on Tuesday. Rangel is president of American Postal Workers Union Local No. 619, and the APWU believes that SB 1789 is "unacceptable in its current form" and should be amended. In its current form. Among other provisions, the amended version of the bill, as supported by the APWU, will maintain current services standards, prevent closure of small post offices and protect six-day mail delivery.

 [Portland Daily Sun](#): "The Postal Service's draconian proposals to close hundreds of processing facilities would lead to disastrous service cuts," Collins told the Association of Magazine Media in a speech yesterday. Collins said the Postal Service should follow a set of standards for closing post offices and processing plants. Collins told magazine publishers yesterday that the prefunding of retiree health plans has led to an obligation of \$46.2 billion. "That liability is not going away — it provides for benefits that have been promised to postal retirees," Collins said in her speech. "Nevertheless, the payments for retiree health benefits could be eased, and our bill would do that. We have included language changing the structure of these payments by establishing a 40-year amortization schedule." Collins explained, "We moved the longer amortization schedule, previously scheduled to start in five years, to start this year. The bill would also reduce the requirement for the retiree health benefit fund to fund 100 percent of the liability in advance to 80 percent. These two provisions will lower the Postal Service's annual payment for retiree health care by \$2-\$3 billion, while still keeping the promises to workers and avoiding a taxpayer bailout."

 [At the Postal Regulatory Commission:](#)

<b>Postal Regulatory Commission</b>	
<b>PROPOSED RULES</b>	
Revisions to Procedural Rules ,	


23176–23178 [2012–9300]	<a href="#">[TEXT]</a> <a href="#">[PDF]</a>
<b>NOTICES</b>	
Meetings; Sunshine Act ,	
23293–23294 [2012–9429]	<a href="#">[TEXT]</a> <a href="#">[PDF]</a>



[Memphis Business Journal](#): FedEx Express , an operating company of Memphis-based FedEx Corp. , is in talks to purchase TATEX, a French express transportation company. The deal would fit into FedEx's growth plan for Europe, which is focused on smaller acquisitions. It mirrors FedEx's plan to acquire Polish courier company Opek Sp.z o.o.



[CityBizList](#): United Parcel Service Inc. Chairman and CEO D. Scott Davis earned a **21.62 percent raise to \$13.05 million** last year, according to an SEC filing. He was paid \$10.73 million in 2010.

	<p><b><i>THE ULTIMATE TEST OF ANY POSTAL REFORM MEASURE</i></b></p> <p><i>(1) It must ensure the fiscal viability of the U.S. Postal Service,</i></p> <p><i>(2) It must ensure the Postal Service is set up to operate on a self-sufficient basis, and</i></p> <p><i>(3) It must ensure the ability of the Postal Service to satisfy the nation's postal needs.</i></p>
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[Wall Street Journal](#): See how the price of a U.S. first-class stamp compares to the equivalent in other countries.

[Wall Street Journal](#): The nation's largest mail-carriers union wants the U.S. Postal Service to raise stamp prices and expand mail delivery. In a report to be released Tuesday, it sharply criticizes the agency's own rescue plan and argues the Postal Service will become profitable only if it restructures itself like a business.

[The Hill](#): Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) seemed to indicate interest in some kind of middle ground between proponents and opponents of amending legislation meant to keep the U.S. Postal Service from going into bankruptcy. "It's not as if there are not amendments that members of the Senate Democratic Caucus want to offer to the bill," he said. "There are. There are several of them. And I know there are several on the Republican side."



[Sen. Bernie Sanders](#): Listen to Sen. Sanders talk about Postal Reform on the Ed Schultz radio show. 

[Hellmail](#): Moya Greene, chief executive of Royal Mail, said this week that plans by TNT Post to pilot a London borough postal service could challenge the sustainability of the Universal Service.




[Sen. Thomas Carper](#) (D-DE): Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.), Chairman of the Subcommittee that oversees the U.S. Postal Service, delivered remarks on the Senate floor on the 21st Century Postal Service Act (S.1789), following this morning's introductory debate on a new draft that incorporates changes suggested by fellow Senators, particularly regarding post office and processing plant closures and overnight delivery.




[Sen. Jay Rockefeller](#) (D-WV): Senator Jay Rockefeller today issued the following statement on a procedural vote on the Senate postal reform bill.




"The Postal Service needs to get its financial house in order, and I'm glad that the Senate agreed to start the debate on this issue. I believe that we ought to have a thorough conversation about how to rein in the Postal Service's runaway costs," said Rockefeller. "That said, I do not support this current legislation. I've said time and time again that any legislation must not disproportionately hurt West Virginia's postal facilities, slash jobs, unfairly cut employee and retiree benefits, and take services away from rural communities. My hope is that we can work together to change this bill and better protect West Virginia's jobs and communities."


 **Government Executive:** The debate on the 21st Century Postal Service Act (S. 1789) is slated to continue in the coming days, with additional amendments likely to be introduced. The Senate will vote on the bill after 30 hours of floor debate. Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., has told senators that he would like the vote wrapped up by the end of this week, but it could spill into next week, according to senate aides with knowledge of the process. The House still is working to gather enough Democratic votes to pass its major postal reform bill. On Tuesday, the National Association of Letter Carriers released its own overhaul recommendations, developed with Lazard Group, an independent advisory firm. The union, which represents about 275,000 mostly urban letter carriers, proposed addressing USPS prefunding requirements, growing some of its services, and raising selected postage and parcel rates. The Senate bill is "a stop-gap, not a solution," NALC said. "There is little in the proposed legislation that addresses potential expansion of services, more flexible product pricing, or necessary changes to the Postal Service's oversight and governance -- all key elements of a comprehensive plan to create a sustainable and viable Postal Service," the Lazard Group's white paper stated. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., who proposed legislation in the Senate that is more similar to the House bill, took issue with the Senate measure's delay on shifting from a six-day delivery schedule to a five-day schedule and holding off on closures.

 **Politico:** Long-awaited efforts to prevent scores of post offices from shutting their doors have run into an unexpected snag: A fight between Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) over aid to Egypt. It all started when Paul renewed his efforts to strip \$2 billion in foreign aid to Egypt – demanding that it be considered as an amendment to a bill overhauling the U.S. Postal Service. But a frustrated Reid balked at that request, saying it was not relevant to the underlying bill. So Reid took the extraordinary step of blocking all amendments to the bill and filed a procedural motion to end debate -- just hours after the Senate voted to begin debate on the measure. The move effectively dares the GOP to block the bill on procedural grounds ahead of a May 15 deadline for Congress to act before mailing facilities begin to close in their home states. Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and others expressed their frustration, saying Reid should allow for a thorough floor debate to iron out the differences – and that Paul should not hold up the bill with a non-relevant amendment.

*April 17, 2012*


 **Sen. Thomas Carper** (D-DE): Comments on the NALC-Lazard paper on the Postal Service.


"I welcome the National Association of Letter Carriers' interest in seeking 'outside the box' solutions to the challenges facing the U.S. Postal Service as well as their determination to push the Postal Service to innovate and seek new revenue. I also welcome Lazard's attempt to look at this problem with a fresh set of eyes. Unfortunately, the white paper the NALC and Lazard have issued today is thin on data, analysis, or fresh ideas for modernizing the Postal Service. Rather, it's thick with tired attacks on the Postal Service and mischaracterizations of the bill before the Senate, S. 1789, the 21st Century Postal Service Act – which, I might add, is the only bipartisan proposal in Congress that stands a chance of preventing a total collapse of the Postal Service in the coming months. The NALC's proposal suggests that the Postal Service should avoid tough decisions to adjust its mail processing and delivery network, a network that independent GAO analysts reiterated last week has significant excess capacity. It also argues that more should be done to raise revenue through pricing and aggressive marketing, all while offering no concrete suggestions in this regard and ignoring the significant provisions in S. 1789 and the managers' amendment filed yesterday that have the potential to push the Postal Service to innovate and experiment with potentially lucrative new lines of business. It also, unfortunately, suggests easy and irresponsible 'band-aid' solutions, like eliminating the requirement that the Postal Service set aside money to meet its retiree health obligations."


 **From the Coalition for a 21st Century Postal Service:** Sen. Paul objected to the unanimous consent necessary for proceeding to the managers' amendment this afternoon. There will be a cloture vote, we are told by the Majority Leader's office, Thursday morning the managers' amendment proceeding to the underlying bill.



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 **National Association of Letter Carriers:** "The United States Postal Service Delivering Change to Revitalize an American Icon"

 **Coalition for a 21st Century Postal Service:** The Coalition for a 21st Century Postal Service supports the Manager's Amendment to S.1789 being offered by the bill sponsors, and applauds the efforts they and their staffs have put in to reach a result that takes major steps toward preserving a useful postal system to serve the mailing public. We strongly recommend a yes vote for this very constructive substitute. We understand there will be amendments offered to the substitute. We urge opposition to any that would direct or cause rate increases beyond the agreed-upon provisions in section 402. Rate increases of any kind beyond the annual CPI increases in current law will prove toxic to USPS, driving substantial additional mail volume out of the system, and worsening an already grave financial situation. This will happen through immediate loss of mail from mailers with no flexibility to add to their postal budgets – they will put more communications to customers online. It will also undermine business confidence in the stability and predictability of rates, a key outcome of the 2006 Act, and cause simple dispassionate business judgments to do the safe thing and move more mail online or to other alternatives, causing still more damage over the mid- and longer term. Again, please vote yes on the substitute as drafted, and no on any rate increases.

 **Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs:** The lead sponsors of a reasonable and bipartisan postal reform bill Tuesday launched Senate debate on a new draft that incorporates changes suggested by fellow Senators, particularly regarding post office and processing plant closures and overnight delivery standards.



**U.S. Government Accountability Office:** "Challenges Related to Restructuring the Postal Service's Retail Network" GAO-12-433, Apr 17, 2012

Over the past 5 years, the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) has taken several actions to restructure its retail network through reducing its workforce and its footprint while expanding retail alternatives. USPS officials estimated that it had saved about \$800 million from reducing the number of work hours dedicated to retail operations. USPS also closed 631 of its post offices, but it did not have cost-savings estimates for these closures. Most of the facilities closed (500) were in response to a postmaster vacancy or the suspension of operations due to an expired lease or irreparable damage following a natural disaster. Fewer closures (131) have resulted from nationwide reviews that USPS initiated in 2009 and 2011. USPS has also restructured its retail network by expanding alternatives through self-service options as well as partnerships with other retailers.


Members of Congress, the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC), the USPS Office of Inspector General (OIG), customers, employee associations, and some community residents have raised concerns about USPS's retail restructuring initiatives. The concerns include


- access to postal services, including community residents' ability to obtain retail services, the adequacy of retail alternatives, and changes to delivery services;
- the impact of facility closures on communities;
- the adequacy of USPS analysis of facilities facing closure and the reliability of USPS data, particularly the accuracy of USPS cost savings estimates;
- the transparency and equity of USPS closure decisions;

- the fairness of USPS's facility closure procedures; and
- changes in who can manage a post office.

PRC, USPS OIG, and GAO have recommended improvements to address some of these issues. In particular, GAO has recommended that USPS develop a plan that addresses both traditional post offices and retail alternatives and ensures that USPS has a viable strategy for effectively adapting its networks to changing mail use and maintaining adequate service as it reduces costs. USPS officials have said they are in the process of addressing these recommendations.

USPS faces challenges, such as legal restrictions and resistance from some Members of Congress and the public, that have limited its ability to change its retail network. For example, USPS is supposed to be self-financing, but it is also restricted by law from making decisions that businesses would commonly make, such as closing unprofitable units. Additionally, some Members of Congress and the public have challenged USPS's plans to close retail facilities in their districts or communities. Certain policy issues remain unresolved related to what level of retail services USPS should provide, how the cost of these services should be paid, and how USPS should optimize its retail network. Pending legislation takes differing approaches to addressing these policy issues. If Congress prefers to retain the current level of retail service and associated network, decisions will need to be made about how USPS will pay for these services, including through additional cost reductions or revenue sources.


 *At the Postal Regulatory Commission: [Docket No. R2012-7](#).* The Association for Postal Commerce filed with the Postal Regulatory Commission comments on the anticipated USPS proposal regarding rates charged for those who elect to participate in the picture permit indicia program.


 *Sen. Thomas Carper* (D-DE): Today, Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.), chairman of the subcommittee that oversees the U.S. Postal Service, released the following statement reacting to a new Government Accountability Office (GAO) report examining the Postal Service's extensive retail network. The report was jointly requested by Sen. Carper and Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Calif.). Sen. Carper's statement follows:


"With today's report, the Government Accountability Office has again confirmed much of what we already knew – the U.S. Postal Service has more work to do to implement a strategy that effectively optimizes its retail network to reduce costs, reflects declining mail volumes and maintains necessary access to retail service. Of the nearly 32,000 retail facilities operated by the Postal Service, approximately 80 percent of them do not generate sufficient revenue to cover their costs. Yet despite sharp declines in customer visits and diminishing mail volumes, the number of postal retail facilities has remained largely constant.


"Many people, including some of my colleagues in Congress, strongly believe that closing postal retail facilities is the wrong approach. I would agree that the kind of mass closings proposed by the Postal Service in recent months would be ill-advised. In fact, the Postal Service should actually be seeking ways to provide increased retail access in some communities through alternate retail options, such as automated kiosks and partnerships with other businesses. That said, the Postal Service is losing billions of dollars annually while mail volume continues to decline. Change must happen. And I've long maintained that if something is worth having, it is worth paying for. If we want to require the Postal Service to maintain retail facilities, we have to figure out a way to reduce costs elsewhere or raise revenues. The bill being considered by the Senate would help the Postal Service do that with post offices, encouraging them to work with individual communities to find cheaper, potentially more convenient ways to offer retail access to postal customers.


 *The vote to permit Senate floor consideration of S. 1789 was passed 74-22. Next stop, full Senate consideration and debate.*


 [U.S. Court of Appeals](#): "We grant the petition for review and remand to the Commission for a definition of the circumstances that trigger § 101(d)'s failsafe protection, and for an explanation of why the particular remedy imposed here is appropriate to ameliorate that extremity. See *Public Citizen, Inc. v. FAA*, 988 F.2d 186, 197 (D.C. Cir. 1993) (requiring agencies to "adequately explain [their] result[s]"). We have also considered the other contentions of the petitioner and intervenors and reject them."


 [S. 1789](#): A section-by-section analysis of the revised S. 1789 has been posted on this site.


 [Wall Street Journal](#): The nation's largest mail-carriers union wants the U.S. Postal Service to raise stamp prices and expand mail delivery. In a report to be released Tuesday, it sharply criticizes the agency's own rescue plan and argues the Postal Service will become profitable only if it restructures itself like a business. The National Association of Letter Carriers also indicated it would be willing to ask its nearly 300,000 members for more "tough sacrifices" to get the Postal Service out of the red. It didn't specify what concessions it would seek from members. The report says, the agency should raise its stamp prices, which are among the lowest in the world, and find new ways to profit more from its built-in advantage as the only entity to reach every American home every day. It should also replace its multilayered governance system with a corporate-style board of directors whose members have entrepreneurial experience.

 [Courier, Express, and Postal Observer](#): Making the business-to-consumer e-commerce market work requires making the delivery experience better and less expensive than it is now. The biggest problem couriers are working to solve is missed deliveries that require a second or third delivery attempt or pick-up from a depot once a missed delivery notice goes out. Missed deliveries raise shipping costs and make buying online less convenient. In the United States, both FedEx and UPS allow shippers to send parcels to retail locations rather than have them sent to their home address. The Postal Service has just started a test of GoPost parcel lockers that will offer customers a 24-7 option for parcel pick-up near their home. However, many if not most customers still want their parcels delivered to their home address and parcel lockers only work for deliveries that include a parcel that can fit into one of the individual lockers.


 [Dutch News](#): Postal company PostNL has halted the revamp of its delivery operations following problems and complaints in Noord-Brabant and Utrecht, where the new system is being tried out, Nos television reports. The company is now planning to consult workers and unions before resuming the operation, Nos says. The plan involves replacing the current 163 local delivery centres with nine centralised locations. On Monday the AD reported a number of large companies had complained about late or missing post following the reorganisation, including online retailer Bol.com, ABN Amro bank and a number of health insurance companies.


 [Boston Globe](#): Faced with a \$5.1 billion loss last year, the Postal Service is considering slowing first-class mail delivery, closing 3,700 of more than 32,000 post offices, and shuttering 223 of more than 400 mail-processing plants (including 43 post offices and five plants in Massachusetts). The closings could be finalized as soon as May 15. If no changes are made, the Postal Service, which generates its own funds and uses no taxpayer dollars, estimates its net loss will reach \$21 billion by 2016. Members of Congress have introduced bills to address these money woes, and Congress has final say on some actions, including a proposal to end deliveries on Saturdays. The changes could have a profound effect on the Postal Service's 546,000 employees.


 [Korea Times](#): In 1979 the international express mail service (EMS) available through the Korea Post was used about 600 times. Since that debut year the figure has exploded by some 10,000 times to reach 5.97 million in 2009, rose to 6.23 million in 2010 and 6.92 million last year. The country's state-run postal service is set to top 7 million items of mail sent express this year in just over 30 years. A few factors such as cutting-edge info-tech systems, advanced global networks and the best customer services are responsible for the feat. "The usage of EMS jumped 10.8 percent last year from 2010 and we think it is quite an exploit to chalk up a double-digit growth in a somewhat saturated market," a Korea Post official said. "We could achieve such success because we offer the highest quality mail services at affordable prices. We will continue to sharpen our competitiveness in order to stay ahead."


 [Washington Post](#): The Senate is slated to resume consideration of legislation Tuesday that would significantly overhaul the operations and finances of the U.S. Postal Service as the struggling agency nears the end of a self-


imposed moratorium on closing post offices and processing facilities. The bill set for debate in the coming days is co-sponsored by Sens. Joseph I. Lieberman (I-Conn.), Susan Collins (R-Maine), Tom Carper (D-Del.) and Scott Brown (R-Mass.) and would delay the Postal Service's move to a five-day delivery schedule for at least two more years while requiring the agency to downsize, rather than close, most of the processing facilities it wants to close. In recent weeks, the bill has been changed to address the concerns of several senators — mostly from smaller, rural states — regarding how and when the Postal Service can shutter small post offices. As broadly described by Senate aides familiar with the bill, USPS would have to work with affected communities to determine what type of postal retail service best meets local needs — perhaps a traditional post office, or placing postal workers at a kiosk within a large nearby supermarket. The bill also permits affected areas to appeal a decision to close a post office to the Postal Regulatory Commission. The bill also permits USPS to change its current first-class mail delivery standards from a "one to two day" schedule/guarantee to a three-day schedule. But USPS still would be expected to ensure overnight first-class mail delivery in some areas, the aides said. Finally, Saturday mail delivery service would be scrapped only after the Government Accountability Office conducts a thorough study and determines that the Postal Service has no other way of cutting a considerable amount of operation costs.

 [From the Federal Register: Postal Service NOTICES Meetings; Sunshine Act , 22823–22824 \[2012–9394\] \[TEXT\] \[PDF\]](#)

 [Hellmail](#): The Estonian advertising market as a whole, grew by 9.4% last year with Estonia Post's direct mail sales growth up 19% compared to 2010.

 [Politico](#): Sen. Tom Coburn is leaving virtually no one unscathed in a blistering new book in which he accuses both parties of hypocrisy and failed leadership in dealing with the country's mounting debt problems. Above all else, Coburn pins everything to one big problem: Lawmakers in both parties who spend their careers in Washington trying to stay in power rather than making politically treacherous decisions on cutting entitlements and raising revenues. He says voters should eject about half of his Senate colleagues from office each cycle to "change the direction of the country."

 [The Hill](#): After having failed to move the "Buffett Rule" forward Monday evening, the Senate plans to take up a postal reform bill, S.1789, Tuesday morning when it resumes. The chamber will resume consideration of the bill at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday. Specifically, the Senate will consider a motion to end debate on a motion to proceed with the bill. On Thursday, Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) called on Congress to try and avoid cuts to the U.S. Postal Service. Republicans have called for some funding cuts for the service, which would result in closing a number of offices around the country. Democrats, meanwhile, want to restructure the mail service to try and avoid as many cuts as possible.

 [Newsday](#): Starting next year, people waiting for their Social Security checks won't need to keep peering out the window for the carrier. The money won't be coming by mail. The federal government is phasing out paper checks for all benefit programs, and it's about time. About 90 percent of recipients already get their money electronically. Now the rest will have to switch over too, getting their funds either via electronic deposit or on a rechargeable debit card by March 2013. Fewer and fewer bills are paid, or even received, by mail. Letters have given way to texts and emails. Now the federal government is turning its back on the mailbox. The USPS must evolve, and Congress needs to empower that change, rather than stand in the way.

 [The Senate is expected to take up the issue of postal legislative reform today.](#) A copy of [a revised S. 1789](#) has been posted on this site.





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


- National Postal Forum Postal Operations Round-Up
- IMb Tracing — Not Your Grandfather's Confirm?
- Will USPS Join the Digital Community?


- Mail Anywhere Pilot Expanded
- eInduction Headed for October 2012 Deployment
- Seamless Acceptance for Small Mailers by end of 2012
- Obtaining Multiple CRIDs/MIDs
- Network Changes and Labeling List Woes
- New Postcom Web Area Dedicated to USPS Network Initiative
- GoPost Introduced at NPF
- PBSA Tool On RIBBS
- Reply Mail Design Tool Available from USPS

 [Press Release](#): "Postal Service Contracting: What Every Contractor Should Know" Early Registration Extended to April 27

 *At the Postal Regulatory Commission: [Commission Public Meeting](#)*, Wednesday, May 2, 2012, at 11 a.m., Commission Hearing Room, 901 New York Avenue NW, Suite 200 Washington, DC 20268-0001

 [American Postal Workers Union](#): On Tuesday, April 17, the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) and the National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU) will conduct rallies and informational leafleting at post offices around the country to highlight an urgent message: Congress must act now to avert a Postal Service disaster. A moratorium on the closure of post offices and mail processing plants expires on May 15, 2012, and postal officials have said they intend to begin consolidating more than 200 mail processing facilities and 3,600 post offices if Congress fails to act by the deadline.


 [WPTZ](#): As early as this week, the Senate could take up a bipartisan bill that offers buyouts to senior employees, cuts worker compensation benefits and makes it possible to end Saturday service in two years. The House could start work on a different postal bill in coming weeks

 The U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General invites you to comment on this week's "[Pushing the Envelope](#)" blog topic:


- **Street Fight in London: TNT Post UK vs. Royal Mail.** TNT Post UK, a private company that collects and sorts mail, will test street delivery this month in an effort to compete with Royal Mail, the traditional government-run postal provider. According to Royal Mail, rival delivery networks hurt mail customers. What do you think? Are there benefits or risks of promoting this type of competition? Share your thoughts on our blog. New Audit Projects: [LINK](#) here to visit our audit project pages.


A new audit project has been started on the external website.

- [Closure of Contract Postal Unites – 12YG021CI000](#). Historically, brick and mortar Post Offices (PO) were the main source of retail revenue for the Postal Service. However, in today's environment, about 39 percent of retail revenue is generated from alternate access channels including; usps.com, self-serve kiosks, grocery stores, approved shippers, and contract postal units (CPU). CPUs are the retail alternative most similar to POs. CPUs are operated and managed by independent retailers to provide a range of postal products and services to customers at Postal Service prices. Our objective is to evaluate the operational and customer impacts for closing the 20 CPUs. Does the closure of CPUs help or hurt customer access? Long term, what should the Postal Service's financial strategy be for CPU's?


 [KXLH](#): The United States Postmaster General is standing by his salary, despite ongoing hardships for the U.S. Postal Service. U.S. Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) has criticized the Postmaster for accepting an \$800,000 compensation package while many rural post offices face closure. The Postmaster was in Helena recently to talk about the agency's budget and addressed the allegations. Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe said, "People can have opinions on that. From a stand point of my salary, I make about four times what a letter carrier would make. If you


would compare that to any other organization in this United States: CEO paid to the front line, very few places is it anywhere near four to one." Tester has formally asked Donohue to take a pay cut.


 [The Telegraph](#): TNT posties take on Royal Mail in London trial. The Royal Mail is to receive its first direct challenge in postal home deliveries in its 360-year history as rival TNT Post UK draws up plans to target major British cities.


 [HR Magazine](#): The French Post Office, La Poste, the second largest European postal operator has streamlined its HR processes giving more control of data to employees. Keen to improve the standardised wage, salary and accounting processes, La Poste has given business users control over rules and business processes. La Poste processes large volumes of data. Given ever-increasing constraints, fast data processing is essential for generating accounting information and for financial management.


 [At the Postal Regulatory Commission: Postal Regulatory Commission \[Congressional Budget Justification\]\(#\) \(Performance Budget Plan\) Fiscal Year 2013](#)


 [Norwich Bulletin](#): As Congress reconvenes this week following the Easter recess, we'd like to remind Connecticut's delegation that time is slowly slipping away and action is needed to avert further financial losses for the U.S. Postal Service.

 [eWeek](#): Among adults who do not use the Internet, almost half said the main reason they don't go online is because they don't think the Internet is relevant to them. Where's the surf? One in five American adults does not use the Internet, according to the latest report from the Pew Internet Project. Senior citizens, those who prefer to take our interviews in Spanish rather than English, adults with less than a high school education and those living in households earning less than \$30,000 per year are the least likely adults to have internet access, the survey found. Among adults who do not use the Internet, almost half have said that the main reason they don't go online is because they don't think the Internet is relevant to them. Most have never used the Internet before, and don't have anyone in their household who does. About one in five say that they do know enough about technology to start using the Internet on their own and only one in 10 said that they were interested in using the Internet or email in the future.

 [Washington Post](#): Shipping via USPS provides us a huge competitive edge and enables us to get products out to customers six days a week in a very cost-effective manner. Once someone places and pays for an order, we ship it out immediately. If someone places an order late Friday, the product will still ship on Saturday. If Saturday shipping via USPS is no longer an option, an order that was paid for on Friday won't go out until Monday. This takes away a huge part of what sets us apart from our competitors who mainly ship Monday through Friday.

 [Washington Post](#): The gap between revenues and costs for the USPS has widened with the extensive increase in technology and use of the Internet. Individuals as well as firms, now utilize online billing services, electronic deposit and e-mail, as opposed to 'snail mail' — increasing the decline in the volume of mail. The decreased volume translates into greatly reduced revenue for the USPS, and since postal costs are fixed (carriers still have to stop at each address, even though delivering fewer pieces of mail), the future of our postal system hangs in the balance. The elimination of Saturday mail delivery to home and business addresses is part of a proposed plan that the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) has formulated as an alternative to significantly increasing postage rates, or requesting a government bailout, to relieve its deficit. For the USPS plan to be put into action, Congress would have to agree not to enact legislation that requires mail to be delivered six days a week.


 [Washington Post](#): From a straight-forward business perspective, my eyes were opened when I learned that the U.S. Postal Service has about 6,000 delivery bar code sorters and many of those machines are only being used about a third of the day, instead of the full 16 to 20 hour days for which they were designed. From that angle, closing some offices, consolidating work and cutting labor hours to meet the shrinking market make great business sense.


 [Washington Post](#): *"Postal Service must trim fat to stay financially viable."* The U.S. Postal Service is under pressure to cover its costs, not make a profit – but breaking even can be hard to do. The emergence of the Internet, e-mail and mobile technology as well as the economic slowdown have all led to the need for changes in the structure


and method of snail mail delivery. To remain viable and provide its still valuable service, the agency must make adjustments.


 [Your highway to intelligent mail services.](#)


*April 16, 2012*


 [Washington Post](#): Our companies design, develop, manufacture, market and sell compact footwear across the world, and we use the U.S. Postal Service every day to provide all of our domestic shipping to our online customers. So we rely on the postal service to help meet our customers' needs as well as maintain our margins for shipping our goods. Learning to maneuver and getting the best rates for the type of shipment was all part of the learning curve, and we found that the USPS offers the best price of all the shippers to move products like ours.

 [Wall Street Journal](#): Deal activity in Europe's logistics sector is heating up, as United Parcel Service Inc.'s UPS +0.18% purchase of smaller rival TNT Express NV last month demonstrated that players in this industry are starting to spend. The €5.16 billion (\$6.75 billion) move by UPS to ramp up its operations in Europe through the largest deal in its 105-year history has created a parcel shipper with more than \$60 billion in annual sales and places considerable pressure on arch rival FedEx Corp. FDX -2.01% FedEx earlier this month bought privately held Polish shipping company Opek in order to push its European expansion plans. Financial details of the transaction weren't disclosed, but FedEx said the purchase gives its express-shipping business access to a ground network in Poland with an estimated \$70 million in annual revenue. Analysts said the recent deal activity suggests that cash-rich companies in the logistics sector are looking to put their money to work.

 [Calculator.co.uk](#): It was confirmed by Royal Mail that they are indeed imposing a cap on how many stamps shops could buy because they are claiming that retailers are exceeding their limits. The Shadow Postal Affairs Minister, Ian Murray, has stated his intention to send a letter Ofcom in regards to what he calls "shameless profiteering" by Royal Mail at the public's expense. Mr. Murray further claims that the rise in the cost of postage is disproportionate and its impact on low income consumers and small businesses will be significant. He understands that those who will be impacted most would want to stock up on stamps before the announced price rise. He feels that the rationing of stamps prior to the price increase is directly opposed to the spirit in which prices were deregulated by Ofcom.

 [Salem-News](#): Congress should consider privatizing USPS. Congress can learn from other countries where the private sector has taken large ownership stakes in their postal services. For example, 69 percent of Germany's formerly government post office Deutsche Post is now privately owned, delivering 70 million letters in Germany, six days a week and doing it at a profit. Through its DHL International arm -- purchased in 2002 -- Deutsche Post AG also operates express service in about 170 countries. In the Netherlands, 100 percent of its formerly government post office is privately owned as TNT Post. The British government is considering selling off to private investors its ownership of the Royal Mail where at least 10 percent of the shares may be reserved for postal employees, which would have the benefit of reducing the unions' incentive to take actions negatively affecting the company's bottom line. With privatization, Congress would end its micromanagement of the USPS; eliminate the complex laws and regulations on delivery schedules, price caps, restrictions on facility shut-downs; and other business decisions. Unfortunately, Congress will again attempt reform, rather than consider privatization.


 [Washington Post](#): Starting next year, the check will no longer be in the mail for millions of people who receive Social Security and other government benefits. The federal government, which issues 73 million payments a month, is phasing out paper checks for all benefit programs, requiring people to get payments electronically, either through direct deposit or a debit card for those without a bank account. The government's switch to electronic payments also comes with a side effect: less business for the U.S. Postal Service, an agency that is already facing big budget problems with the rise of email and electronic bill paying.


 [Washington Post](#): Business mailers fret that eliminating mail processing centers could raise their costs; ditto various publishers. The fact that, without reform, the costs would get shifted to someone else, quite possibly taxpayers, seems not to trouble them. Postal unions cling to contracts that require only modest employee





contributions to health care, make it essentially impossible to lay off many workers and forbid transferring employees to new jobs more than 50 miles away. Last, but not least, members of Congress defend their districts' postal facilities, no matter how underutilized or inefficient. For years Congress has kicked this particular can down the road, but time is running out. There are two competing bills, one in the Senate and one in the House. The House bill is much more realistic: It would overcome political resistance to closing facilities by appointing a commission similar to the one that trimmed excess defense installations, allow USPS to move more quickly to five-day delivery and bar no-layoff clauses in labor agreements.


*April 15, 2012*

 [Save the Post Office](#): A hundred years ago this Sunday, the Titanic collided with an iceberg and sank in the icy waters of the North Atlantic, causing the deaths of over 1500 people. Researchers have recently announced a new theory on the cause: Unusual weather conditions produced a false horizon that hid the iceberg from view. In other words, a mirage. The leaders of the Postal Service are under the influence of their own form of hubris. They're always right "because they said so," and they've convinced themselves that the only way to deal with declining mail volumes is by radically downsizing the workforce. They are even willing to cause self-inflicted damage by implementing plans they know will drive away billions of dollars of business. The officers at the helm seem determined to sink the Postal Service. Their business plan will send the Postal Service into a downward spiral of falling revenues and deeper and deeper cuts. But it's full speed ahead, and nothing will steer them in another direction, even though it's clear they are heading straight toward an iceberg of their own creation.


 [NBCMontana](#): Senator Jon Tester announced the Postal Service will not close mail processing centers in Butte, Helena, Kalispell or Wolf Point during the state's primary election season. Tester said it will help prevent problems with absentee voting, but said he'll keep working to make sure the post offices stay open permanently.

 [The Japan Times](#): The Lower House on Thursday passed a bill to revise the privatization scheme of the Japan Post group. The bill was jointly submitted to the Diet on April 3 by the Democratic Party of Japan, the Liberal Democratic Party and Komeito. It represents a rare case in which consultations among the three parties in the divided Diet has produced a bill. The Diet is expected to enact it by the end of the current Diet session, which ends on June 21. It is hoped that the bill will improve the Japan Post group's overall services.


 [Pakistan Today](#): The newly appointed Director General Pakistan Post Syed Ghulam Panjtan Rizvi has officially assumed the charge of his office. In an introductory meeting with staffers of Pakistan post, he emphasized the employees that a bit improvement and devotion to duties can bring the Postal Department in perfect competitive balance with the private courier companies.


 [Washington Post](#): From town halls to job fairs to meet-and-greets with voters during Congress' two-week recess, Democrats and Republicans focused on the budget in a preview of the seven-month campaign to November. The economy and jobs are voters' priorities, and how the budget debate plays out could prove critical in the fall, with control of the White House, Senate and House at stake.

*April 14, 2012*

 [Fog City Journal](#): While the USPS is structured like a business, Congress often prevents it from actually operating like a private company, such as taking actions to reduce costs, improve efficiency, or innovate in other ways. The agency is also obligated by statute to provide mail services to all Americans, irrespective of where they live and the cost of serving them. It is required to deliver first-class mail at a uniform price throughout the nation. Is it any wonder why the USPS is in debt? The USPS fiscal year 2011 debt was \$13 billion and in the first quarter of fiscal year 2012 it had a \$3.3 billion operational loss. The USPS can borrow money from the U.S. Treasury but its debt limit is set at \$15 billion by federal statute. Thus, the USPS will no longer be able to absorb operational losses by the end of this year.

*April 13, 2012*


 **Town Hall:** The post office is in dire straits. An aging workforce, generous retirement benefits, and an increasingly-electronic communications world mean that the USPS is looking down a long corridor of red ink. (Sounds familiar when thinking about the government.) Regardless, the postal unions are in denial about this. With an eye to preserving incredibly generous public union benefits, they've been running advertisements across the country advocating for a solution from Congress.


 **Press Release:** – [ProList, Inc.](#), a Maryland based direct marketing service provider announced today the launch of a new business venture, SnailWorks™, an integrated direct marketing platform. Concurrent with the announcement was the unveiling of a new website, [www.MySnailworks.com](http://www.MySnailworks.com). The service is designed to allow mailers to coordinate traditional direct mail efforts with new media such as email marketing, web landing pages, and mobile marketing. Direct mail projects set up in the SnailWorks system will be tracked as they travel through the Postal Service, using Intelligent Mail, and when each mail piece is delivered, that event will "trigger" other follow-up efforts such as email, telemarketing, or text messaging. The system will also host and track web and mobile-based landing pages that prospects will be able to access from the direct mail or follow-up efforts.


### **Attention PostalOne! Users:**


- **Business Customer Gateway Outage** — The Business Customer Gateway production environment will be unavailable on Sunday, April 15, 2012, from 3 a.m. to 5 a.m. CDT. During this time, all USPS services accessed through the Business Customer Gateway, including *PostalOne!*®, *FAST*®, Mailer ID, and Program Registration, will be unavailable.
- ***PostalOne!*® Microstrategy Maintenance Outage** - The *PostalOne!*® Microstrategy reporting environment will be unavailable from Saturday, April 14, 2012, 8 p.m. until Sunday, April 15, 2012, 8 a.m. CDT for a major database upgrade. During this time internal users will not be able to access Verification and Performance Reports and external users will not be able to access Mail Quality Reports. Report updates will process after the upgrade, internal reports will be current by 1 p.m. CDT Sunday, April 15, 2012 and Mail Quality Reports will be current by 8 a.m. CDT, Monday, April 16, 2012.
- ***PostalOne!*® Maintenance Outage** - from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. CDT on Sunday, April 15, 2012, and Sunday, April 22, 2012, to prepare for a major database technology upgrade. April 15, 2012 patch Release 30.0.1 will be deployed to correct known issues. Mail.dat client software will be available for download (optional).
- ***PostalOne!*® Major Upgrade Outage** - The major database technology upgrade will be completed during an extended maintenance window from 6 p.m. CDT on Saturday, April 28, 2012, through 6 p.m. CDT on Sunday, April 29, 2012.


During these outages, *PostalOne!*® and Mail.XML will be unavailable, including *FAST*® and eDOC Web Services. Saturday, May 5, 2012 through Sunday, May 6, 2012 should be considered the contingency weekend for the April 28-29 outage if issues result in a rescheduled upgrade.


	<b>PostCom welcomes its newest member (actually, a returning member): <a href="#">FedEx SmartPost</a> 16555 W. Rogers Drive New Berlin, WI 53151 represented by <b>Dennis L. Oates</b>, Vice President, Postal Operations &amp; Engineering.</b>
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 **The Wenatchee World:** The top U.S. Postal Service official on Thursday took his case for rural post office closures straight to those it will hurt most, telling residents in Montana's capital and one of its smallest towns that thousands of post offices nationwide must be shuttered to cut costs.

 [Bowling Green Daily](#): With a May 15 deadline looming, the American Postal Workers Union is pressuring Congress to pass legislation that would allow the U.S. Postal Service to fix some of its problems. U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell's spokesman, Robert Stuerer, said the senator's office has received multiple calls on the issue. "Sen. McConnell (R-Ky.) has heard from constituents on both sides of the legislation. He understands the important services local post offices provide in rural areas of our commonwealth and wants to ensure we reform the United States Postal Service in a responsible and sustainable fashion," Stuerer said in an email to the Daily News. "Sen. McConnell met with U.S. Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe to discuss the challenges faced by the Postal Service and the effect that post office closings and consolidations in Kentucky could have on our local communities and people across the Commonwealth. As the Senate prepares to debate the issue, Sen. McConnell will review the final legislation following the amendment process."

 [Washington Examiner](#): If you have followed the debate over how to reform the Postal Service, you're probably aware that the government-employee unions representing postal workers have been fighting hard against big cutbacks. If you think about it for a minute, you would probably guess that FedEx and UPS have an interest in a reduced Postal Service, or at least one that doesn't expand so as to compete with these private carriers in areas like shipping alcohol. But you probably didn't think to wonder how much the envelope industry is lobbying on this. In short, the envelope lobby is against the unions in seeking cutbacks in the labor force, but also against the private carriers in that they don't want the Post Office to reduce services.

 [OpenSecrets.org](#): Watching paint dry might sound more exciting to some Americans than overhauling the postal service -- until they realize that post offices will be closed, Saturday delivery is on the chopping block and other things they take for granted are up for debate.

 [Toronto Sun](#): Can you copyright a postal code? Canada Post thinks so. The Crown corporation is suing a geocoding website for providing a free online database of Canadian postal codes, which it says infringes on its copyright. But Geolytica, which runs the site, said it built its collection for postal codes without any help from Canada Post's official database. "This brings us here. Having to face a Crown corporation with deep pockets in federal court, over something we have created but which they believe otherwise," wrote Geolytica founder Ervin Ruci on the site's blog. "Fighting for principle is expensive, and we will do it." Canada Post charges companies approximately \$5,500 a year for the same information. The statement of claim filed by Canada Post said it's losing potential clients and revenue. Geolytica argues it used crowdsourcing to build its own database, which means the information was generated by the site's own users and staff, not through Canada Post.





#### **DMM Advisory: IMb™ Services Update**


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- **FAST Deployment - Release 20.1** — FAST Release 20.1 will be deployed to the Production environment on Sunday, April 15, 2012, between 3 a.m. and 8 a.m. CDT. The FAST Online Application and Web Services messaging will not be available during this time. All FAST Web Services messages received during the deployment will be queued and processed after it is completed. Direct questions or requests for additional information to the FAST Help Desk by email [FAST@usps.gov](mailto:FAST@usps.gov) or phone 1-877-569-6614.


 [BusinessWire](#): QuadDirect, a division of Quad/Graphics, Inc. (NYSE:QUAD - News) is completing installation of a new "Press-Plus" solution for inline direct mail production that promises higher response rates and improved ROI. Its modular component approach allows clients greater direct mail capabilities and flexibility, while retaining the speed and efficiencies of inline production. The system can be customized to produce more sophisticated direct mail pieces using the latest response-driving ink-jet and finishing techniques. Inline mail sorting helps shorten production cycles and lower costs overall compared to prior systems.

 [The News Journal](#): The U.S. Government Accountability Office took another close look at our postal system and -- surprise -- it found that the nation needs a new way of looking at mail delivery. The new GAO report came in response to a request by Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del., and Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, and Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Calif. Congress has been struggling with a reorganization bill that would allow the U.S. Postal Service to adjust to a totally new business environment. First-class mail, the prime financial support of the service, is declining far more quickly than many thought. The Postal Service wants congressional authorization to make needed changes in structure, facilities and workforce. Otherwise, the Postal Service is bound to start costing taxpayers billions of dollars in unneeded costs. A Senate bill would provide employee buyouts and would delay a decision to move to a five-day delivery system. The House bill would create a commission to make decisions on facility closures and deliveries. Certainly, a compromise can be reached. However, the separate bills are not the problem. Congress being Congress is the problem. If Congress prefers to ignore reality, Congress had better find a way to pay for its fantasy.

 [Malta Today](#): A survey by the Malta Communications Authority has found 68% of large bulk mailers rate the overall quality of postal services provided by MaltaPost as very good, while 48% of those interviewed claim to have seen an improvement in the services currently provided.

 [The Telegraph](#): Royal Mail stamp price Q&A What is happening to the price of stamps?

 [The Sun](#): Post Offices are rationing stamps as hordes of Brits rush to stockpile them ahead of price hikes later this month.

 [Balkans.com](#): The privatisation of Romania's postal company will be completed at the end of this year or the beginning of 2013, not in June 2012, as initially agreed with the IMF, which is an unrealistic deadline, Communications Minister Razvan Mustea said April 12. "Posta Romana is the largest employer and a very important company for the state, which owns 75% of its capital. I do not want the privatisation done at just any price

and under just any terms. We want to find a serious investor for Posta Romana. When this process is completed, the state will remain a majority shareholder, owning 51% of the capital," Mustea said, Mediafax quoted.




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


- The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report this week that said, "since 2006, the U.S. Postal Service has taken actions to reduce its excess capacity. Such actions have made progress toward consolidating the mail processing network to increase efficiency and reduce costs while meeting delivery standards." It goes further to say, "however, since 2006, the gap between USPS expenses and revenues has grown significantly. In February 2012, USPS projected that its net losses would reach \$21 billion by 2016."
- The Postal Regulatory Commission has filed an advance notice of proposed rulemaking to gather comments on its current procedures for reviewing proposals by the Postal Service to make changes in the nature of postal services. The Commission said, "after reviewing the comments submitted in this proceeding, the Commission may institute rulemaking proceedings to consider the adoption of new, updated procedures for processing nature of service cases."
- According to IRET, "the Service's pensions are in very good financial shape. A few foreign posts have had trouble with underfunded pensions, but USPS actually enjoys a pension surplus: \$13.1 billion at the end of 2011. The Service should be allowed to access that money — provided it is used to help finance needed reforms, not to delay them. On the other hand, the generous retirement health benefits the Service promises to its workers and the high cost of paying for those benefits are one of the key reasons for USPS's poor financial performance compared to the majority of foreign postal services."
- FYI- IMPB exceptions allowed. Is the Postal Service eyeing your piggy bank? LePage vs PRC at Court of Appeals. Interactive TV not likely to brush direct mail aside. Folio: Magazine honors Donahoe as innovator. Collins, Snowe hit campaign-for-friends trail. Post Offices: Too important to be stamped out. Banks have big stake in battle over postal reform. How much do federal employee advocates make? Why direct mail (as in paper) works better than online marketing, sometimes. Overpaid public workers: the evidence mounts. Senator Baucus spends day working at Missoula post office. PostCom's newest member.
- Updates from the Domestic Mail Manual.
- Updates from the Federal Register that affect the mailing industry.
- An update from the USPS Office of Inspector General.
- A review of 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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** NPR:** Letter carriers say the latest legislative fix about to come before the US Senate could devastate the mail service as we know it. Senate Bill 1789 is meant to improve the US Postal Service. But the National Association of Letter Carriers says it will lead to drastic cuts—eliminating Saturday delivery and phasing out door-to-door service in two years, unless the postal service starts showing a profit. The letter carriers say that's unlikely. The postal service itself isn't taking a stance on this particular law.

** The Hill:** Some lawmakers in both parties have criticized the current postal reform proposals in both chambers, and have also lashed out at USPS for proposing to close processing facilities in their states or districts. Postal unions have joined some of those officials in calling on the USPS to find more solid fiscal footing by expanding their services, not consolidating them. And groups like the Coalition for a 21st Century Postal Service — which represents, among others, magazines and newspapers — have said they would oppose proposals that raise postage rates.


 [MetroNews](#): Postal workers across West Virginia are calling on U.S. Senators Jay Rockefeller and Joe Manchin to vote against the postal reform bill.


 [ENews Park Forest](#): U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) today said the Postal Service cannot cut its way to a solution that protects jobs, reduces costs and maintains service. Instead, the Postal Service which employs more than 30,000 people in Illinois must work with Congress and the American people to address its financial problems. Durbin, who worked to secure a five-month moratorium on postal facility closures, also noted that the U.S. Senate is expected to debate comprehensive reform legislation within the next few weeks. "I share the National Association of Letter Carriers view that we need to create a long-term business model that will reform and grow the Postal Service to meet the needs of Americans in the 21st century. Any legislation that aims to do this deserves consideration in Congress before the moratorium on closures ends next month.


 [Government Executive](#): A Government Accountability Office report released Thursday offered support for several controversial provisions of a major U.S. Postal Service reform bill backed by House Republicans. The watchdog called for "dramatic changes" in the USPS cost structure and efforts to "bring down costs related to excess and inefficient network resources." The report also backed another much-debated provision in the Issa bill that would create an oversight panel, similar to the Defense Department's Base Closure and Realignment Commission, through which lawmakers could exert greater oversight over closure and consolidation decisions.


 [KTIV](#): The Postmaster General says if the U.S. Postal Service were a private company, it would be in the middle of bankruptcy proceedings, right now. The agency reported a \$5-billion loss in the last fiscal year, alone. Officials say "doing nothing is not an option." Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa is all too familiar with possible post office closures, and the layoffs that would follow. "We have to pass this bill or there's gonna be a lot of drastic things done to the postal service," Grassley said. The motivation here is a May 15th deadline. That's when a postal service moratorium on closing post offices and processing centers expires. By the way, Grassley said he supports the bill as it's written.

*April 12, 2012*

 [Post & Parcel](#): Dutch material handling systems manufacturer Vanderlande is supplying a new sorting system for a new Norway Post parcel-sorting plant. The company said today will be installing a new "Posisorter" system at the new sorting terminal in Fredrikstad, about 100km south of Oslo. Norway Post is aiming to co-locate parcel processing operations with pallet processing systems in the plant.

 [Sen. Susan Collins](#) (R-ME): "GAO rightly identified that the Postal Service has a labor force sized for a time before email, online bill paying, and its massive volume declines. That's why our bipartisan bill allows for compassionate buy outs and rightsizing the workforce. I hope that our bill will soon be debated in the Senate. Given the dire financial situation of the Postal Service, changes are needed and quickly," said Senator Collins.

 [RT](#): If you are expecting parcels from abroad, be assured you should finally receive them soon. The Postal Service, which has been overloaded, says it is getting on top of the backlog. Yesterday, the Postal Service announced it had dozens of tons of cargo stuck at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport. Large amounts of cargo from the US were held up at Turkish customs before being forwarded to Moscow. This overloaded the airport's capacity, driving it to impose an embargo. Deliveries from Hong Kong, China and South Korea have been particularly affected. Russia's postal service has long been known for its unreliability and delays.

 [Canada NewsWire](#): The Hon. Steven Fletcher, Minister of State (Transport), and Canada Post President and CEO Deepak Chopra today revealed the strategic role a \$200-million processing plant now under construction will play as the gateway for e-commerce shipments from Pacific Rim economies entering Canada's largest home delivery and retail network. By 2014, the 700,000-square-foot Canada Post Pacific Processing Centre at the Vancouver International Airport will connect e-commerce merchants and consumers, the fastest-growing sector of the delivery business.



**Post & Parcel:** US postal regulators are looking into streamlining the way they review major service changes at the US Postal Service, in the light of rapid changes in the communications arena. Facing criticism last year for taking 12 months to assess proposals by USPS to eliminate Saturday deliveries, the Postal Regulatory Commission has also faced pressure this year to speed up its review of big changes to US First Class Mail standards. The ongoing Commission review of mail standards is likely to take until July, but warnings from postal unions claim that mail standards could start to change as early as next month.



**CBS News:** The top U.S. Postal Service official on Thursday took his case for rural post office closures straight to the people it will hurt most, telling Montanans that up to 3,600 small post offices around the country need to be shuttered as part of cost-cutting moves. Rural residents who traveled to Helena to meet Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe answered right back, telling him they depend on their post offices. In a report released Thursday, federal auditors stressed that "dramatic changes" were needed to stem the Postal Service's mounting debt and that the agency's proposal to close mail processing centers, estimated to save roughly \$3 billion a year, was an important part of accomplishing that goal. The report by the Government Accountability Office also noted that the proposal to close mail centers faced tough obstacles due to opposition from local communities to the job losses and cutbacks in service. Labor agreements also make layoffs and forced employee transfers difficult. The report expressed support for elements of a House postal bill that would set up a new commission to make major decisions on postal cuts, including reducing mail delivery to five days a week. It said that if Congress opted to delay or prevent the closing of mail processing centers, lawmakers would have to find ways elsewhere to significantly cut postal costs. "We cannot allow political interests to trump our responsibility to restore the Postal Service to solvency and protect the taxpayer from picking up the tab for surplus facilities," said Rep. Darrell Issa, chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee and a sponsor of the House bill.



**U.S. Government Accountability Office:** "Mail Processing Network Exceeds What Is Needed for Declining Mail Volume"


"Developing an optimal mail processing network will require both congressional support and USPS leadership. Moreover, we have previously reported that Congress and USPS need to reach agreement on a comprehensive package of actions to improve USPS's financial viability. In these previous reports, we provided strategies and options that Congress could consider to better align USPS costs with revenues and address constraints and legal restrictions that limit USPS's ability to reduce costs and improve efficiency. Consequently, we are not making new recommendations or presenting a matter for Congress to consider at this time. Without congressional action to help USPS address its financial problems, USPS will be limited in the amount of rate increase it may seek and may fall even further into debt. USPS had \$2 billion remaining on its \$15 billion statutory borrowing limit at the end of fiscal year 2011. It is now abundantly clear that the postal business model must be fixed given the dramatic and estimated decline in volume, particularly for First-Class Mail. If Congress prefers to retain the current delivery service standards and associated network, decisions will be needed about how USPS's costs for providing these services will be paid, including additional cost reductions or revenue sources." *[EdNote: To quote Casablanca's Captain Renault--"I'm shocked! Shocked, I tell you....."]*





**Senator Thomas Carper** (D-DE): Today, Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.), chairman of the subcommittee that oversees the U.S. Postal Service, released the following statement reacting to a new Government Accountability Office (GAO) report on overcapacity at the U.S. Postal Service and efforts to consolidate its mail processing network. The report was jointly requested by Sen. Carper, Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Calif.).


"Today's report confirmed much of what we already knew – that the U.S. Postal Service has gone to great lengths to reduce the number of mail processing centers it maintains in order to adjust its operations to reflect the changing demand for the products and services it offers. To date, the Postal Service has consolidated dozens of facilities, particularly Airport Mail Centers, saving billions of dollars annually. Yet despite these efforts, the Postal Service still maintains far more processing capacity than it needs to meet current demand in a cost effective manner. Many in Congress strongly believe that the Postal Service's most recent proposal to close more than 200 additional mail processing facilities is the wrong approach. At the same time, the Postal Service is


losing billions of dollars annually and mail volume is continuing to decline. I've long maintained that if something is worth having, it is worth paying for. If Congress wants to require the Postal Service to maintain additional mail processing facilities, we have to figure out a way to reduce costs elsewhere or raise revenues." [EdNote: *If you don't do something substantive about reducing costs, don't even think about raising rates. Mail volume and revenue will leave, and you'll STILL have to figure out what to do about costs.*]

 [Dead Tree Edition](#): Decreasing demand for publication papers in the U.S. is apparently having a counterintuitive result: higher prices. Or, at the least, higher minimum price levels during down markets.

 [Post & Parcel](#): Austrian Post is getting into the business of outsourced fulfillment with the planned acquisition of Vienna-based firm Systemlogistik Distribution GmbH. The postal service said the targeted company has two sites in the Austrian capital, providing services for business customers including order processing, storage, picking, packing and store returns.


 [Brand Republic](#): The figures are based on data from Royal Mail, which has recently broadened its definition of direct mail and changed the method it uses for estimating the average cost of each mailed item. The AA/WARC headline prediction of an 18.4% rise in direct mail spend this year is based on the difference between 2012 figures defined on the new more generous basis, and 2011 figures defined on the former basis. However, on a like-for-like comparison with 2011, the 2012 prediction is for a drop of "approximately" 1%, according to WARC data editor Suzy Young.

 [PR-USA.net](#): Open Solutions Inc.®, the leading provider of collaborative enterprise technology to community-based financial institutions worldwide, recently signed a strategic alliance agreement with DST Output, a leader in producing and delivering multi-channel customer communications. The agreement calls for DST Output to provide print and electronic document composition and delivery services for banking statements and notices. These services will be available to Open Solutions' global client base of more than 3,500 clients, including some of the top credit unions in the country.


 [Legalbrief Today](#): A former US Postal Service manager pleaded guilty in federal court last week to committing wire fraud and conspiring to violate federal conflict of interest laws, attorneys said.

 [The Mainichi](#): The House of Representatives on Thursday passed a bill to review the privatization of Japan's postal services spearheaded in 2005 by then Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. See also [Japan Times](#).


*April 11, 2012*




**[Welcome to PostCom Radio](#)**  
**[We Don't Need No Stinkin' QR Code. We Can Do All That and More With IMb](#)**  
Join PostCom President Gene Del Polito and Address Vision General Manager Shahrom Kiani in a discussion of the power and utility of using the IMb as a more convenient and cost-effective alternative to the QR Code.


 [TechCrunch](#): Sincerely, the startup behind a range of photo-printing and greeting card mobile apps, including Postagram, PopBooth, Sincerely Ink and Dotti, is today rolling out a major update to its Postagram product which will introduce post office tracking for its cards as well as scannable QR codes – which the company is cleverly not planning to refer to as "QR codes" (too geeky) in its communications with customers. More importantly, Postagram is the first of the company's apps to gain access to "Sincerely Magic," a new feature that will help build a connected database of the apps' users across all Sincerely products. The feature will allow users to send cards via snail mail to anyone, even if they only know their email address.



 [Press Release](#): UPS has announced UPS CrossBorder Connect™, a ground freight service between the United States and Mexico designed to significantly ease heavyweight freight supply chain challenges for companies investing in cross-border trade. The service bundles UPS's transportation and customs brokerage expertise north and south of the border to boost speed to market, drive cost efficiencies and reduce supply chain risk.

 [Post & Parcel](#): British postal company UK Mail Group has won a two-year contract for its hybrid mail service, imail, with public healthcare agencies in southern England.


 [Courthouse News Service](#): The U.S. Postal Service must better explain why it authorized an airline to deliver certain freight across otherwise unreachable parts of rural Alaska, the D.C. Circuit ruled.



 [NBCMontana](#): U.S. Senator Max Baucus is pushing to keep post offices around Montana open. He spent the day working with employees at the Missoula mail processing center. Over the next few days Baucus is spearheading meetings to give Montanans the chance to tell U.S. Postal Service officials what they think about closures. "It makes no sense to just wholesale, slash and cut rural post offices. The postal service is \$15 billion in the hole if all...the ones that are on the chopping block, were all closed, that would save only about \$240 million, so it makes no sense," Baucus said. Postmaster General Patrick Donohoe will be coming to Montana to hear what Montanans think tomorrow, in Helena and Ingomar, north of Billings.


 [Institute for Research on the Economics of Taxation](#): "**Why The U.S. Postal Service Is In Greater Financial Trouble Than Most Foreign Posts — The Role of Postal Retiree Health Care Benefits**"

 [Practical e-Commerce](#): "The Future of Regulated Mail, and Ecommerce Shipping"


	<i>PostCom welcomes its newest member: <a href="#">BMC Software</a> 8401 Greensboro Drive McLean, VA 22102 represented by <a href="#">Colleen E. Sanford</a> Client Executive</i>
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 [Wall Street Journal](#): "**Overpaid Public Workers: The Evidence Mounts** " Several new government studies make it harder for unions to deny the need for reform. The Bureau of Economic Analysis has announced that, beginning in 2013, the National Income and Product Accounts of the United States will calculate defined-benefit pension liabilities—and the income flowing to employees in those plans—on an accrual basis that reflects the value of benefits promised, regardless of the contributions made by employers today. The bureau's reasoning is a 2009 research paper stating that "if the assets of a defined benefit plan are insufficient to pay promised benefits, the plan sponsor must cover the shortfall. This obligation represents an additional source of pension wealth for participants in an underfunded plan." At current interest rates, this adjustment would roughly double reported compensation paid through public pensions. The Congressional Budget Office endorsed a similar approach last month in a new report on federal employee compensation. The report—which congressional Democrats reportedly hoped would debunk our 2011 paper on federal pay—found that the federal retirement package of pensions plus retiree health care was 3.5 times more generous than private-sector plans, contributing to a 16% average federal compensation premium.


	<i>Awww . . . You missed PostCom's "Live from the National Postal Forum?" No sweat. You can see what you missed right here.</i>	
Live from the National Postal Forum -- Day 1 <a href="#">Association for Postal Commerce</a>	Live from the National Postal Forum -- Day 2 <a href="#">Association for Postal Commerce</a>	


 [ThomasNet](#): MultiTrac® offers web-based tracking, measurement, and reporting tools for all outbound and inbound mail. Product helps clients manage marketing campaigns, synchronize multichannel campaigns, reconcile postage account transactions with USPS, as well as manage postal expenses. It also allows address change

information to be received electronically, and for timed emails to be automatically sent to any mail recipient based on mail tracking information and delivery.


 [The News-Herald](#): A postal pallet theft at Printwell Printing was foiled by an employee who spotted something amiss the morning of March 24. The employee saw a man loading postal pallets onto the bed of a white 1995 Ford Ranger at the building, 26975 North Line Road. About 20 pallets had been loaded onto the bed when the employee used his car to block the truck by pulling in front of it.

 [The Jakarta Post](#): PT Pos Logistik Indonesia, a subsidiary of state-owned postal firm PT Pos Indonesia, will be the subject of an initial public offering (IPO) next year. "Out of six subsidiaries, only PT Pos Logistik Indonesia is ready for an IPO in 2013," PT Pos Indonesia retail and property director Setyo Riyanto said during a business gathering in Surabaya on Tuesday, Antara news agency reported. The postal firm has appointed Ernst and Young as an IPO consultant.


 [Mainichi Daily News](#): A House of Representatives committee passed a bill Wednesday to revise the privatization of the postal system as proposed by the ruling Democratic Party of Japan and two major opposition parties. The lower chamber of the Diet is expected to approve the bill and send it to the House of Councillors on Thursday.


 [ERR](#): Itella Smartpost is opening a postal service between Estonia and Finland on Thursday. Clients will now be able to use self-service parcel machines to dispatch post between Estonia and Finland. The company has 50 machines in Finland and 52 in Estonia. Clients will also have access to all Finnish post offices through the service.


 [From the Federal Register: Postal Service NOTICES Meetings; Sunshine Act, 21819 \[2012-8868\]](#) [[TEXT](#)] [[PDF](#)]


 [Saginaw News](#): As protesters prepare to demonstrate in front of lawmakers' offices across the country to demand changes in a United States Postal Service reform bill, U.S. Sen. Carl Levin said today he shares some of their concerns. Levin plans to introduce an amendment to Senate File 1789 that would give the public a chance to first appeal the closure of any postal facility. The amendment could impact all facilities proposed to be closed, including two in Saginaw.

*April 10, 2012*


 [Idaho Statesman](#): The 45-cent stamp doesn't go very far — not against a \$9 billion deficit, anyway. And so, the U.S. Postal Service is in a crisis. When you get down to it, the federal agency has only two options for erasing a shortfall: reduce services or raise rates. Both decisions carry the same basic risk: alienating users and pushing them ever more in the direction of e-mail, texts and social media, where communication is cheap and instantaneous. When that's the choice, the Postal Service is simply going to have to close some of its branches, especially in small-town Idaho.


 [Inquirer News](#): On its 20th year, the Philippine Postal Corp. seems set on reestablishing its position in an increasingly high tech world. With a new logo, new services, and even the promise of a new office, PhilPost celebrated its 20th corporate anniversary at its headquarters at the Manila Post Office on Tuesday. Though the Philippine postal office was established in Manila in 1767, PhilPost only got its name and corporate status in 1992 when then President Corazon Aquino signed Republic Act No. 7354.

 [Post & Parcel](#): Lithuania Post earned more than expected last year, achieving its first annual profit since 2007, it said today.

 [Government Executive](#): Ever wonder how much union leaders are paid to represent you? National Journal's latest survey of compensation for executives in the Washington area includes some federal employee advocates. Postal employee union leaders did pretty well, the survey shows. John Hegarty of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union brought in \$347,791 in annual compensation, based on Internal Revenue Service information available as of March

30 and primarily covering calendar year 2010. Fredric Rolando of the National Association of Letter Carriers earned \$302,165 and William Burrus of the American Postal Workers Union netted \$275,700.


 **Business Insider:** Direct mail does work. Sure it's hard to track the results, sure it's not as fancy as a digital campaign, but it does drive sales. Business owners and markets don't down one method of doing marketing (or anything else), if it works. One type of marketing might be great for one segment of customers and one particular thing and one method might be great for something else.


 **Post & Parcel:** Canada Post has launched a potentially important bid to attract more small and medium-sized businesses to use the mail for local advertising purposes. The Crown Corporation has launched a new free-of-charge service online that makes it easier for SMEs to locate prospective customers among households in their local areas. The "Precision Targeter" tool allows businesses access to Canada Post's extensive address database, combined with national census data, to more precisely target saturation mail campaigns to the best delivery routes for a certain message. The service also simplifies the process of using the Unaddressed Admail service to run local marketing campaigns. Aiming at a key segment of the advertising mail market in regard to potential growth – small businesses – Canada Post's latest offering mirrors in many respects the Every Door Direct Mail service being run south of the border by the US Postal Service.


 **Conference Registration:** "Postal Service Contracting: What Every Contractor Should Know"


 **At the Postal Regulatory Commission:**


- **Press Release:** The Postal Regulatory Commission today issued an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking **asking the public for comments and suggestions on possible improvements to its rules for considering Postal Service requests for Advisory Opinions** related to significant changes in service. The full text of the Advance Notice is available on the Commission website, [www.prc.gov](http://www.prc.gov). Comments are due within 60 days of the date of publication of this notice in the Federal Register.
- **RM2012-3 Comments** on the PRC's "Notice of Institutional Cost Contribution Requirement for Competitive Products."

 **Voters Legislative Transparency Project:** "ALEC/Koch Cabal Pursuing Privatization of the US Postal Service for UPS and FedEx." [EdNote: Reminds me of that old Buffalo Springfield song "♪♪Paranoia strikes deep. Into your life it will creep. It starts when you're always afraid....♪♪"]


 **Save the Post Office:** Over the past fifteen months, more than two hundred communities have tried to save their post office from being closed by appealing to the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC). For nearly all of them, the effort was in vain. [EdNote: In vain? Well, the job of the Commission is simply to administer the law as it is written.]


 **ERR:** Eesti Post, the national postal service, is moving more of its offices to shopping centers. "Our goal is to move our services closer to people. In addition to other services, shopping centers are a very convenient place for postal services," said Eesti Post communication director Inge Suder.


 **CNET:** A new study finds that 20 percent of third grade students have cell phones and 90 percent of them are online, while 83 percent of children in middle school have one. [EdNote: I wonder how many know how to write a business letter or diagram a sentence.]


 **American Banker:** It's probably not an exaggeration to say that the banking industry relies on the post office more than any other sector of the U.S. economy. More than half of all statements and bills sent through the mail come from banks, savings and loans, and credit unions, according to the U.S. Postal Service. And those 4 billion or so mailings per year are matched by roughly the same number of advertising offers from credit-card issuers. That leaves banks with a big stake in the debate on Capitol Hill over how to reform the Postal Service. According to the Postal Service, financial institutions mailed more than 19 billion pieces of advertising between October 2009 and

September 2010. Revenue from the financial industry totaled \$7.1 billion, or nearly 11% of the Postal Service's total commercial revenue. But the move by banks toward paperless statements, a shift to mailing statements quarterly rather than monthly, and reductions in advertising budgets have all hurt the postal system's bottom line. Bank industry officials warn that rate hikes will only give banks and other industries a greater incentive to find other channels of communication, which would further undermine the postal system's viability.

 [Financial Times](#): The coalition hopes to draw on public affection for Royal Mail in a stock market flotation, probably in autumn 2013. But even if it succeeds in selling a chunk of the world's oldest postal service – the most ambitious privatisation since British Rail – it seems unlikely to rekindle the frenzy over privatisation shares seen in the mid-1980s.

 [ARN](#): Australia Post Mobile is useful for anyone who spends plenty of time dealing with our national postal service, especially if eBay or Amazon are your good friends. The app offers basic essential services, including an elaborate postage calculator, postcode search, 'pay a bill', and of course (and most importantly), the item tracker. There is also a 'find us' feature which offers a map with pinpointed office and street posting box locations. This proves to be particularly beneficial when traveling in unfamiliar locations. This capability can be viewed as a list also, which is helpful if your 3G coverage is minimal.

 [New Zealand Herald](#): Nearly 30 million fewer letters and parcels were sent by snail mail in the past year - but a more dramatic decline was prevented partly by bulk mailouts during the general election. In its half-year report, New Zealand Post chairman Michael Cullen reported there was a 7 per cent drop in the volume of mail being sent within New Zealand.

 [The Spokesman-Review](#): Last week a group of Spokane area postal workers and their backers gathered downtown to voice opposition to plans that would shut down hundreds of post offices and dozens of processing centers across the country. The Postmaster General has said those cuts are needed for the privately funded, non-tax supported Postal Service to eliminate an \$8 billion shortfall in its annual budget. While people debate the issue of whether cuts at that level are needed, others are concerned that the Postmaster General will push plans to eliminate Saturday delivery. That concern, however, seems to be one that won't gain much support in Congress; any initiative to cut Saturday delivery has to be approved by Congress. Last week, more than 100 members of Congress signed a letter in support of six day mail, rural post offices and new innovations.


*April 9, 2012*




The U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General invites you to comment on the following This week's "[Pushing the Envelope](#)" blog topic: Some e-Thoughts on e-Books. Sales of U.S. e-books have slowed considerably according to marketing research firm, R.R. Bowker. This may indicate the diversion to digital download is slowing down. Will the adoption of electronic bills and correspondence also slow down? What effect could this trend have on large volume postal products? Let us know what you think.


A new audit project has been started on the external website:


[Program Management – 12YG022CI000](#). Currently, the Postal Service has initiated DRIVE (Delivering Results, Innovation, Value and Efficiency) to improve business strategy development and execution. It is based on a methodology used by many corporations to apply strategic and financial rigor to decision making, and to navigate through significant organizational changes. DRIVE is focused on a portfolio of 36 strategic initiatives to meet its performance and financial goals. According to the Postal Service, DRIVE is a structured approach to organizing operational and management activities that facilitates cross-functional dialogue and collaboration, provides streamlined reporting and accountability, and incorporates measurement, analysis, and evaluation of initiatives. Successful program management will be needed in order to maintain and track these initiatives.


 [Novinite](#): Bulgaria holds the dubious honor of having the highest prices of postage in Europe when compared to the relative purchasing power of the population, a BBC survey has shown. Posting a letter in Bulgaria only costs

BGN 0.85 (USD 0.68) but to most Bulgarians, that's a lot, BBC has commented as it compared the price of postage in different European countries. In the BBC's survey of 65 countries around the world, Bulgaria's postage price ranks third when adjusted to reflect the local cost of living.


 [Logistics Week](#): The UPS Store franchise network has been honored by the U.S. Postal Service at the National Postal Forum for its participation in Every Door Direct Mail, which provides small businesses with a cost-effective way to send direct mail.


 [Palm Beach Post](#): The fate of the U.S. Postal Service lies with a Congress that has done nothing to save the institution that will lose as much as \$18.2 billion a year by 2015 unless lawmakers act.


 [Auctionbytes](#): On April 12, the National Association of Letter Carriers will hold demonstrations outside of Senate offices across the country in order to pressure senators to oppose S. 1789, which it believes will be brought up in the Senate after the Easter recess. Letter carriers say the legislation would hurt the Postal Service.


 [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#): The Postal Service pays into several retirement and health funds. Almost everyone agrees that in the past it has vastly overpaid, some estimate by as much as \$100 billion. One would think it a simple matter for Congress to allow the USPS to tap into these excess funds to pay current health benefits. One would be wrong. The Congressional Budget Office counts the surplus funds as part of the existing budget. This manufactured financial crisis legitimized the privateers attack on the Postal Service. Proposals include ending Saturday delivery, which would open the door to private companies; divesting half the service's physical infrastructure, and even ending door-to-door delivery.

*April 8, 2012*


 [U-T San Diego](#): Text message spam has started waking Bob Dunnell in the middle of the night, promising cheap mortgages, credit cards and drugs. Some messages offer gift cards to, say, Walmart, if he clicks on a website and enters his Social Security number. Once the scourge of email providers and the Postal Service, spammers have infiltrated the last refuge of spam-free communication: cellphones. In the United States, consumers received roughly 4.5 billion spam texts last year, more than double the 2.2 billion received in 2009, according to Ferris Research, a market research firm that tracks spam. Spread over 250 million text message-enabled phones, the problem is not as commonplace as email spam. But it's a growing menace, with the potential for significant damage.


 [The Guardian](#): The great age of the Post Office is past, here and indeed all over the world The pillarboxes and phone boxes remain, but as the letter vanishes as an instrument of meaningful correspondence, so does the Post Office itself


 [The Tribune](#): As if competition by instant means of communication, like the internet or smart phones, were not enough, postal service in Pakistan seems to be suffering from other ailments that are perhaps best represented by the dilapidated condition of letterboxes that can be found scattered around the city. Nearly half of these letterboxes are currently either broken or in serious need of repair, and a Pakistan Post official said that they are not even checked regularly by post office staff.


 [Morning Sentinel](#): The U.S. Postal Service should not close facilities in Hampden or elsewhere around the country until Congress acts on postal reform legislation, says Snowe. Snowe wrote a letter last week to U.S. Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe urging him to continue a moratorium on closures through Aug. 1. The current moratorium ends in mid-May, and the Postal Service plans to close 223 of its 460 mail-processing facilities nationwide to cut costs, including its facility in Hampden. It will move that facility's operations to its processing center in Scarborough. "Moving forward on this plan before Congress has a chance to act will seriously degrade service, drive away customers, and establish an untenable business model for the future -- something that Congress is working to prevent," Snowe wrote. Collins, one of the authors of proposed Postal Service overhaul legislation, also has criticized the plan to close Hampden and other facilities, as well as other Postal Service cost-cutting moves.

*April 7, 2012*


 [The Daily Yomiuri](#): Sixteen groups including U.S. and European insurance industry bodies released a joint statement to strongly criticize Japan's bill to review its postal privatization process. The statement said the legislation ignores "the longstanding concerns raised by the above international industry coalition about creating the equivalent conditions of competition in the insurance, postal, and delivery industries." Among the 16 groups, the Coalition of Service Industries (CSI) of the United States warned in a separate statement that reviewing the postal privatization process could negatively affect Japan's bid to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade negotiations. The other organizations that adopted the joint statement on Friday include the American Council of Life Insurers, the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan, the European Business Council in Japan, and the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association.


 [PC Magazine](#): *A good quote from the Cranky Geek himself, John Dvorak -- "Just look at what more people use the computer for in the United States: Facebook, Twitter, e-mail, Web surfing. This is all time-wasting social crap. I've come to the realization that most people really do not need a powerful computer in any way because they just surf Facebook all day. So what if someone does not have a machine? Time spent fretting over any sort of digital divide, whether international or local, is time wasted. Any so-called digital divide is a meaningless construction manufactured to draw attention away from real problems."*

 [The Spokesman-Review](#): In a little more than five weeks, on May 15, the U.S. Postal Service will start closing 3,500 post offices and 200 mail-processing centers, many in Eastern Washington and North Idaho. Postal Service officials committed to a moratorium on closures in December, with the expectation Congress would take some of the actions needed to stanch annual losses that have surged to \$9 billion. Postmaster General and USPS Chief Executive Officer Patrick Donahoe on March 27 reiterated to a congressional subcommittee the urgent need for legislation that will sanction the closures, permit five-day delivery, and amend earlier legislation that imposes unrealistic and unreasonable prepayments into Postal Service pension and retiree health care funds. He also wants authority to create a Postal Service-sponsored health care plan. That same day, the Senate set aside work on a rescue package that would have provided most of the relief the Postal Service says it needs.

 [Billings Gazette](#): Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe and Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., will host a community discussion on rural post office closures and area mail processing facility consolidations at 2 p.m. on Thursday in Ingomar. Baucus said it's critical for Donahoe to visit with community members in places like Ingomar before making decisions that would drastically impact service, jobs and a way of life.

*April 6, 2012*

 [Pensions & Investments](#): Canada Post Pension Plan, Ottawa, returned 0.2% on its investments in 2011, according to a news release on the pension fund's website. The returns were lower than the plan's 0.8% benchmark.

 [PRNewswire](#): In speech at Rutgers, NALC President called on Congress to take time to draft comprehensive reform instead of pushing through flawed legislation. Fredric V. Rolando, president of the National Association of Letter Carriers, said Friday that Postal Service legislation pending before Congress lacks any long-term vision and fails to provide for the creation of an effective business plan for a vital American institution. "What the Postal Service needs most is a new business model," Rolando said, "built from the bottom up, one that looks above the immediate financial and structural problems to find opportunities to meet the evolving needs of the American people in the 21st century."


 [Attention Postal One! Users:](#)


**Business Customer Gateway Outage** - The Business Customer Gateway production environment will be unavailable on Sunday, April 15, 2012, from 3:00 a.m. CDT to 5:00 a.m. CDT. During this window, all USPS services accessed my mailers through the Business Customer Gateway, including PostalOne!, FAST, Mailer ID, Program Registration, will be unavailable.


**PostalOne!® Microstrategy Maintenance Outage:** The PostalOne!® Microstrategy reporting environment will be unavailable beginning Saturday, April 14, 2012 at 8:00 p.m. CDT until Sunday, April 15, 2012 at 8:00 a.m. CDT for a major database upgrade. During the outage internal users will not be able to access Verification and Performance


Reports for Business Mail Acceptance and External users will not be able to access the Mail Quality Reports. Report updates will be processed after the upgrade is complete and internal reports will be current by 1:00 p.m. CDT, Sunday, April 15, 2012 and Mail Quality Reports will be current by Monday, April 16, 2012 at 8:00 a.m. CDT.


**PostalOne!® Maintenance Outage:** There will also be a PostalOne! outage from 4:00 a.m. CDT to 8:00 a.m. CDT on Sunday, April 15, 2012 and Sunday April 22, 2012 as the database is prepared for a major technology upgrade. While this outage is occurring on April 15, 2012, Release 30.0.1 will be deployed to correct known issues. Release 30.0.1 will provide a new Mail.dat client software for download (optional). During these outages PostalOne! and Mail.XML will be unavailable including FAST and eDOC WebServices. An extended maintenance window for PostalOne! will be used Saturday April 28, 2012 through Sunday, April 29, 2012 to complete the major upgrade. The exact times will be communicated by April 13, 2012.


 **U.S. Court of Appeals:** "In *LePage's 2000, Inc. v. Postal Regulatory Commission*, 642 F.3d 225 (D.C. Cir. 2011), we vacated an order of the Postal Regulatory Commission and remanded the case for further proceedings consistent with our opinion. We now consider a petition by *LePage's 2000, Inc.* and *LePage's Products, Inc.*, for attorneys' fees and expenses incurred in the litigation leading up to our decision. Because we find that the Commission was not substantially justified in issuing its order, but that fees and expenses requested for proceedings before the Commission are not reimbursable, we award a portion of the fees and expenses sought in the petition for reasons more fully set forth below.

 **4-Traders:** TNT Post Parcels, part of PostNL Parcels, has completed a major upgrade of its IT environment with the introduction of 230 handheld terminals in Belgium. Thanks to this, customers can now track their parcel online anytime of the day. With a uniform IT environment in Belgium and the Netherlands, TNT Post Parcels can now operate a platform on which innovative services like Checkout and MijnPakket (MyParcel), both already available in the Netherlands, can gradually be offered in Belgium as well.

 **JD Supra:** A recent European Court case has confirmed that a dominant firm will not breach EU competition law simply by selling its services below their total cost, as long as the services are charged above their 'incremental' cost. Furthermore, an abuse of dominance will only occur where it can be shown that the company intended to remove a competitor from the market as a result of its pricing strategies. The Court of Justice of the European Union ('ECJ') has ruled that a dominant postal company (Post Danmark) which has a universal service obligation may make selective price reductions, and bring its prices below the level of its average overall costs but not below its average incremental costs, without infringing Article 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ('TFEU') prohibiting an abuse of a dominant position. The court concluded that each case should be judged on its particular facts but the important question is whether the pricing strategy has the result or potential, without objective justification, to remove a competitor from the market.

 **Mediapost:** It's well-documented the U.S. Postal Service is navigating one tough route in this digital economy. Questions about the effectiveness of direct mail aren't helping. Not that those haven't been around, but marketers' interest in social media and other emerging tactics can't be a good sign about flyers filling mailboxes. One of the shiny new things is interactive TV (iTV), which cable operators are more than happy to pitch as a direct mail substitute. Yet, data floating around this week suggests the direct mail industry and, by extension the post office, have a good while to keep making money on large postcards advertising large discounts.

 **The Daily Caller:** Today, the United States Postal Service (USPS) wants access to one of the federal government's other "trust funds" — the federal employee pension fund — to cover its multi-billion-dollar losses and incentivize its expensive workforce to retire. The problem is, like Medicare and Social Security, federal employee pensions are financed by current contributions from employees and employers (government agencies). Past contributions weren't saved — they were spent — since the funds are money-in, money-out operations. The Postal Service has too many people, offices and processing plants for the business it projects to do in the months and years to come. USPS needs to right-size its network in order to meet demand and reduce its labor costs.

 **BBC:** The price of a British first-class stamp is going up by about a third at the end of the month, from 46p to 60p, and the price of a second-class stamp will rise almost 40%, from 36p to 50p. But the Royal Mail says its "prices are amongst the best value in Europe". Is this true? If you convert the local price into dollars, the UK is the fifth

most expensive in Europe. The 60p it will soon cost for a first class stamp is \$0.96, behind Finland, Switzerland, Denmark and, in first place, Norway - where a comparable stamp costs \$1.67 (9.5 Kroner).



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


- The Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe in this week's opening session for the National Postal Forum talked about the need for change. He pointed out that change is not easy and that people, especially postal stakeholders are comfortable with keeping things the way they are. But he was quick to say, "our future is not in today's comfort zone."
- Executives from the U.S. Postal Service spoke to the mailing industry this week about the legislative progress it is making and the creation of additional value in mail through technology. According to several postal executives, the Postal Service is no longer just talking; progress is real and happening.
- The USPS' Wednesday morning executive session at this week's National Postal Forum (NPF) highlighted its marketing efforts since the last Forum. Titled, "Ensuring a Bright Future," USPS chief marketing officer Paul Vogel began the session by reminding attendees "this ain't your grandfather's post office anymore." Vogel and USPS vice president of domestic products Gary Reblin updated session attendees on key USPS marketing strategies and product offerings.
- The focus from the USPS this week at the National Postal Forum (NPF) in Orlando, FL, was definitely its Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb) Full-Service offering. From singing and dancing in NPF sessions to the Postmaster General's opening remarks, Full-Service took center stage.
- Mailers attending the National Postal Forum (NPF) earlier this week were disappointed that the USPS did not provide an update on its time line for implementing its network changes, or even sessions focused on understanding and preparing for the network changes. As one of the most significant changes facing mailers this year, many had looked forward to a session that would outline the USPS' network optimization implementation plans, including providing mailers with resources to help plan for the changes that are anticipated to take place later this year as mail processing facilities are consolidated or closed.
- The Institute for Research on the Economics of Taxation (IRET) has released a new paper that "examines one crucial difference: government micromanagement, which has saddled the U.S. Postal Service with excess operating costs. Later papers will investigate three other differences: retiree health care expenses, postal pricing, and nonpostal diversification."
- The Association for Postal Commerce (PostCom) on March 30, 2012, submitted to the USPS its comments regarding the proposed rules for discontinuation of POSTNET barcode. The USPS is proposing discontinuation of POSTNET barcodes and requirement of Intelligent Mail Barcodes (IMb) for all automation letters and flats by January 2013. PostCom encouraged the USPS to continue to aggressively explore simplification of the requirements and processes for Full-Service as well as increasing the financial and operational benefits associated with using Full-Service for both mail owners and mail service providers. The association also admonished the USPS for initially including a barcode clear zone requirement in the proposed rules, which it said would not have happened if the USPS understood its customers' businesses, or utilized the existing collaborative processes in place such as the Mailers Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC) to air such proposals in advance.
- CBO updates cost savings on House bill. Retiring Lieberman in Senate legislative mix unlike peers. Rahall tries to save rural post offices. USPS provides monthly full service IMb report. Now in progress: A push to keep (contract) POs open. USPS to allow logos, etc as Picture Permit Imprint Indicia. Senate considering commission to review USPS business model. Should printers fear digital mailbox services? USPS officially announces GoPost pilot. Magazine guidelines for tablets. Hybrid mail and the USPS. USPS files motion to dismiss complaint case. USPS deliver M.A.I.L. award. PostCom members/supporters recognized by USPS. Post Ops Update to bring more NPF news. USPS posts service standards mapping tool. Tester asks USPS to delay closures till after elections. April 12 demonstrations to save America's Postal Service.
- Updates from the Domestic Mail Manual.
- Updates from the Federal Register that affect the mailing industry.
- An update from the USPS Office of Inspector General.
- A review of 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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 [Dead Tree Edition](#): Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe was named today to Folio: magazine's "2012 Folio: 40" list of the magazine industry's "most innovative and distinguished professionals." The Donahoe article, published online today and to appear in an upcoming issue of the magazine, cited Donahoe's "continued commitment to magazine media, while also remaining steadfast on the realities surrounding the challenges the USPS is combating." Donahoe has reassured publishers that the U.S. Postal Service won't try to solve its financial problems by jacking up their postage rates, the article said. He's trying instead to cut costs, it added, by reducing the number of employees and postal facilities and by eliminating Saturday delivery.


 [The Hindu](#): Deutsche Post DHL, the world's leading postal and logistics group, on Thursday, said it had acquired the 24 per cent stake held by the Lemuir Group in their joint venture. With this acquisition, the joint venture, DHL Lemuir Logistics Pvt. Ltd., becomes a 100 per cent subsidiary of Deutsche Post DHL, a company release said here. The entity has been renamed as DHL Logistics Pvt. Ltd.


 [The Spokesman Review](#): The postal workers union will demonstrate this afternoon in Spokane against plans to close some Post Office facilities. But the notice of that demonstration seems to be a model of Murphy's Law about things going wrong. First of all, the notice received Wednesday wasn't sent out by standard mail but by e-mail, which is one of the reasons postal volumes are down. Second, the first notice had the wrong day. Well, good thing it was by e-mail, because the union was able to send out a quick correction saying it was actually today. But that new notice had a problem itself.


 [Ozarks First](#): Sen. Claire McCaskill talked about ways to keep rural post offices open. Among other things, she thinks the U.S. Postal Service can shore up budget problems by charging companies like Fed-Ex and UPS more money when they hire the Postal Service to make deliveries.

*April 5, 2012*

 [At the Postal Regulatory Commission: System Review Report of the Postal Regulatory Commission's Office of Inspector General Audit Organization](#) conducted by the Inspector General of the Federal Trade Commission.


 [National Association of Major Mail Users](#): Last fall Canada Post committed to develop a solution for BRM card stock that would minimize impacts to customer costs while enabling machine processing of Business Reply Mail cards. After substantial testing and analysis, we would like to advise that Business Reply Mail customers may continue using paper with a weight lower than 160 gm<sup>2</sup> but not less than 111 gm<sup>2</sup>. In such cases, Customers must realize that a small portion of their returned cards may be subject to longer processing times. To improve performance, we recommend using: optimal card size of 108 mm x 165 mm (4.3 in x 6.5 in); and grain direction long.


 [PR Newswire](#): FedEx Corp. FDX -0.28% announced today that it signed an agreement to acquire the Polish courier company Opek Sp.z o.o. (Opek), the latest step in its strategy for growth in Europe.

 [PR Newswire](#): Delivering Shipping Innovation to eBay Sellers Earns eBay the U.S. Postal Service Partnership for Progress Award.


- **Business Customer Gateway Outage** — The Business Customer Gateway production environment will be unavailable on Sunday, April 15, 2012, from 3 a.m. to 5 a.m. CDT. During this time, all USPS services accessed through the Business Customer Gateway, including PostalOne!®, FAST®, Mailer ID, and Program Registration, will be unavailable.
- **PostalOne! Microstrategy Maintenance Outage** — The PostalOne! Microstrategy reporting environment will be unavailable from Saturday, April 14, 2012, 8 p.m. until Sunday, April 15, 2012, 8 a.m. CDT for a major database upgrade. During this time internal users will not be able to access Verification and Performance Reports for Business Mail Acceptance and external users will not be able to access the Mail Quality Reports. Report updates will be processed after the upgrade is completed, internal reports will be current by 1 p.m. CDT, Sunday, April 15, 2012, and Mail Quality Reports will be current by 8 a.m. CDT, Monday, April 16, 2012.
- **PostalOne! Maintenance Outage** — from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. CDT on Sunday, April 15, 2012, and Sunday, April 22, 2012, as the database is prepared for a major technology upgrade. During the April 15, 2012, outage, Release 30.0.1 will be deployed to correct known issues. During both outages, PostalOne! and Mail.XML will be unavailable, including FAST and eDOC web services.


The major upgrade will be completed during an extended maintenance window from Saturday, April 28, 2012, through Sunday, April 29, 2012. The exact times will be communicated by April 13, 2012.


 **Dead Tree Edition:** Flats Sequencing System machines continue to run much slower than their target speeds and aren't getting any faster. But they also aren't breaking down as often as they were last year, according to a Postal Service presentation.


 **PR Newswire:** The Business Journals today named Apple, Inc. the 2012 Grand Award winner as part of its ninth-annual American Brand Excellence Awards, which recognize brands that best meet the needs of small to mid-sized businesses (SMB). This year marks the second consecutive year that Apple, a pioneer in brand excellence, has received the award. The Business Journals also awarded Brand Excellence Awards to companies in six additional business categories:

*Business Services: UPS Retail: The UPS Store*

 **ChannelNews:** Digital Post Australia's online post box service for Oz announced last month by a partnership between Computershare, Salmat and US based Zumbox, is hoping to have the e-postal service established later this year. The system would allow users to receive and store utility bills and bank statements in an online post box.


 **BBC:** A man in Cornwall has set up his own postal service, delivering letters around his local town whilst riding a penny-farthing. Graham Eccles set up this unique service following Royal Mail's recent announcement that the price of first-class stamps will rise to 60p. The man who lives in Bude now delivers mail within his hometown and the surrounding villages for 25p a letter, more than half the price of Royal Mail's postage.

 **From the Federal Register: Postal Regulatory Commission NOTICES** Postal Service Classification and Price Adjustments, 20656-20657 [2012-8161] [\[TEXT\]](#) [\[PDF\]](#)


 **CNN Money:** Unions and some lawmakers say the U.S. Postal Service's plans to close plants and post offices would turn customers away and hasten the service's downward spiral. Now their campaign has been buoyed by revelations of a survey that the Postal Service commissioned -- and then dismissed and pushed to make secret. The survey, budgeted to cost up to \$435,000, shows closures and cutbacks would cost \$5.2 billion in lost business and result in a 7.7% drop in mail volume. The Postal Service says the survey -- conducted last summer -- was "seriously flawed" because it was based on the assumption that slower delivery, an end to Saturday service and postage price hikes would all happen at the same time. The proposed cutbacks would occur over five years, according to the service. As a result, the Postal Service ordered a new survey focused on tracking customer response to slower


delivery and plant closures. It showed the Postal Service losing \$1.3 billion in revenue, with a 1.7% drop in total mail volume.


*April 4, 2012*





**Welcome to PostCom Radio**  
**A Postal Podcast**  
*Join PostCom President Gene Del Polito and Experian Senior Project Manager Dylan Purse in a discussion of "making your way in a multi-media marketing world."*


 **QRCodePress:** TNT Post, the national postal service of the Netherlands, is taking a bold new approach to its quarterly magazine publication titled "Er is Post!" The post service has tapped augmented reality developer Layar to make the magazine more interactive. The magazine is delivered to every household in the Netherlands every quarter, giving Layar a large audience to reach out to with its acclaimed technology. Layar claims that every page of the upcoming magazine will contain an interactive augmented reality experience. Print is considered an "old world" medium today. Many people believe that print is an obsolete platform, something that publishers are quick to shrug these accusations off. Print is, in fact, going through a period of rapid evolution powered by technologies like augmented reality. Companies like Layar are using the technology to revitalize print media in the hopes of making it more appealing to tech-savvy consumers.


 **Sacramento Bee:** Last week the U.S. Postal Service launched its latest redesign of the popular Click-N-Ship online tool, making it easier and faster for customers to manage and ship their domestic and international packages. Customers using Click-N-Ship will see a cleaner, more streamlined design that reflects the features of usps.com.


 **CEP News** (Courier-Express-Postal), published by the [MRU Consultancy](#), has reported that:


 The Japanese post is expected to close the current financial year 2011/2012 with losses of around 370m euros. A corresponding business plan for the Japan Post Service Co. was adopted by the government last week.

 The fact remains that Austrian Post has to bear all costs for the conversions of residential letterboxes.


 A new start-up company in Austria distributes unaddressed advertising mails digitally. The Aktionsfinder GmbH (15 employees) offers leaflets on its website and via a smartphone application on a daily basis.

 Česká pošta significantly increased its profits despite a slight decrease in mail volume in the past business year.

 Bpost's IPO is getting more unlikely. Even though major shareholder CVC, who holds a 50% stake minus one share since the middle of 2009 is still committed to dispose its stake, an IPO could be less profitable than expected due to the generally tight economic situation.

 E-commerce in Belgium is expected to record double-digit growth this year again.

 Distanshandel Norge, the association of Norway's mail order companies, established a new trade organisation at the end of February.


 French La Poste named the head of the commission which will hold the 'extensive dialogue' - which was announced in the middle of March (CEP-News 12/12) - over labour conditions with the unions and employees.

The [MRU](#), founded in 1992, is the only consultancy in Europe, which has specialised in the market of courier-, express- and parcel services. For large-scale shippers and CEP-services in particular, the MRU provides interdisciplinary advice for all major questions of the market, as there are for example market entry, product design, organisation, and EDP. [To learn more about the stories reported above, contact CEP News.](#) (We appreciate the courtesy extended by CEP News to help whet your appetite for more of what CEP offers.)




A new report has been posted on the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General website (<http://www.uspsoig.gov>). If you have additional questions concerning a report, please contact Wally Olihovik at 703-248-2201 or Agapi Doulaveris at 703-248-2286.


[Unauthorized Overtime Usage in Field Operations \(Report Number HR-AR-12-003\)](#). Our report determined that the U.S. Postal Service has established procedures to monitor and control unauthorized overtime; however, managers and supervisors did not always follow prescribed procedures. We identified issues relating to Postal Service (PS) Form 1017-B, Unauthorized Overtime Record; PS Form 3996, Carrier – Auxiliary Control; Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS) updates; and controls over time cards.


 **DMM Advisory: April DMM Update** Postal Explorer® (<http://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 April 1, we updated our mailing standards to include the following changes:


- **District Consolidations—ZIP Code Realignments** We revised [608.8.4](#) to align various 3-Digit ZIP Code™ service areas with the appropriate Manager Business Mail Entry District listing. We published this information in the March 8, 2012, Postal Bulletin.
- **Increase eBay Insurance Indemnity Limit** We revised [503.1.0](#) to align the maximum indemnity for all sources of domestic postal insurance to the same \$5000 limit. We published this information in the March 8, 2012, *Postal Bulletin*.
- **Optional Preparation for FSS Zones When Combining Mailings of Standard Mail and Periodicals Flats** We revised [705.15.0](#) to provide an option for mailers authorized to combine mailings of Standard Mail® and Periodicals flats to also prepare these mailings in accordance with the FSS preparation standards under [705.14.0](#), and we revised [708.7.1](#) to describe the new optional endorsement line (OEL) standards when these two mailing options are used together. We published this information in the February 23, 2012, *Postal Bulletin*.
- **Shipper Paid Forwarding—Treatment of Mail** We revised [507.1.0](#) to clarify the treatment of mail for Shipper Paid Forwarding service. We published this information in the February 23, 2012, *Postal Bulletin*.


Our next scheduled DMM update is May 7.


 **Press Release:** Pitney Bowes Inc. has announced that Australia Post has selected the Volly™ secure digital delivery system from Pitney Bowes Inc. to power the Australia Post Digital Mailbox service that is planned to roll out to households across Australia later this year. "All players in the customer communications delivery value chain will be impacted by digital mailbox services as volumes shift, the economy changes, and new competitors, partners, and suppliers emerge," stated Matt Swain, associate director of document outsourcing at research firm InfoTrends. "With today's announcement, Pitney Bowes emerges as an international force in the digital mail delivery market while Australia Post demonstrates its commitment to the space." [EdNote: The U.S. Postal Service had a chance to adopt Volly quite some time ago, but it couldn't quite get beyond the mental impediments it had created for itself. Give me a good idea and there are those at the USPS who can give you a dozen reasons not to go for it.]


 **National Association of Letter Carriers:** On April 12, the National Association of Letter Carriers will hold "Save America's Postal Service" demonstrations outside of Senate offices across the country. They are designed to put pressure on each senator to oppose S. 1789. S. 1789 likely will be brought up in the Senate following the Easter recess, the week that follows the April 12 demonstrations. The timing and impact of these events will be critical in helping us to stop S. 1789 and save America's Postal Service.


 [The Globe and Mail](#): Tablets and e-readers might be the future of the publishing industry, but the print magazine is far from a write-off. Canadian publishers lost \$50-million in newsstand sales in the last year, but an industry poll into consumer habits hints at a brighter future for publishers brave enough to keep investing in their printed products. Data from the Periodical Marketers of Canada to be released Wednesday shows those who do read magazines overwhelmingly prefer to read on paper, despite the ever-widening list of digital alternatives made available by publishers anxious to keep them reading. The publishers will soon have an unexpected ally to help them address the problem, at least in the short term. Canada Post will announce an initiative that would see the postal service handle digital distribution of magazines so the publishers could focus on content, rather than logistics.


 [The Australian](#): A FEDERAL judge has rejected Australia Post's attempt to block an emerging online rival from using a similar name. Australia Post has accused Digital Post Australia of "cashing in" on its brand name as both companies seek to launch online digital mailboxes where users can receive and pay their bills. The postal giant had applied for interlocutory orders to stop DPA using its name, but judge John Middleton this afternoon ruled the name could still be used ahead of a full trial.


 [IsleOfManToday](#): THE ISLE of Man Post Office has announced it will increase the cost of postal products and services later this month. The changes will take effect from April 30. A local letter will rise by 1p meaning the price of a standard letter, up to 100g for Isle of Man addresses, will increase to 38p. The rate for UK-bound standard letters will be rising by 3p to 41p. In the UK a first-class stamp will rise from 46p to 60p. Despite this news, the island's postal rates will continue to be one of the lowest in Europe and the increase is significantly lower than the recent announcements made by other administrations, claim Post Office chiefs.


 [Direct Marketing News](#): Despite Congress's political gridlock, the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) expects action on a comprehensive postal bill to address its financial issues on the Senate floor "within the next two weeks," said Ron Stroman, deputy Postmaster General at the USPS, during the executive briefing session at the National Postal Forum (NPF) in Orlando, Fla. Stroman singled out Nevada Senator Harry Reid as a major supporter in the USPS's efforts to push the bill to the Senate. "We have a good shot of getting the House to take action," Stroman said. "If we get that done, we can get to a conference. In that conference I think we can resolve a lot of our differences."


 [Bluefield Daily Telegraph](#): Why Congress has not yet passed meaningful postal reform legislation — particularly in light of the hundreds of postal facilities targeted for closure — is baffling. Keeping our post offices open is an issue after all that most Americans can agree upon and are supportive of.


 [Oak Park Journal](#): Rather than think large and expand the USPS business plan and profit potential, there are constant demands from the Right that services be cut, which would only reduce earnings and accessibility of services to citizens. The internal resources of the USPS could offer universal access to high-speed broadband, universal email and Internet access, digital scanning and the forwarding of documents.


 [Billings Gazette](#): Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., has asked the postmaster general to delay closing mail-processing facilities until 2013 to accommodate Montanans who vote by mail. *[EdNote: Let me get this straight. First you tell the PMG you think he's overpaid (even though his pay fails to match that of a postal CEO outside the U.S.), and then you ask him to do you a favor. You're kidding, right?]*


 [Hellmail](#): Following a review of pricing at AN Post, the rates for posting items weighing more than 50g, including items sent by Standard and Registered Post services, will change from Tuesday 1st May, 2012. The operator said the majority of letters and postcards would be unaffected by these changes as the basic 55c stamp rate for posting up to 50g in weight remains unchanged. Some rates are being reduced, with significant reductions of up to 50 per cent in tariffs for posting parcels over 5kg in weight nationally and internationally. The new tariffs, which include a range of incentives to help SMEs and to encourage online sales, still place An Post well below the European average in terms of price and amongst the lowest-cost providers for most services.

 [Press Release](#): The Business Journals announced April 2 that small- and mid-sized businesses had named UPS and The UPS Store top brands for 2012.


 [Wall Street Journal](#): John Fahey says it's time for National Geographic Magazine to turn a new page. Digital expansion has become the buzzword for the yellow-bordered flagship of 124-year-old National Geographic Society, long known for its riveting photography, atlas maps and tendency to accumulate in readers' basements. Mr. Fahey says he must continue reinventing the society's oldest asset—stories and pictures—with blogs on the news, a tiered subscription model and offerings for the iPad, Kindle and Nook readers. The 60-year-old former chairman and CEO of Time Life Inc. spoke to The Wall Street Journal about his digital efforts, and why the print magazine may cease to exist someday.


 [BurrusJournal](#): I have heard the rumble about submitting a Resolution to the national convention to rescind the action taken in 2010 to confer Emeritus status in honor of my 37 years of service as an officer. I have not decided how I intend to respond, but in order that there is absolutely no misunderstanding, if there are any APWU members who believe that I do not deserve the honor, I do not want the title. Of the billions of web sites available for inspection, bigoted bullies chose to access burrusjournal.org read it and take exception to its contents. One would think that if they disagree with the contents they would use their time in a more productive way, but they read it and pass judgment. Being incapable of defending a contract that reduces the wages of the next generation of postal employees by 25% and receiving nothing of value in return they desire to stifle debate and threaten retaliation for those who dare dissent. I reject any expectation that I owe a debt of support to the architects of this sell out that exceeds my debt to future employees.


 [Business Daily Africa](#): A change of guard is looming at the financially troubled Postal Corporation of Kenya (PCK) following the board's decision not to renew chief executive Hussein Ali's contract which is set to expire in September. The parastatal's board met last Thursday to review the performance of Major-General (Rtd) Ali and concluded that he had failed to meet the threshold of 70 per cent needed to retain him at the helm of the parastatal.

 [Post & Parcel](#) Americans sent nearly two billion fewer letters in the three months up to the end of December 2011, compared to the same period the previous year.

*April 3, 2012*

 [U.S. Court of Appeals](#) Decision regarding Northern Air Cargo, et al.v. United States Postal Service and Peninsula Airways,Inc.,

 [DMM Advisory](#): **USPS Package Intercept™ Phase Two.** On Wednesday, March 28 the Federal Register published our Domestic Mail Manual (DMM®) final rule that implements the second phase of USPS Package Intercept™ service, introducing an electronic process for commercial customers to request USPS Package Intercept and other related features. The implementation date is June 24, 2012. This final rule invites customers to comment on or before June 15, 2012. The complete final rule Federal Register can be found on the Federal Register website at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-03-28/pdf/2012-7356.pdf> and will be available soon on the Postal Explorer® website at [pe.usps.com](http://pe.usps.com).

 [Federal Times](#): The U.S. Postal Service spent more than \$717 million on unauthorized overtime pay in the past two years, a new audit has found. The agency's inspector general found that lax controls over time cards at some post offices and mail processing plants contributed to the problem. "These conditions created opportunities for employees to receive overtime without prior approval, clock-in for work before their scheduled tour began, and clock-out after their tour ended," the report said.





*["This Week In Postal" In-Style.....A Feminine Perspective.](#)*





*News (and tweets) from the National Postal Forum in Orlando:*


- Deputy Postmaster General Ron Stroman told Forum attendees that the Senate majority leader has vowed to make postal reform the top issue when Congress returns to work. He said he's optimistic that movement of the Senate bill could spur comparable action in the House, which would lead to a House-Senate conference to craft a reconciled bill.
- Mailers are excited with the Postal Service's announcement of "Anywhere Mail," a program that would allow postal permit holders to enter mail anywhere without needing area specific permits.
- Full-service IMb participants will no longer have to pay annual mailing fees.
- The Postal Service is testing the use of smartphones for conducting last scan information, which would greatly facilitate mail service transparency.
- The USPS announced an Intelligent Mail Small Business (IMSB), which would enable small businesses to gain the fullest possible benefit from participating in full service IMb.
- In response to industry requests, the USPS has made available on its RIBBS web site ([https://ribbs.usps.gov/modernservicestandards/ssmaps/find\\_map.cfm](https://ribbs.usps.gov/modernservicestandards/ssmaps/find_map.cfm)) a tool that allows the user to see a geographic map showing the current service standards for each class of mail from each 3-digit origin ZIP Code. This is the same tool that the USPS used to make available by subscription on disk, and helps mailers see service standards in a map format. Kudos to the USPS for making it available! Now we just need the enhancements outlined by MTAC Workgroup 114 to make it an even better planning tool!

 **Infoprint:** Should printers fear digital mailbox services? Digital mailbox services will grow to be an important delivery and payment channel that billers, service bureaus, and vendors will need to develop a strategy around. In fact, we estimate that digital mailbox services will deliver two billion paperless transactional documents to U.S. consumers in 2015 – representing seven percent of all transaction documents, 19 percent of all paperless delivery, and \$323 million in transaction document delivery fees alone.


 **Multichannel Merchant:** The theme of this year's National Postal Forum here at the Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center is innovation and technology. There's even an Innovation & Technology Pavilion inside the exhibit hall. The first session I went to this morning was called, "Innovations in Technology & Delivering Product Information," but when I reached the session room I was told there was no room. Many others wanting to attend this session on mailing innovations and technology were also shut out of the session. When I tried going to another session at the same time that too was "sold out" with standing room only. One attendee said: "I didn't pay \$800 to come down here and get shut out of these sessions." It was an overly packed house for Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe's opening session today, but there were no warnings of the breakout sessions being overcrowded. Attendees are arriving early for these sessions, I was told, so I'll need to arrive plenty early to get a seat in the afternoon sessions I hope to attend. It's great for the U.S. Postal Service and the National Postal Forum that there is so much interest in the forum and these breakout sessions. It's also ironic because so many trade conferences we attend have dwindled in size in recent years and exhibit halls have been sliced in half. But not here at National Postal Forum 2012.


 **Yahoo! News:** Neopost Limited announced today that there are practical ways to mitigate the recently announced Royal Mail price increases without damaging your business.


 **Direct Marketing News:** The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) officially announced at the National Postal Forum in Orlando, Fla., the pilot program of its GoPost parcel delivery lockers, which the USPS began implementing in Northern Virginia in February. While customers typically have packages delivered either to their homes or their work addresses, GoPost, situated in areas with heavy foot traffic, provides a third option. Customers sign up for the service online, decide which GoPost location they want to pick up their package, and are given a keycard and PIN to open the locker when the package is delivered. Customers are notified of the package's delivery through text or email.


 **Direct Marketing News:** The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) maintains an ongoing push to use better data and technologies to improve services amid digital competition, said Patrick Donahoe, Postmaster General and CEO of the USPS, during the keynote at the National Postal Forum in Orlando, Fla., on April 2. "I don't think we're old school, nor do I think we can afford to be," Donahoe said. "We need to change and evolve. I think of mail as a data and technology center." He added that mail, unlike other marketing channels like digital, print and television, is


chiefly about driving ROI. "When it's targeted," he said, "it gets to every household. It is the best way to drive a consumer purchasing decision, the best way to get people to go to the website, and to connect with customers to strengthen brand relations."


 [PRWeb](#): "Pass the Post Provides a Cost Cutting Business Solution With its Latest Relaxed Pricing Amid Price Lifts on Mails and Packages"

 [MarketWatch](#): Dutch package company TNT Express NV , which has agreed to be acquired by its U.S. rival United Parcel Service Inc. UPS -0.06% , said Monday that first-quarter operating results were hit by pricing pressure and declining volumes as it grapples with tough trading conditions in Europe.


 [Wall Street Journal](#): How many times have we heard that this was the worst recession since the Great Depression? That may be true—although the double-dip recession of the early 1980s was about comparable. Less publicized is that our current recovery pales in comparison with most other recoveries, including the one following the Great Depression. The current recovery began in the second half of 2009, but economic growth has been weak. Growth in 2010 was 3% and in 2011 it was 1.7%. Who knows what 2012 will bring, but the current growth rate looks to be about 2%, according to the consensus of economists recently polled by Blue Chip Economic Indicators. Sadly, we have never really recovered from the recession. The economy has not even returned to its long-term growth rate and is certainly not making up for lost ground. No doubt, there are favorable economic numbers to be found, but overall we continue to struggle. Threats of higher taxes, the constantly increasing regulatory burden, the failure to pursue an aggressive trade policy that will open markets to U.S. exports, and the enormous increase in government spending all are growth impediments. Policies have focused on short-run changes and gimmicks.


 [Wall Street Journal](#): Express Scripts Inc. and Medco Health Solutions Inc. won government approval Monday for their \$29.1 billion merger, setting the stage for the creation of a massive new pharmacy-benefit manager that could alter how, and possibly where, patients get their prescription drugs. While Express Scripts and Medco don't run brick-and-mortar pharmacies, they operate their own mail-order facilities.

 [Direct Marketing News](#): While the overall mood at the 2012 National Postal Forum is upbeat and optimistic, if I were less charitable, I would say the real theme isn't as much "Technological Innovation" as it is "Change or Die."


 [At the Postal Regulatory Commission](#): Quarterly Statistics Report  
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/81/81820/Quarterly%20Statistics%20Report%20Quarter%201.%20FY%202012.pdf>


*April 2, 2012*


 [Advertising Age](#): Last month, digital executives from Hearst's 20 or so titles were summoned for an important meeting at the company's Manhattan headquarters. The pressing subject was Pinterest, how all Hearst's magazines are using it, and how they could leverage the platform. Attendees also spent a fair bit of time examining competitors' "pinning" strategies. Pinterest, the social site that lets users post images from the web to their personal "pinboards," has been around since 2010. But brands and publishers' notice of it has been increasing, partly because every image "pinned" links back to its source, offering new traffic to anyone who can capitalize. And the potential was made especially clear when Time Inc.'s Real Simple recently said Pinterest had sent more traffic than Facebook to its site. Real Simple, which has about 206,000 likes on Facebook, already has almost 60,000 followers on Pinterest.

 [New York Times](#): On Monday, the Association of Magazine Media will announce a set of voluntary guidelines developed by representatives from the magazine publishers Bonnier, Condé Nast, Forbes, Hearst, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, Meredith and Time Inc. The guidelines will cover how magazines measure their tablet editions, the vocabulary used in those definitions and time frames for when reader data will be released. The measures include the total number of a publication's digital issues and the number of readers by issue. They will also count the number of times a reader opens a tablet issue (called a session), how much time that reader spends reading each issue and the average number of sessions per reader per issue.




 **American Recycler:** The U.S. Postal Service saved more than \$34 million and generated \$24 million in 2011 by reducing energy, water, consumables, petroleum fuel use and solid waste to landfills, conservation efforts encouraged by the Go Green Forever stamps. The Postal Service recycled 215,000 tons of material, which saved \$14 million in landfill fees and yielded \$24 million in new revenue. Employee lean green teams were key to helping the Postal Service achieve the savings and revenue, part of which included more than a \$20 million decrease in supplies spending from the previous year. Lean green teams help identify and implement low- and no-cost sustainable practices to help the Postal Service meet the following goals by 2015: (1) Reduce facility energy use by 30 percent. (2) Reduce water use by 10 percent. (3) Reduce petroleum fuel use by 20 percent, and (4) Reduce solid waste by 50 percent. The Postal Service plans to deploy lean green teams nationwide in 2012 to help achieve these goals.

 **Something from one of our correspondents:** Talk about precious cargo. When the U.S. Post Office Department, as it was called from 1828 to 1970, introduced its parcel post service in 1913, no one anticipated that among the routine shipments of produce and eggs would be a kid—let alone two. Unlike the appalled postmaster general, who would soon outlaw the practice, the parents of 5-year-old May Pierstorff had no qualms about affixing postage to their bundle of joy in 1914. After all, she was under the 50-pound weight limit, and the 53 cents in stamps stuck to her coat sleeve was a whole lot cheaper than the cost of a train ticket to her grandparents' house. "May actually rode in a mail car like all the other packages for the 73-mile journey from Grangeville, Idaho, to Lewiston, Idaho," says Nancy Pope, a historian at the National Postal Museum. The second child was referenced in the postmaster general's policy memo, Pope says, but that's all we know about the little tyke. Tracking, you see, wasn't introduced until 1999.

 **Rep. Gerry Connolly:** "Connolly and Young Call on Congress to Develop 21st Century USPS Business Model More than 100 Members of Congress sign letter in support of 6 Day Mail, Rural Post Offices, Innovation."

 *At the Postal Regulatory Commission:*

- [Monthly Progress Report on Full-Service Intelligent Mail Participation and Compliance by Commercial First-Class Mail and Standard Mail Customers \(March 30, 2012\)](#)
- [Annual Compliance Report Errata Notice](#)

 **Potomac Local:** Virginia Congressman Gerry Connolly was joined by more than 100 members of Congress in calling on Speaker John Boehner and Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi to maintain robust mail service, including 6 day delivery and rural post offices, and develop a transformational 21st Century business model for the USPS.


Republican Don Young of Alaska joined Connolly in circulating the letter.





The U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General invites you to comment on the following: This week's "Pushing the Envelope" blog topic:


What should be done about overfunding? This is our fifth and final topic in our "Five Elements of a Postal Solution" blog series. Join us this week as our three guest bloggers share their views. This week we have Roger Kodat, former Department of the Treasury official; Jim Sauber, Chief of Staff at the National Association of Letter Carriers; and Elmar Toime, former Chief Executive of New Zealand Post, as our featured guests. See what they have to say and share your own thoughts on our blog. A new audit project has been started on the external website:


**[Negotiated Service Agreements \(NSA\) – 12WG006EN000.](#)** Negotiated Service Agreements (NSAs) are customized and mutually beneficial contractual agreements between the U.S. Postal Service and individual mailers. These agreements provide customized pricing incentives or other arrangements justified by a shift in the mailer's business strategy and mail operations. Through NSAs, customers receive incentives for meeting criteria specified by the Agreement and to increase their use of the mail as a marketing tool, thereby creating more volume and net revenue for the Postal Service as their business grows. According to the Postal Service, experience shows that working directly with mailers present opportunities to improve processes and streamline internal systems and handling methodologies. This helps to identify potential new products and services that may benefit mailers, reduce expenses, and improve service, not only for the NSA partner but for other postal customers as well. Our objective is to obtain information about the NSA process, identify the systems used to monitor performance, and determine if there are areas which warrant further detailed audit work.

 **U.S. Postal Service:** A map of the [National Network Optimization program](#) has been posted on this site. A spreadsheet of the [proposed destination service areas also has been posted here.](#)

 **CNBC:** The UPS Store® network today announced a new relationship with AARP, offering its members valuable discounts at the more than 4,300 The UPS Store locations nationwide. Now AARP members can save 15 percent on the full retail price of eligible products and services while saving 5 percent on UPS shipping services.

 **PR Newswire:** In a keynote address to open the National Postal Forum in Orlando, FL, Patrick R. Donahoe, Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer of the U.S. Postal Service, today discussed the transformative power of technology and innovation in the mailing industry. Speaking at the nation's largest annual gathering for the mailing industry, Donahoe described a technology and data-centric mailing industry poised to benefit from innovations to increase the value of mail for both senders and receivers. "As an industry, we have to retain what differentiates mail and physical delivery, and bring it into the future," said the Postmaster General. "It's astonishing how much is changing in the ways people communicate. Mail has to be a part of these changes."

 **Federal News Radio:** The Congressional Budget Office estimates a postal reform proposal in the House would save about \$20 billion through 2022. The bill (H.R.2309) — introduced last summer by Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Calif.) — would eliminate Saturday mail delivery, close mail processing facilities, increase postal employees' contributions to their health and life insurance premiums, and allow the Postal Service to use nearly \$11 billion in surplus retirement contributions.

 **Post & Parcel:** US Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe said today that the mailing industry had to "embrace change" to strive for a more dynamic future, but that USPS would build on its key strength – its delivery network.




The OIG blog "[Pushing the Envelope](#)" *What should be done about overfunding, overpayment, and other unfunded federal mandates?*





#### *News (and tweets) from the National Postal Forum in Orlando:*


- Alive and well! [@nonprofitpostal](#) Close PMG Donahoe has a new granddaughter! (w initials C.O.D.) [#orlandonpf](#) -well done!
- Alive and well! [@nonprofitpostal](#) The future of mail is integration. [#orlandonpf](#) (i.e. postcards from your phone)
- PMG Donahoe pokes the Hill to get postal legislation done so we can get on with this thing [#orlandonpf](#)
- PostCom [@PostCom2](#) [#USPS](#) announced pilot test called Go Post, starting in NoVA; deliver by customer request - 24 hr postal delivery; text/email notification
- PostCom [@PostCom2](#) Partnership with USPS, eBay has given \$800 million in revenue over the last year. Partnership for Progress Award was awarded to eBay


 **Federal Times:** It's no secret that the U.S. Postal Service is looking at shutting more than 3,200 post offices as part of a major downsizing initiative. Less known is that 20 privately run post offices are also on the chopping block, but in this case because of a labor agreement with the American Postal Workers Union. Under its latest contract with the APWU signed last year, the Postal Service agreed to close 20 "contract postal units" (CPUs) or else insource the work "as soon as practicable." Those units are in New York, Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and several other states. Given that there are more than 3,000 contract postal units nationwide, it's not clear why these were singled out, but several Republican members of Congress aren't happy about it. The 20 CPUs in question provide "handsome levels of revenue" to the Postal Service "in a more cost-effective manner than traditional post office facilities," Reps. Gus Bilirakis and Steve Southerland, both of Florida, and John Carter and Ted Poe of Texas wrote in a letter earlier this month to Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe and APWU President Cliff Guffey.


*[EdNote: Ok. Which "underpaid" Member of Congress will volunteer to resign his or her seat and take on the job of Postmaster General. The good news? You might be paid more. The bad news? You've got 535 "congressional directors" who believe they know how to do the job better than you, and they'll interfere in just about anything you want to do. Anyone foolish enough to try?]*


 **BusinessWire:** [Click2Mail](#), an industry leader in cloud-based hybrid mail services (**and a PostCom member company**), is expanding its mail fulfillment service to an additional 223 million delivery points in Europe. Through a unique partnership with the French postal service La Poste, Click2Mail's clients will now enjoy "one-click" mailing capabilities into France and the rest of Europe. Customers will have the convenience of submitting their documents and lists via Click2Mail's web portal to Maileva and having Click2Mail manage next-day printing, folding and posting in France by Docapost, a La Poste subsidiary.

 **The Press-Enterprise:** The United States Postal Service faces many daunting challenges, the salary of the postmaster general not being one of them. Still, Congress may soon consider legislation to drastically cut USPS executive salaries. The service needs a business visionary to return it to both profitability and relevance and should pay what is required to attract top executive talent. Congress should therefore defeat this short-sighted measure.

 **Delmarva Daily Times:** The U.S. Postal Service is looking for ways to make ends meet in an increasingly hostile economic environment. From a business standpoint, it makes no sense to take austerity measures that will slow delivery times and further alienate already dissatisfied customers who complain about slow deliveries; this is a recipe for failure.

 **Washington Post:** This was supposed to be the week Congress finally got down to the business of fixing the U.S. Postal Service. It didn't happen. A Democratic attempt to tie Republicans to big oil companies, lingering issues with federal highway funding and the start of the annual budget process tied up most of the week, upending plans to begin debate in the Senate over a bipartisan plan to overhaul how USPS manages and delivers the mail. There will be roughly one month left when the House and Senate return from their two-week Easter and Passover recess to complete postal reform before the end of a moratorium on closing up to 223 processing centers and thousands of post offices. At the request of lawmakers, USPS agreed to wait until May 15 to begin the closings process, which is expected to start in late May, be suspended in late August for the election and holiday-mailing season and then resume again next January. The sites set to close employ thousands of people, and Sens. Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.), Joe Manchin (D-W. Va.) and Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), among others, are especially concerned with the fates of processing facilities in their states, because many workers may lose jobs or be assigned to neighboring states.

 **Human Events:** It's another month in Washington, and it's yet another bailout. This time, taxpayers will be tapped for another \$41 billion to subsidize the United States Postal Service, a flagging entity that is struggling against the tide of modern technology, despite its competitive advantage in the mail-carrying business.

 **Attention PostalOne!® Users: PostalOne!® Release 30.0.0** deployment was completed on schedule today, April 1, 2012 at 9:00 a.m. CDT including a new client version of Mail.dat available for download that is required for use with this release. There was an issue with electronic Verification System (eVS) data maintenance that is being resolved. That issue status is being communicated to eVS mailers in a separate email notification. **Reminder: Test Environment for Mailers (TEM) PostalOne!** Release 30.0 will deploy to the Test Environment for Mailers (TEM) on Monday, April 2, 2012. *PostalOne!* TEM will be unavailable from 4:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. CDT. If you have any additional questions please contact the Help Desk at 800-522-9085.

*April 1, 2012*




News from the National Postal Forum in Orlando:

- The USPS today at the "IMb Advanced Users" session at the National Postal Forum (NPF) announced that tomorrow it will launch more extensive pilot of its Mail Anywhere Pay Anywhere offering. Pilot

participation criteria include that the mailer must demonstrate over some period of time (not yet specified by USPS) that it is Full-Service compliant with accurate electronic documentation submitted. More details are expected from the USPS later in the NPF.

- Mailers attending today's IMb Advanced Users session at the National Postal Forum (NPF) applauded the USPS for a process that allows mail service providers to send the USPS an Excel spreadsheet with their mail owner client company name and address in order to obtain CRIDs/MIDs for multiple mail owners in a batch process for Full-Service IMb. Previously the information would have to be obtained in a manual time-consuming process with no batch capability. Information on the two processes available from USPS can be found on the USPS web site at <https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=intellmailmailidapp>
- The USPS at the IMb Advanced Users session at the National Postal Forum (NPF) today said that it plans to launch nationally its eInduction program in October 2012. The USPS also said it hopes to begin offering a Seamless Acceptance option for small volume mailers as soon as the end of 2012, since there is less financial risk to the USPS than with larger mailers. The USPS said that perhaps by early 2013 it could bring on some larger mailers into a Seamless Acceptance option.

 [The Times of India](#): The department of post (DoP) is planning to set up 1,000 automated teller machines (ATMs) across six states -- Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu -- under its ongoing modernisation plan, according to a top official.