



Association for Postal Commerce

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

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

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Postal News for April 2015


April 30, 2015


 **The Mac Observer:** Apple and IBM are partnering with Japan's postal service to help monitor the welfare of elderly people in the country by using iPads. The partnership will enhance Japan's service where postal workers check in on elderly people along their routes by using iPads running IBM software. Currently postal workers check in on the elderly on their delivery routes as a paid service. Putting iPads in the hands of senior citizens will make it easier to check their status and, thanks to the apps IBM is developing, will help them stay in shape and eat properly, too. Japan Post Group is rolling out the iPads in a test program, and if successful, will expand to include up to 5 million customers by 2020. The program could be offered in other countries, too, depending on how it plays out in Japan.


At the Postal Regulatory Commission:

- R2015-4 Notice of Revision to United States Postal Service Notice of Market-Dominant Price Adjustment, Attachment A, Part II -- Errata
http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92176/MCS_Errata_4_30_15.pdf
- R2015-4 Order No. 2461 - Order on First-Class Mail Promotions and Related Mail Classification Schedule Changes
http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92180/Order_2461.docx
http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92180/Order_2461.pdf


 **Reuters:** PostNL, the Netherlands-based postal company, said on Thursday it had ended talks with LDC on expanding PostNL's "Whistl" subsidiary in Britain to include broader "end-to-end" services. In late 2013 PostNL announced plans for LDC to fund a major expansion of Whistl's services to challenge Royal Mail. LDC was to have taken a 40 percent stake in a joint venture encompassing Whistl's current activities.

 **GlobeNewswire:** The Finnish post's name of the company was changed to Posti Group Corporation on January 1, 2015. From January 1, 2015, the names of the business groups are: Postal Services, Parcel and Logistics Services, Itella Russia and OpusCapita. Since the beginning of 2015, Posti Group Corporation's result is reported on the basis of the new business groups. The Group's net sales decreased by 7.3% and amounted to EUR 435.9 (470.0) million in January–March. Mail delivery volumes continued to decline substantially, while parcel services grew. In the logistics market, the situation remained weak and competition continued to be intense. Exchange rates depreciated. Net sales decreased by 0.8% in Postal Services, by 10.6% in Parcel and Logistics Services and by 33.2% in Itella Russia, and increased by 0.5% in OpusCapita. Measured in local currency, Itella Russia's net sales decreased by 1.2%.

 **Post & Parcel:** Summarising PostNord's January-March performance, President and CEO Håkan Ericsson has reported that "the market is characterized by continued decline in the mail business, especially in Denmark, while e-commerce is showing strong growth". Mail volumes declined year-on-year by 7% in the first quarter. Sweden's volumes decline by 5%, but Denmark saw a 15% drop. A bright spot of the quarter was the e-commerce segment which, said Ericsson, "continues to show rapid growth", while business to consumer (B2C) parcel volumes rose 21% year-on-year. Ericsson also reported that PostNord signed "several substantial service logistics contracts for home delivery of food groceries, laundry and other consumer items", as well as new parcel delivery contracts.

 **Wall Street Journal:** The dollar tumbled toward its biggest one-day decline against the euro in more than a month, as a lackluster reading on U.S. growth sowed more doubts about the prospect of higher interest rates this year. At the start of 2015, many investors and economists had pegged higher rates by midyear. Now, expectations for an increase have been pushed out to late 2015 and beyond. Higher rates make a currency more attractive for investors.

April 29, 2015

 **CBC:** The head of the union representing postal workers says the federal government's plan to modernize sick leave for public servants sounds like déjà vu. Denis Lemelin, president of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, said the relatively new sick leave system at Canada Post hasn't worked out for his members or the workplace. "It changed a lot of things," said Lemelin. "It's the fact that it's personal days and what is happening is people are coming to work sick, so that's the reality." Canada Post negotiated a new sick leave policy that was implemented in 2013 after a labour dispute, during which sick leave was one of the key issues. CUPW members went from being allowed 15 sick days a year to the current system of five personal days, Lemelin said. Once those five days are used up, postal workers must then apply to an insurance company for short term disability.




Office of the Inspector General:

- [Fiscal Year 2014 Postal Service Selected Financial Activities and Accounting Record](#)

What The OIG Found. The Postal Service's accounting transactions were fairly stated and account balances conformed to the general classification of accounts. Also, the Postal Service complied with all material laws and regulations tested. We did not propose any financial statement adjustments or identify any issues material to the financial statements or that would affect the overall adequacy of internal controls. However, controls over eTravel reimbursement claims, high dollar manual invoices, rejected invoice batches, and capital property disposals were not always designed or operating effectively. Also, management did not always properly test or document their key control examinations of high dollar invoices and rejected invoice batches. As a result, there is an increased risk that control failures are not detected and reported. The Postal Service could have potentially recorded \$54.9 million in rejected invoice batches in an improper accounting period for fiscal year 2014.

What The OIG Recommended. We recommended management reinforce to all reimbursement claim approvers the requirement to include canceled checks or rental receipts for lease expense reimbursement claims. We also recommended management establish procedures to review rejected invoices for Prompt Payment Act interest payment consideration. Further, we recommended management revise key control language and test procedures over capital property disposals and rejected invoice batches to ensure they reflect the intent of the control and contain sufficient detail to determine whether the control is functioning efficiently. Finally, we recommended management reinforce to testers to document control test results based only on test procedure requirements.

 **BGN News:** An employee of the Turkish National Post and Telegraph Directorate (PTT) who stormed a branch in Ankara on Wednesday taking one hostage and injuring another, surrendered to police after a standoff.

 **Post & Parcel:** Polish Post has signed an agreement granting access to its delivery network to industry rivals InPost. The move is required by Polish law, as in other European Union Member States, where the designated

universal postal service provider is obliged to provide other firms access to certain parts of its delivery network. The requirement is designed to spur competition in an industry that started out as largely publicly owned and therefore massively dominated by the state-owned incumbent universal service providers. The Polish Post-InPost agreement grants InPost access to thousands of roadside mailboxes used particularly in rural or isolated communities.

 **From the Federal Register:**

Postal Regulatory Commission	
NOTICES	
New Postal Products ,	
23825–23826 [2015–09943]	[TEXT] [PDF]
23824–23825 [2015–09944]	[TEXT] [PDF]
23825 [2015–09945]	[TEXT] [PDF]
The Postal Service could have potentially recorded \$54.9 million in rejected invoice batches in an improper accounting period for fiscal year 2014. What The OIG Recommended We recommended management reinforce to all reimbursement claim approvers the requirement to include canceled checks or rental receipts for lease expense reimbursement claims. We also recommended management establish procedures to review rejected invoices for Prompt Payment Act interest payment consideration.	
Postal Service	
NOTICES	
Product Changes:	
Priority Mail and First-Class Package Service Negotiated Service Agreement ,	
23826 [2015–09960]	[TEXT] [PDF]

April 28, 2015



Office of the Inspector General:

- [Postal Service Management of CBRE Real Estate Transactions](#)


Background. Under a June 2011 contract, CBRE Group, Inc. (CBRE) is the sole provider of real estate management services for the U.S. Postal Service. These services include marketing and sale of properties and conducting lease negotiations. In fiscal years 2012 and 2013, CBRE marketed 49 property sales totaling about \$118 million and conducted 1,698 lease negotiations. The U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) issued two reports on the Postal Service’s contract with CBRE and a third addressing the Postal Service’s historic properties. This report, which considers Postal Service management of CBRE real estate transactions, is the fourth in a series evaluating Postal Service real estate management. Our objective is to assess the Postal Service’s internal controls over CBRE real estate property sales and lease negotiations.


What The OIG Found. The Postal Service could improve its management of CBRE real estate transactions. Management continues to allow CBRE to collect commissions from lessors for lease negotiations in addition to payments from the Postal Service based on performance targets for lease renewals. Management also allows dual agency transactions, enabling CBRE to represent and negotiate for both the Postal Service and buyers or lessors. These actions are inherently risky and create conflicts of interest whereby CBRE may not negotiate property sales and lease transactions in the Postal Service’s best interest or may capture opposing party fees from the Postal Service.


What The OIG Recommended. We recommended management terminate and recompet the current real estate services contract. In addition, we recommended management, in the interim, modify the CBRE contract to prohibit CBRE from collecting commissions from opposing parties and prohibit dual agency representation. We also recommended management, in the interim, notify lessors they are not required to pay commissions. We also recommended management train employees to comply with the requirement to


review appraisals independent of CBRE and implement revisions to the appraisal review checklist to ensure it is sufficient to detect technical errors in appraisals. Further, we recommended that management update record management requirements, implement Postal Service policy that requires employees to consistently enter real estate transactions into the facilities management system, and instruct the contracting officer to ensure the proper certification of payment authorizations.

- [The Curious Ups and Downs of Mail Volume Declines](#) The Midwest is the nation's "breadbasket." New England has its Patriots. Appalachia loves its bluegrass music. And it never rains in Southern California. We all associate certain things with different regions of the country. Now, it seems, one of those things is mail volume. The decline in mail volume may be more nuanced than some realized, data in our new white paper suggests. Take the drop in First-Class Mail (FCM), for instance. The math clearly shows that from fiscal years 1995 to 2013, FCM single-piece volume fell by a total 61 percent nationally. But a close look into the geographic details reveals the rate of FCM decline varies widely by location. So widely, in fact, that the U.S. Postal Service should keep it in mind as it right-sizes its network and considers new products and services. Everything's bigger in Texas, right? In Dallas, the percent of FCM volume lost was far greater than 61 percent, while in other areas – like Charleston, WV – it was close to zero. Moreover, the rate of decline is slowing or has even stopped in many of the areas that have lost the most mail volume. The details are all in [Declines in U.S. Postal Service Mail Volume Vary Widely Across the United States](#).

 [Forbes](#): Approved last fall by the Postal Regulatory Commission, USPS started a San Francisco beta-test grocery delivery service by partnering with local grocery stores. This move is even stranger because the federal government itself hasn't been exclusively using the post office on its core business of mail delivery: \$17 billion of federal money was spent with FedEx FDX +1.31% and UPS since 2000 (source: OpenTheBooks.com). So if the federal government can't trust USPS to deliver mail why should we ask them to deliver milk and eggs? USPS will be competing directly against entrepreneurs who are already filling that space. But if the postal service delivery service is too slow (who wants stale produce?) the market won't force them out. They'll keep providing bad service anyway. It's this lack of accountability – and transparency – that's bad for society on all levels from consumers to taxpayers to entrepreneurs.

 [Wall Street Journal](#): United Parcel Service Inc. said Tuesday that first-quarter earnings rose 14%, boosted by new pricing initiatives and strong growth in its domestic segment. Earnings beat expectations, though revenue fell short because of the stronger dollar and lower fuel surcharges.

 [Wall Street Journal](#): The Federal Reserve's rate-setting committee is meeting this week, and investors widely expect the Fed to hold rates unchanged. Only a few months ago, at the start of 2015, yield-starved investors thought they saw a light at the end of the tunnel. The Fed was expected as early as June to starting lifting rates from near zero, where they have been since 2008. Many thought a rate boost by September was likely. But recent weak data on U.S. growth and inflation have yet again pushed back expectations for when the Fed will start raising rates. Federal-funds futures, used to place bets on the Fed's interest-rate policy, show that investors now don't see a greater-than-even chance the Fed will raise rates until December.


 [Reuters](#): Dutch logistics group TNT Express on Tuesday reported a first-quarter operating loss and lower comparable revenues and said the coming year would be difficult as it prepares to be taken over in 2016 by larger American rival FedEx. The company made an operating loss of 11 million euros (\$11.96 million), partly because of pricing pressures, especially in its core European international markets, calendar effects, ongoing investments and a decline in fuel surcharges. TNT Express said it expected trading conditions would remain tough, especially in Europe, during the rest of 2015. It said it expected restructuring and other charges of between 25 and 30 million euros in the second quarter.


 [CNET](#): Officeworks is taking aim at Australia Post with a new parcel delivery service known as Mailman, offering parcel delivery across Australia, with one- to two-day delivery on offer between most capital cities. The service is driven out of Officeworks' stores, with the retailer promising strong service thanks to late night and weekend opening times -- something that Australia Post currently doesn't offer. The tech and office supplies chain is also promising a one-stop-shop for parcel services, thanks to its range of parcel packaging, as well as print-at-home delivery labels.


Mailers' Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC)

Visibility/Service Performance Measurement/Addressing Focus Session Webinar Wednesday, May 6 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (EDT)

The Visibility/Service Performance Measurement Focus Group will host a webinar for MTAC members that will include all of the regular updates normally given during the focus group meetings at MTAC. We look forward to seeing you at the next MTAC meeting at the National Postal Forum on Wednesday, May 20. Please note the MTAC meeting at NPF is a condensed meeting. This pre-MTAC webinar is your opportunity to receive the updates normally provided at the quarterly meetings. Instructions for participating appear below: Attendee Information US/Canada Attendee Dial-in: (866) 381-9870 Conference ID: 37548896 Attendee Direct URL: <https://usps.webex.com/usps/onstage/g.php?MTID=e350e732ad24df3c4490ba457010d68ea>

 **Greenfield Daily Reporter**: The Supreme Court will consider a dispute over the time limits for filing certain claims of employment discrimination. The justices on Monday agreed to hear an appeal from a former Colorado postmaster who says the U.S. Postal Service retaliated against him after he claimed he was passed over for a promotion because he is black.


 **KTVA**: A small team of federal law enforcement agents with the United States Postal Inspection Service is working to keep alcohol out of the mail. It's one of the oldest law enforcement agency in the country, a group with a unique mission that chases after each suspicious package. Anchorage-based Postal Inspector Alan Damron spends his waking hours trying to stop bottles from reaching places where they will do harm. It's completely illegal to send alcohol through US mail.

 **NBC Bay Area News**: The United States Postal Service (USPS) changed an outdated emergency policy in January following an NBC Bay Area investigation that exposed critical delays in a life and death situation at a mail processing facility in Oakland. The policy, dating back to the 1970s, advised postal service employees not to call 911 first when they witnessed a medical emergency and instead instructed them to call the onsite postal police unit. The policy stated "Only the postal police are to initiate the 911 procedure." The USPS adopted a new 911 policy in the Oakland facility at the beginning of the year. The first line now states "In an emergency, anyone should immediately call 911."


April 27, 2015





National Association of Letter Carriers: The annual NALC Letter Carriers Food Drive will be held on Saturday, May 9, 2015 ***Frequently Asked Questions about the "Stamp Out Hunger" Food Drive***

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


- **Clarification of Content Eligibility for Standard Mail Marketing Parcels.** We revised [243](#) to reaffirm basic eligibility standards for Standard Mail Marketing Parcels. We published this information in the April 2, 2015, Postal Bulletin.
- **Premium Forwarding Service Commercial.** We revised [507.3.0](#) to update the online payment option for Premium Forwarding Service Commercial® (PFS-Commercial™) service. We published this information in the April 16, 2015, Postal Bulletin.
- **Updated Restrictions—Freely Associated States (FAS).** We revised [503.1.0](#) and [608.2.0](#) to clarify the references to restrictions for Freely Associated States. We published this information in the April 16, 2015, *Postal Bulletin*.


 [Washington Post](#): The U.S. mail is slowing down. In January, the Postal Service eliminated overnight delivery for local first-class letters that used to arrive the next day. Anywhere from 20 percent to half of the rest of the first-class mail sent every day now takes an extra day of delivery time. Service standards have been relaxing since 2012, when the volume of first-class overnight mail decreased and that of two- and three-day mail grew. The changes are a response to declining mail volume and the resulting excess capacity in processing plants, and they've allowed the financially strapped Postal Service to save \$865 million with the closure of a first round of 150 plants and another \$750 million by shuttering 82 more starting in January. The Postal Service calls the delivery changes "Network Rationalization." Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.), who serves on the Senate committee that oversees the Postal Service, has long complained that her constituents are not getting mail in three days but in four or five days or longer.


 [Independent](#): An Post could end up throwing away letters that don't have enough postage paid on them under new terms it wants to impose on customers. And consumers could end up insuring letters to carry cash but get nothing back if the mail gets lost. The regulator Comreg has highlighted a number of serious concerns it has with new terms and conditions proposed by An Post. It says that some of the new conditions An Post wants to impose are very heavily weighted against customers and would have a "significantly adverse effect on postal service users". In a consultation paper on the new postal terms and conditions, Comreg highlights particular issues where consumers want to send cash or vouchers in the post.

 [Ghanaweb](#): The Postal and Courier Services Regulatory Commission (PCSRC) has expressed concern about the operations of illegal operators in the courier business and has described it as a key challenge hampering business. "There are a number of operators clandestinely operating courier operations and the Commission has on numerous occasions invited them to regularize their activities but to no avail".


April 26, 2015


 [Roll Call](#): For those with professional lives centered on the Hill, there is an understandable desire to see evidence Congress has found the bottom of its dysfunctional ditch and is beginning to climb out the other side. But there's a downside to such eagerness. Overinflating the meaning of a handful of modest and historically routine accomplishments will tempt lawmakers to rest on laurels they have not yet earned. Declarations about signs of healthy legislative life this spring are mostly overwrought, somewhat premature and potentially counterproductive.


 [The Hill](#): Top lawmakers are laughing off the possibility that the U.S. Postal Service might rely on drones in the coming years. Members of Congress who concentrate on postal issues generally agree that the Postal Service could stand to bring its vehicle fleet into the 21st century. But they also said they hadn't heard of the drone proposal. Once informed, they didn't seem to believe there's much potential in a marriage bringing together drones and USPS, which has been criticized for being slow to adapt to the new challenges and opportunities brought by technology. "Would that be for air mail?" Sen. Tom Carper (Del.), the top Democrat on the Senate committee that oversees USPS, said with a laugh. "Quote me on that, O.K.?" Say when asked, Carper said: "Would that be for air mail?" Obviously not for snail mail." Carper added that he's been meeting with other senators about postal issues, with an upcoming roundtable to focus on the agency's future challenges. Still, he insisted: "I wouldn't put my money on the Postal Service using drones any time soon." Rep. Stephen Lynch (Mass.), a senior Democrat on the House Oversight Committee, had a similar take, even as he too knocked the Postal Service for being behind the times technologically. "There are things I need to worry about. And there are things that are very unlikely to happen," Lynch said, making it clear that drones delivering packages for the Postal Service fell in the second category.

 [The Independent](#): Angry postal and telecoms workers are trying to cut their union's ties to Labour, which could blow a £500,000 hole in the cash-strapped party's finances. Several motions to the Communications Workers Union (CWU) conference in Bournemouth have called for a review of the 200,000-strong group's links with Labour and a reduction in affiliation fees. These fees give trade unions certain rights within the party, such as selecting members of the powerful National Executive Committee. Postal workers do not believe that Labour fought hard enough to prevent the privatisation of Royal Mail in late 2013, which some MPs have argued was sold for up to £1bn less than its correct value.


April 25, 2015


 [Victorville Daily Press](#): Residents are continuing to speak out about what they suspect is internal mail theft at local post offices, and they are taking their grievances to state senators this month, Phelan resident Mike Simpson Rogers said Friday. Rogers has been vocal about his unhappiness with the community's postal service, and has held two meetings and a protest to raise awareness. He previously told the Daily Press that he is frustrated with not receiving packages, receiving them late and having them damaged. He, as well as roughly one dozen residents who have been attending meetings, have voiced concerns over not receiving mail in their post office boxes. Rogers held a meeting April 23 to discuss the issues before he sends signed letters to the Postmaster General in Washington, D.C. The first meeting was held at the Rose O'Leary Community Center on April 9, and was followed by a protest at the post office on April 15. "It's really getting ridiculous," Rogers said Friday. "There was a lady at the (April 23) meeting who said she found her neighbor's government checks on the ground nearly 2 miles away from her home. I don't know if that was theft, I don't know what's going on, but something's going on in this town and it's apparent."


 [JOC](#): It should be no surprise that executives at FedEx and UPS would be fed up with the false reports of their business model being disrupted by developments with app-based, Uber-like models for same-day and next-day delivery of online retail orders. The buzz around venture-funded delivery apps such as Shutl, Deliv, Roadie and Kanga, as well as the U.S. Postal Service delivering on Saturdays and Sundays for Amazon, is based on misgivings and lack of understanding of the capabilities the FedEx and UPS parcel networks have to offer competitive last-mile service. E-commerce growth, with a compound annual growth rate of 14 percent since 2008 — much of it driven by free shipping — certainly can't be ignored. For UPS, residential deliveries have soared from 20 percent to 45 percent of total volume in the last several years, impacting productivity of a high-wage, union work force and requiring investment in high fixed-cost sortation equipment. For FedEx and UPS, the surge in residential deliveries and larger packages driven by online orders is changing the cost structure, turning pickup and delivery routes into mainly delivery routes, and creating an imbalance in loads moving between hubs and local facilities.

 [Government Executive](#): Postal management is looking for vehicles with an array of specifications, ranging from a less boxy design to stronger windshield wipers to better cup holders. Lawmakers in both chambers of Congress, however, have focused on a different priority for the next crop of USPS automobiles: efficiency. Rep. Jared Huffman, D-Calif., this week introduced the Federal Leadership in Energy Efficient Transportation (FLEET) Act, which would require the Postal Service to reduce its petroleum consumption by 2 percent each year over the next 10 years. The new standards would cut USPS' fuel usage by 250 million gallons and save \$350 million in that period, Huffman said, while turning the agency into a "global leader in efficiency and innovation." The vast majority of the vehicles are those designed for delivery, which -- according to a 2009 inspector general report -- average just 10 miles per gallon. That report suggested the Postal Service could convert some of its fleet to electric vehicles. On Thursday, three Democratic senators wrote a letter to Brennan urging the agency to "invest in cutting-edge vehicle improvements that will reduce emissions, decrease accidents, and save lives in communities across the country." Sens. Cory Booker, N.J., Brian Schatz, Hawaii, and Gary Peters, Mich., all members of the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, asked Brennan how Congress could assist the Postal Service in acquiring a more efficient fleet, as well as what steps the agency is taking to ensure the new vehicles are equipped with better fuel economy.


April 24, 2015


 [Marcopolis](#): "Interview with Mamadou Konate, Chief Executive Officer of La Poste de Côte d'Ivoire"


 [Post & Parcel](#): SP Express, a US-based provider of logistics and order fulfilment services, has announced a partnership with APC Postal Logistics. The partnership allows SP Express to offer ecommerce and other merchants cost-effective outbound direct-to-consumer parcel shipping options for reaching over 230 international markets.


 [900CHML](#): Earlier this week, the City of Hamilton passed a by-law to restrain Canada Post from installing hundreds of "supermailboxes" this year across the mountain. Canada Post has issued a statement, saying it's continuing the installation of the mailboxes in the City of Hamilton. The crown corporation says it has the exclusive jurisdiction over postal services in Canada and has the legal authority to install Community Mailboxes on


municipally-owned property. This morning Canada Post has filed notice in the Ontario Superior Court of Hamilton asking the Court to declare the By-law invalid.

 [Congressional Research Service](#): "Franking Privilege: Historical Development and Options for Change" -- In attempting to balance a democratic need for the franking privilege against charges of abuse, Congress has routinely amended the franking statutes. In general, the franking privileges granted to Members at any given point in time can be defined by five dimensions: who is entitled to frank mail, what is entitled to be franked, how much material can be sent, where franked material can be sent, and when franked material be sent. Historically, changes to the franking privilege typically have not altered all of these dimensions at once, resulting in a wide variety of legislative arrangements of the franking privilege. Similarly, proposed options for future legislative changes may involve altering some, but not all, of these dimensions.


 [Jamaica Observer](#): Portfolio minister for the postal service, Phillip Paulwell says no decision has been made to cut the number of post offices and agencies across the island, even though Postmaster General Michael Gentles has indicated the urgency of rationalisation to stem mounting losses. Paulwell said extensive consultations were necessary with all stakeholders, including members of parliament and residents from the communities that would be affected. "We are very conscious of those persons who depend on the post office now. So whatever we do we have to make sure that we cater to those needs. We expect that, shortly, Cabinet will be properly briefed, and a decision taken," he said.


 [DC Velocity](#): The U.S. Postal Service is testing a program to provide fulfillment services to small to mid-size e-commerce businesses, a move that could expand USPS' offerings beyond the handling and delivery of mail and allow it to join the ranks of global posts that have long since expanded into nontraditional segments. USPS has opened a warehouse outside of Chicago where it is "conducting an operational test to determine the feasibility of providing prestaged warehousing delivery services for third-party companies," according to Sarah A. Ninivaggi, a USPS spokeswoman. In a statement to DC Velocity, Ninivaggi said the initiative allows USPS to "explore a new way of providing value and convenience for consumers by taking advantage of our existing processing and delivery network" and to "respond to the changing needs of consumers while enhancing the overall delivery experience." The pilot program began several months ago, she said. Details of the program are unknown. However, USPS may be following a template laid out by the quasigovernmental agency's Office of Inspector General (OIG), which, among other duties, serves as a de facto marketing advisor. In two reports, one in February 2014 and the other this January, the OIG suggested several ways the USPS could expand its value proposition and capture more of the business-to-consumer traffic being driven by e-commerce's phenomenal growth. The OIG proposed that USPS consider pursuing the market for "continuity shipping," where online orders automatically get replenished and shipped as parcels to the same customers on a repeat basis. Products such as mail-order pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, pet supplies, and beer and wine would be ideal candidates for this form of shipping, and USPS, as a parcel carrier, would be well positioned to advise e-merchants on fulfillment and delivery solutions, the OIG said. It pegged the continuity shipping market at about \$7.6 billion in calendar year 2014, or 2.5 percent of total U.S. online sales. The market could grow 30 to 40 percent annually over the next 5 to 10 years as repeat online customers transition to new subscription services, the OIG said.

 [Global Post](#): A new Australian national robotic postal sorting system is sending up to 40,000 parcels to the wrong address each day, it was reported on Friday. The 500-million-Australian dollar (389-million-U.S. dollars) machines were installed at Australia Post centers late last year, but since then staff and casual employees have been paid an enormous amount in overtime salaries to keep the postal system working. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) said it had seen documents indicating up to 40,000 parcels - 20 percent - were going the wrong addresses each day.

 [Direct Marketing News](#): In its April 16 filing with the Postal Regulatory Commission revising requests for certain market dominant rate approvals, the U.S. Postal Service announced that it would proceed on schedule with the first of four planned promotions for 2015. The Earned Value Promotion, reports USPS, will run from May 1 through July 31. This program is intended to reverse some of the decline in First Class mailings. To qualify, mailers that include Business Reply or Courtesy Reply pieces in their direct mail campaigns will receive a postage credit of each piece returned to them. The Postal Service also expressed its intent to move forward with the planned effective


dates for three other discount programs that incent use of color, mobile integration, and technologies such as augmented reality in direct mail campaigns.

 **Post & Parcel:** DPD Germany has taken a big step in the expansion of its parcel shop network, through a partnership with one of the country's largest clothing retailers. The move has added DPD ParcelShops to more than 1,300 branches run by NKD across Germany. DPD said the partnership was one of its most important for the network of parcel collection points.

 **Helsinki Times:** Posti will next Tuesday begin consultative negotiations with a total of 477 employees at postal outlets with the objective of making a maximum of 380 permanent employees redundant between 2015 and 2018. The cost cuts are necessitated by a service network overhaul planned by Posti. The provider of postal and logistics services is set to add roughly one hundred new service points to its service network in the near future. As part of the overhaul, it will transfer some services provided by its own outlets to corporate partners to be able to offer longer opening hours to customers.

April 23, 2015

 **PostCom Members !! The latest issue of the [PostCom Bulletin](#) is now available online.** 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. See what you've been missing.

 **Slate:** Swiss Post, Switzerland's postal service, wants to make drone mail delivery happen. For real. The service is partnering with delivery drone company Matternet to run a pilot this summer in which ONE drones will carry pieces of mail weighing up to 2.2 pounds for up to 12 miles.

At the Postal Regulatory Commission:

- **RM2015-7 Order No. 2455** - Order Granting United Parcel Service, Inc. Motion for Issuance of Commission Information Request No. 1 and Revising Procedural Schedule <http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92148/Order%20No.%202455.docx>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92148/Order No. 2455.pdf>

"United Parcel Service, Inc. (UPS) requests the Commission to issue an information request to the Postal Service for a "Crosswalk File" that un.masks all ZIP Codes in the Postal Service's nationwide Form 3999 data set. UPS also seeks access to the Crosswalk File for its outside counsel and consultants, subject to the same protective conditions that applied to their earlier access to non-public material. Id. at 5. The Commission, having reviewed the supplemental information provided by UPS and an extensive set of pleadings, grants the UPS Motion for the reasons discussed below . . ."

INDUSTRY ALERT


Keeping up with all the news affecting the mailing industry can be a bit challenging at times, but we're here to help with that. [Mail Spoken Here](#) is brought to you by the Office of Industry Engagement and Outreach, Consumer and Industry Affairs; bringing you the latest news on mail coming from the Postal Service. It is our intent to provide an ongoing news recap of all mailing requirements, Federal Register notices, Postal Bulletin articles, and webinars. We'll keep you posted on any comment-period requirements, and let you in on upcoming events or changes to standards when the information is available.

INDUSTRY ALERT

USPS Shipping Products and Services Webinar Series April 28, 2015, 11a.m. EDT – Collect on Delivery Electronic Funds Transfer Join us as the Postal Service continues to host its series of informational webinars on a variety of products and services. The webinars will focus on service

enhancements, features, benefits, how to get started, and onboarding information to acquire the knowledge and skills to effectively use the service.


Tuesday, April 28, 2015 at 11a.m. EDT – Collect on Delivery (COD) Electronic Funds Transfer Learn about the option to obtain Electronic Funds Transfer, in lieu of a Postal Service money order, for remittance for COD payments made by cash. Speaker: Evonne Thomas, Product Development Specialist Participant information is provided below: Tuesday, April 28, 2015 (11:00 a.m. EDT) Collect on Delivery Electronic Funds Transfer Attendee Information: US/Canada Attendee Dial-in: (866) 381-9870 Conference ID: 17345127 Attendee Direct URL: <https://usps.webex.com/usps/onstage/g.php?MTID=e55f72b77a4caa09d62a9993df1fd9f5b>


 **Logistics Business Review:** US-based logistics firm United Parcel Service (UPS) is taking part in a study aimed at using drones for delivering aids for humanitarian disaster relief activities. UPS expertise supported the assessment of scenarios which would require possible use of drones during or after disasters, especially for the difficult-to-reach locations. The firm also helped in considering the deployment conditions of the drones in such situations, regulatory implications and safety protocols.


 **From the Federal Register:**


Postal Regulatory Commission	
NOTICES	
Market Dominant Price Adjustments , 22748–22749 [2015–09446]	[TEXT] [PDF]
Postal Service	
PROPOSED RULES	
Revisions to the Requirements for Authority to Manufacture and Distribute Postage Evidencing Systems , 22661–22662 [2015–09424]	[TEXT] [PDF]


April 22, 2015


 **New York Times:** Audi, the German carmaker, said Wednesday that it would begin testing a system in Munich next month that would allow people to order goods from Amazon and have them delivered by DHL, the German package delivery service, to the trunk of their parked car. The idea is not completely new. Volvo Cars said more than a year ago that it was testing a similar system. A Volvo spokesman said Wednesday that the company has finished its testing and expected to announce soon that it would be offering the service to consumers in Sweden, where Volvo has its highest market share. Newer Volvo cars are already equipped with technology that would enable package delivery to vehicles, the spokesman said. Moritz Drechsel, an Audi spokesman, said the pilot project in Munich would be the first involving an online retailer, a delivery company and an automaker working together. The point of trunk package delivery is to solve the eternal problem of packages that cannot be delivered because no one is home to receive them. Customers who wanted to use the service would agree to allow their cars to be tracked by GPS. The DHL delivery worker would then receive an electronic authorization that could be used to open the trunk to deposit a package. Customers would also be able to leave letters and packages in their trunks for pickup by DHL, a unit of Deutsche Post DHL, which also operates the German postal service.


 **Peagle:** Now, the De-Mail provider, Deutsche Telekom, Francotyp-Postalia, as well as United Internet (1&1, Web.de and GMX) a simplified procedure for the end-to-end encryption enabled. Now, users can have their messages on the Basis of the standard "Pretty Good Privacy" (PGP) to encrypt. A prerequisite is a free Plug-in for the Open Source project is Mailvelope, which at first only for the browsers Chrome and Firefox.


 [CNN Money](#): The shipping process is incredibly inconvenient. You know this, I know this, and Silicon Valley investors do too. That's why prominent venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers just led a hefty new round of \$50 million funding in Shyp. The startup, which launched in March 2014, takes care of the pesky logistics involving with shipping: from packaging to pickup to returning. Using the Shyp app, users can take a picture and click a few buttons. Like magic, or within 20 minutes, the package will be taken care of ... meaning one of Shyp's couriers will pick it up, package it and ship it off using the best carrier option: FedEx, DHL, UPS or the U.S. Postal Service.


 **[Attention Postal One! Users: PostalOne!® Required Web SSL Cert updates Production Implementation](#)** - PostalOne! will be updating its Web SSL certs on Tuesday 4/28/2015 between 5:00PM central and 7:00PM central. Your systems that interface with PostalOne! may be impacted by this change and will need to update the certs they use to connect to PostalOne! Please see the attached documentation and a copy of the Prod Certs that will be enforce after the PostalOne! Cert installation on Tuesday 4/28/2015. For USPS applications, please coordinate with your Middleware or Unix point of contact.


 [Grand Forks Herald](#): *Sen. Heidi Heitkamp* -- "For more than a year, I've been gathering stories through my Fix My Mail initiative from folks all across North Dakota about the challenges they have faced with getting their mail on time or other problems. I've heard from more than 200 North Dakotans so far, and I've shared these stories directly with the U.S. Postal Service to make sure it's aware of what mail service is actually like in our communities. Based on the feedback from North Dakotans, I requested the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General do a formal review of mail delivery standards and postal employee issues with the Postal Service in North Dakota. And recently, that report was released, and it confirmed what I've been hearing from so many North Dakotans: that mail service and delivery has not been up to par in our state. These are serious problems that must be addressed. Now that we have a clear understanding of the mail service and delivery issues across North Dakota, Congress, the Postal Service and those in the postal community need to work together to overcome these challenges."

 [Truckinginfo](#): The U.S. Postal Service has chosen 15 possible manufacturers to build its next-generation delivery vehicle, including Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, Ford, Nissan, and Freightliner. The list of suppliers under consideration also includes AM General, AMP Holding, Emerald Automotive, Karsan, Mahindra, Morgan Olson, OEM Systems, Oshkosh, Utilimaster, VT Hackney, and ZAP Jonway. Several suppliers on the list specialize in vehicle modifications, including green-vehicle powertrains. ZAP and Jonway Auto, for example, specialize in battery-electric vehicle conversions.

 [AllAfrica](#): BotswanaPost will adjust services tariffs with effect from May 1, 2015. A press release from BotswanaPost stated that this was on the backdrop of the last review undertaken in 2012 that was proving out of sync with the current market demands for sustainable postal business.

 [Knoxville News Sentinel](#): The state Senate on Tuesday approved the tax break on aviation fuel sought by FedEx, after rejecting an attempt by Senate Democratic Leader Lee Harris to cut the tax rate for all payers of the aviation fuel tax.

 [Southeast Missourian](#): *NALC President Frederic Rolando* -- "There's a lot of misleading "conventional wisdom" about U.S. Postal Service finances. Unfortunately, some of it was included in your otherwise excellent story about the proposed ending of mail processing at the USPS facility in Cape Girardeau. The story attributed Postal Service financial challenges to an infrastructure "deemed too large" (without attribution) and declining letter volume. What belies this is something your readers weren't told -- Postal Service operations are profitable, and increasingly so."

 [Jamaica Observer](#): The postal service says it is unable to sustain the 551 post offices and agencies that now exist across the island and as such is moving to reduce the number by half. According to Postmaster General Michael Gentles, post offices have been struggling financially. "In fact, over the past five or six years, we have consistently run a deficit close to \$500 million, and the issue is that the present network which we have is unsustainable, and the reality is that there is going to have to be a drastic reduction in our network, in the region of 60 per cent," Gentles told yesterday's sitting of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament. The number of buildings, he said, are not needed, nor can they be sustained, based on the budgetary allocation to the service. However, he quickly

pointed out that consultations will be done, and that while most of the agencies and offices would no longer exist, the system would be "reconfigured" in a manner that would ensure that people who need the service could still access it.

[Murray Ledger & Times](#): The U.S. Postal Service is investigating the cause behind hundreds of delayed bills and payments between the Murray Electric System utility company and its customers this month. Postal Service spokesperson David Walton said his office has been trying to track down where the interruption in mail service occurred after many Murray Electric customers failed to receive their bills this month and officials with the utility say last month, payments were delayed.

[Federal Times](#): The head of the National Treasury Employee Union has a message for lawmakers: Do not cut federal pay and benefits any further. Both the Senate and the House versions would increase federal employee pension contributions to six percent or more of salaries. The House version would also cut the federal workforce by 10 percent through attrition and increase Postal Service employee contributions to their health insurance premiums.

[FCW](#): April 1 is marked on the government calendar as Census Day. This year, Census Day marked a milestone in the countdown to the 2020 enumeration -- we're now closer to the beginning of the coming 2020 census than to the opening of the previous 2010 population count. New technology to manage and optimize field operations, down to the routes taken by door-to-door canvassers, is projected to save \$2.3 billion, per Census Bureau estimates. This includes a smartphone or tablet reporting system that is in development. The planned Internet response system, currently being tested, is projected to save about \$550 million. Improved address validation using data from the U.S. Postal Service, commercial aerial imagery and other data sources will save the bureau from having to use its army of enumerators to update its master address list, potentially saving \$1 billion.

April 21, 2015

[FEDweek](#): The Postal Service IG has announced an audit of potentially questionable purchases using fleet credit cards, a potentially significant issue in an agency that uses more than 180,000 vehicles for delivery operations. It noted that most of the vehicles are fueled regularly by a carrier during the day while on his or her assigned delivery route; each vehicle has a fleet credit card the carrier uses to pay at the gas station. Fleet credit cards are managed at the post office or station and the charges are reviewed on a regular basis to help ensure they are used for appropriate purchases.


[Press Release](#): Bell and Howell has introduced the next generation of its Producer® series inserter. This unique high-speed, multi-format system processes up to 25,000 letter mailpieces per hour with the additional capability of inserting flats documents. The Producer is now one of the fastest multipurpose inserters of its type, and reduces the need for multiple machines dedicated to distinct applications. The Producer system's innovative dynamic drive system enables additional flats processing capability while providing an increase in letters speed. The result is quick changeovers, ease of use for operators, and standardization to reduce parts and maintenance. High-volume transactional environments such as financial services, insurance and healthcare operations can use the Producer platform to move quickly between jobs and insert/letter sizes, without having to shift work to another machine. This helps keep machine capacity high, providing more ROI and reducing capital expenditure requirements.

[National Postal Mail Handlers Union](#): On April 17, 2015, the USPS announced its latest list of last minute "public" changes to the Phase II-2015 USPS Network Rationalization Consolidation list. This is the third consecutive week that the Postal Service has made modifications to the Network Rationalization Consolidation list -- affecting a large group of postal facilities. Approximately 18 facilities have had their move dates changed to "To Be Determined" (TBD). This public list is the most current information available, but of course is subject to further change. The National Office of the NPMHU is seeking clarification from the Postal Service on this new list to establish exactly what this means for the "move dates" for employees in impacted plants.

[Arizona Daily Star](#): The Tucson postal processing facility's consolidation will hurt Southern Arizona's economy, image and people who are reliant on mail services, community members told U.S. Rep. Martha McSally.

INDUSTRY ALERT *Customer Supplier Agreements (CSA's) Webinar for First-Class Mailers Tuesday, May 12 2:00-3:00 p.m. (EDT)*

The Mail Prep and Entry Focus Group will host an informational webinar for representatives from the First-Class Mail Industry. This webinar will focus on how to take advantage and utilize Customer Supplier Agreements. Topics covered include: (1) What is a Customer Supplier Agreement (CSA)? (2) How is it helpful to the Industry / US Postal Service? (3) Ongoing changes to the CSA system (4) Explanation of ongoing Pilot Program for CSA's (5) Information on CSA's and the Operational Window Changes (OWC). Registration is required. US/Canada Attendee Dial-in: (877) 294-2949 Conference ID: 28422383 Attendee Direct URL: <https://usps.webex.com/usps/onstage/g.php?MTID=e596db1429162916782b2ebd63122b758>


 **New York Times:** A Postal Service surveillance program that records the information on the outside of letters and packages delivered to people suspected of criminal activity should be overhauled because of a lack of oversight, according to a report by a national defense lawyers' group. An [audit](#) by the service's inspector general last year found that about 20 percent of the orders for surveillance under the program, known as mail covers, were improperly approved. The New York Times [reported](#) on abuses in the program, including a case in which law enforcement officials in Arizona used it to investigate a political opponent. Guy Cottrell, the chief of the Postal Inspection Service, [told](#) lawmakers last year that the agency had made several changes in the way it managed the mail covers program. He said that the agency had updated its computer system to make sure information on each mail cover was recorded correctly, and that it was developing a process to bar law enforcement agencies that abuse the program from being approved for use of mail covers.




Dead Tree Edition: "Mail carrier" was recently named as one of the 10 worst careers in the U.S., largely because of a supposedly bleak employment outlook. "Hiring of mail carriers has been on a steady decline with the proliferation of email and text messaging," CareerCast said in ranking mail carrier #191 out of 200 careers. CareerCast's jobs outlook was based on a U.S. Labor Department projection that the number of mail carriers would shrink by 28% from 2012 to 2022. There's just one problem with this scenario: "Just about everyone" is wrong. The number of people delivering mail for the U.S. Postal Service is actually growing slightly.

From the Federal Register:

- **Postal Regulatory Commission NOTICES** New Postal Products , 22232–22233 [2015–09031] [\[TEXT\]](#)

 **The Motley Fool:** "Has United Parcel Service Inc. Become Less Productive?"


 **The Guardian:** Citing lack of appropriate regulatory agency as cause of the stagnation in the courier sector, the Association of Nigeria Courier Operators (ANCO) has called on the National Assembly to pass the Postal Commission Bill before the expiration of its tenure in June. According to Oladapo, the demand for reforms in the postal sub-sector has been a recurring decimal in Nigeria's policy formulation.

Office of the Inspector General:

- **[What Do You Think of the New Package Sorter?](#)** -- The Postal Service relies on the Automated Package Processing System (APPS) and Automated Parcel and Bundle Sorter (APBS) to sort packages. But it is testing five new Small Package Sorting Systems (SPSS) machines that could provide additional processing support for the growing package volume. We will evaluate whether the performance, functionality, and deployment of the SPSS meets the Postal Service's expectations for this technology. Have you had any experience with the SPSS machines? If so, what is your impression of the technology? How does the SPSS machine compare to other Postal Service package sorting machines?
- **[Modes of Delivery and Advertising Mail Customer Engagement](#)** -- Delivery to curbside mailboxes or neighborhood cluster box units costs less than delivery to the door. But do curbside and cluster box delivery result in a lower level of customer engagement with mail? To find out, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) asked the market research firm InfoTrends Inc. to conduct a survey of 5,000 postal customers. The OIG then asked Professor Michael Bradley of George Washington to analyze the survey


data to determine how customer engagement with advertising mail varied by mode of delivery. The survey results clearly show customers with delivery to the door had significantly higher levels of engagement with most kinds of advertising mail than did customers with curbside or cluster box delivery. These findings are especially important because advertising mail is critically important to the U.S. Postal Service's finances. The paper suggests that the Postal Service do more to understand the impact these findings could have on the effectiveness of advertising mail. [*See also the Washington Post story on "[Door deliveries work better for mail advertisers. Here's why that matters](#)"*]


- [Ad Mail Delivery: The Closer the Better](#) -- Are all mailboxes equal? Not when it comes to advertising mail, which seems to invoke three critical factors normally associated with real estate – location, location, location. It costs the U.S. Postal Service less to deliver mail to curbside mailboxes or neighborhood cluster boxes than to your door. That's why there's been talk of possibly eliminating door-to-door delivery as Canada Post has recently announced. But the move could cut more than costs; it could also cut the effectiveness of ad mail, which provides about \$16 billion of revenue annually to the Postal Service. We worked with the market research firm InfoTrends in surveying 5,000 households across the country to determine how much people engage with advertising mail. What we found was intriguing: People with to-the-door delivery had a much higher "read-and-response" rate to ad mail than people with curbside or cluster box delivery. A related trend: People with to-the-door delivery are less likely to throw their ad mail away than those who collect their mail at the curbside or cluster box. It's all detailed in our new white paper, [Modes of Delivery and Customer Engagement with Advertising Mail](#), in which we suggest that the Postal Service and ad mailers work together to understand these delivery trends, which could have a critical impact on how much mail advertisers continue to send.


 [MobileStorm](#): Sometimes — even though you're not sure if it'll work — you throw more money at it — just in case. And such is the case with advertisers who "don't know what they're doing yet when it comes to digital marketing." "Nearly half of marketers plan to boost their investments in digital channels this year, according to a new report from Forrester Research," notes the Wall Street Journal blog CMO. "The survey of 89 business-to-consumer marketers found that, despite the higher investments, 43 percent of respondents said they are still experimenting with digital marketing and do not yet know what works." [*EdNote: Heck! Mail works. Use that.*]

April 20, 2015


 [Forbes](#): "CIO Rob Carter Transforms FedEx Into A Cloud Centric Enterprise"


 [Federal Times](#): The Postal Service has winnowed down the companies bidding to build the next generation of its delivery vehicles - and one of them is offering up an all-electric truck that doubles as a drone launcher. The agency released a list of pre-qualified sources for the contract April 14, which include Ford motor company, AM General LLC, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles US LLC and Nissan North America, Inc., among others. But one of the companies - Workhorse Group Inc., - is hoping to make an impression by showing the Postal Service that the future could involve a drone that can deliver packages while the mail carrier works their normal route. The electric delivery truck is called "Workhorse" while the drone that carries the packages is called "Horsefly" and is a product of a years-long partnership between the company and the University of Cincinnati, which has an unmanned vehicle research program.


 [PostalVision 2020](#): What can we learn from the most recent study, sponsored by the Brookings Institution? Is the information new, reliable and actionable? It all depends on the assumptions. If you accept the assumptions of the study, the Postal Service may benefit from \$18 billion in annual subsidies. But the many of the assumptions are questionable, and some important concerns are not addressed completely or are left out entirely.


 [Miami Herald](#): U.S. Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart has written a letter to Postmaster General Megan Brennan in support of Miami Lakes' quest to learn why its request for a ZIP code boundary change was denied by the U.S. Postal Service. "I respectfully request, within all applicable rules and regulations, for the full and fair consideration of Miami Lakes' [Freedom of Information Act] request and would appreciate a response on this matter," the letter said. In December, Miami Lakes submitted a public records request to the postal service, asking for backup documents,


such as studies and cost breakdowns, that were used to deny the town's request for a ZIP code boundary review. In response, the postal service said it couldn't provide the information requested, as those details are exempt from public disclosure.


 [Roll Call](#): The folks in charge of franked mail in the House refuse to allow members of Congress to send official mail for the sole purpose of encouraging their constituents to "thank a veteran," a policy one Illinois Democrat calls "a disservice to the brave men and women who sacrifice so much for this country."


 [Tampa Bay Times](#): The Ruskin mailman who last week flew a gyrocopter into restricted airspace over Washington D.C. to make a political statement says he has been put on paid leave with the U.S. Postal Service with orders not to discuss his story with the media. "I was informed by the acting postmaster — and he sounded like he was reading from a script — that I was on administrative leave pending an investigation," Hughes wrote in an email to the Tampa Bay Times. "I am NOT allowed on postal property without advance permission and I can only enter the building through the front if I do visit with permission. (This injunction always precedes a termination.) I asked about the nature of the administrative leave — it's with pay BUT I'm not allowed to talk to the media AT ALL." It is another restriction that Hughes said he intends to violate. He said the move amounted to a "gag order" that he did not respect. A spokeswoman for the U.S. Postal Service said she could not discuss Hughes' employment status. Calling himself a mix between Paul Revere and P.T. Barnum, Hughes said he loathed the U.S. Supreme Court's 2010 decision in Citizens United vs. Federal Election Commission, which said campaign contributions are a form of "political speech" and struck down contribution limits for corporations and unions.


 [American Postal Workers Union](#): With the Collective Bargaining Agreement set to expire in one month, APWU negotiators – and members – are preparing to turn up the heat! "As we enter the final month of bargaining, it will soon become clear whether management is serious about reaching a negotiated settlement," said President Mark Dimondstein. "Our bargaining team is pursuing every opportunity to win a contract that is fair to our members and that allows us to give the people of the country the service they expect and deserve," he said. "To keep the pressure on the Postal Service during the final weeks of negotiations, we must demonstrate the commitment of our members and the support of the American people for our goals – Good Service! Good Jobs! Good Contract!" The union is launching an ambitious program to mobilize support for the final stretch.


 [Printweek](#): Print businesses including Banner Managed Communication, Capita Business Services and Critiqom (formerly Document Outsourcing) are among 37 suppliers to a mammoth new pan-government postal goods and services framework. It is split into seven lots, including: collection and delivery; on-site hybrid mail solutions; off-site hybrid mail solutions; international mail services; franking machines and mailroom equipment; on-site in-bound mail solutions and off-site in-bound mail solutions. Suppliers appointed to both the on-site and off-site hybrid mail solutions lots include Banner Managed Communication (BMC), Canon (UK), Computershare Investor Services, Financial Data Management, Neopost, Pitney Bowes, Ricoh UK, Whistl UK (formerly TNT Post UK) and Xerox UK.

 [PRNewswire](#): Camber Corporation is proud to announce that it was awarded a seven year, Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (ID/IQ) contract with the United States Postal Service (USPS) with a ceiling value of \$210M dollars. Under the Software Engineering and Development Services (SEDS) contract, Camber will provide software engineering and development services to multiple groups within the USPS enterprise. Camber's team will perform requirements analysis, technical design, code development, systems integration testing, configuration management, quality management, risk assessments, business analysis, help desk functions, network management, development and support of critical applications for on-going USPS technical operations.


 [Scoop](#): Any re-negotiation of New Zealand Posts deed of understanding needs to be done openly and fairly, says the union for postal workers, the EPMU. Over the past few years, New Zealand Post has been cut to the bone as the government demands bigger ... Transparency needed from NZ Post on future job and service cuts Any re-negotiation of New Zealand Post's deed of understanding needs to be done openly and fairly, says the union for postal workers, the EPMU.


 [Bulletin Standard](#): Without a prepared partner in the Oval Office, Republicans are displaying couple of signs that they want to use their congressional majorities to essentially attempt to implement their most controversial proposed cuts with binding legislation. Legislation to curb Postal Service charges and finish Saturday mail delivery is an solution, as are cuts to meals stamps, Pell Grants, student loans and subsidies for rural air service, amongst others.


 [Federal News Radio](#): The third generation program to improve federal identity management, Connect.gov, is barely off the ground and the General Services Administration is asking industry what the fourth generation will look like. GSA and the Postal Service launched Connect.gov — formerly called the Federal Cloud Credentialing Exchange (FCCX) — in December. Now there are five sign-in partners, including ID.me, PayPal, Yahoo, Verizon and Google, and three federal relying partners, the departments of Agriculture and Veterans Affairs, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology. Through Connect.gov, agencies can access all four levels of digital credentials making it easier for citizens and businesses to interact online with the government.


 [Telecompaper](#): PayPal has opened its free postal returns service to users in Belgium, different Belgian media reported. The service allows buyers to return online purchases made via PayPal, for free. The payment service wants the option to highlight its services in Belgium The service is also available in the Netherlands.

April 19, 2015

 [The Verge](#): Norway will shut down FM radio in the country beginning in 2017, Radio.no reports. The Norwegian Ministry of Culture finalized a shift date this week, making it the first country to do away with FM radio entirely. The country plans to transition to Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) as a national standard. *Norway's transition to DAB will begin on January 11th, 2017. [Wow!]*

 [The Jerusalem Post](#): It is no secret that the government-owned Israel Postal Company is in the process of collapsing. As far as the customers are concerned the situation manifests itself in the numerous post office branches and agencies that have shut down over the past year; the endless queues and slow service at functioning post office branches; mail delivery only twice or three times a week; mail sent from Israel taking two to five weeks to arrive, as well as airmail from the US and Europe taking a month to three months to arrive; and notices sent by the post office to inform us of the arrival of a large item of mail, a parcel or a registered letter, which we are supposed to go ourselves to collect, being placed in our post box around 10 days after the notice was sent out.

 [Rappler](#): Switzerland's postal service is to start testing deliveries by drone, a spokesman for Swiss Post said Sunday, April 19.

 [Washington Examiner](#): Where possible, policy leaders in this country should make the promotion of American businesses a priority. When the American economy is flourishing, our country flourishes. What is not understandable, however, is when an American entity like the United States Postal Service creates a competitive advantage for foreign producers. USPS charges less than 94 cents to deliver a four-pound package from China to an American consumer. Compare that to an American company trying to ship the same package from a neighboring state — it could be charged \$11.30, according to a quick online search. The American company has to pay 12 times what the Chinese shipper would be charged, adding to its overhead costs. Something seems out of whack here. Why is the Postal Service choosing to lose money on this business? While the postal service appears to be running itself into the ground financially, it is American consumers and American businesses that are disadvantaged. The U.S. Postal Service should not be subsidizing international package shipments to the detriment of American businesses. Rather, they should be focusing on what they were originally set up to do — to provide letter mail service anywhere in the country at a reasonable rate.

April 18, 2015


 Smithsonian
National Postal Museum


for campaign finance reform. The carrier was immediately arrested and did not

[Pushing the Envelope](#): A rural letter carrier made news when he landed his gyrocopter on the US Capitol grounds in a protest call



have a chance to deliver his protest mail. This was not the first time such a device was used to carry the mail. Although it was the first wildly unsanctioned one. An autogiro has been on the Capitol grounds before, although on the other side of the building. In July 1931, James Ray, of the Autogiro Corporation of America took off from the east side of the Capitol building carrying Senator Hiram Bingham (R-CT) as his passenger. Autogiro test flights were common through the 1930s in the United States. At least two such flights involved the US Capitol and the mall, although only one of those involved carrying the mail. By the 1930s, commercial aviation companies were eying this aircraft to help carry the mail. On January 17, 1939, the Post Office Department announced it would take bids for operating an autogiro service launching from the Philadelphia, PA post office. The first craft to take off from that roof was the Kellett KD-1B autogiro, built by the Kellett Autogiro Company. It had an enclosed cockpit and was operated by Eastern Airlines. This craft first carried mail on July 6, 1939.

 [Wisconsin State Journal](#): By a vote of 85 for and 11 against, the Senate on Wednesday approved a non-binding measure that endorsed unspecified funding in a pending budget plan (S Con Res 11) for U.S. Postal Service actions such as reinstating overnight-delivery standards, preserving rural service, adapting digital technologies and keeping open as many as 82 mail-processing plants with 15,000 jobs now slated for closure. A yes vote endorsed steps to improve the postal service in its present structure.

 [Memphis Business Journal](#): While it may have seemed like FedEx Corp.'s acquisition of Dutch carrier TNT Express came out of nowhere, it was actually a deal 20 years in the making. David Mortimer, former TNT CEO, talked with Memphis Business Journal via phone from Sydney, Australia, about approaching FedEx in the mid-1990s to discuss buying TNT's Europe-based express freight service GD Express. While it may be based in The Netherlands today, TNT, or Thomas Nationwide Transport, was actually founded in Sydney by Ken Thomas in 1946. When Mortimer became CEO, TNT was facing more than \$1 billion in debt, with its European operations losing \$100 million a year. So, Mortimer scheduled a business trip to Memphis to meet with Fred Smith, FedEx chairman and CEO, about selling GD Express in exchange for FedEx shares. TNT had a 50 percent stake in GD Express, and the post offices in Germany, Holland, France, Sweden and Canada held the remaining shares.


 [From the Federal Register](#): Postal Regulatory Commission *NOTICES* New Postal Products , 21775–21776 [2015–08930] [[TEXT](#)]

April 17, 2015

 [At the Postal Regulatory Commission](#):

- **R2015-4 Order No. 2444-Notice and Order on Amended Rate Adjustments and Classification Changes for Standard Mail, Periodicals, and Package Services Products**
Comments on the revised planned price adjustments and related classification changes for Standard Mail, Periodicals, and Package Services are due **no later than April 23, 2015**.
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92082/Order%20No.%202444.docx>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92082/Order%20No.%202444.pdf>
- **RM2015-2 Status Report of The United States Postal Service Regarding Matters Raised At the Recent Proposal Nine Technical Meeting** <http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92083/Tech.Conf.Status.Rpt.pdf>

 **PostCom Members !! The latest issue of the [PostCom Bulletin](#) is now available online.** This is the special edition with the latest USPS proposed rates to be implemented (if approved) on May 31, 2015.


 [Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs](#): Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.), ranking member of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, convened a bipartisan briefing on the state of Postal Service finances Thursday afternoon. The briefing provided an important opportunity for all senators to hear from the U.S. Postal Service





along with key oversight bodies, including the U.S. Postal Service Office of the Inspector General and the Government Accountability Office, on how revenue generation and cost cutting initiatives have impacted the Postal Service's bottom line and the forecast for the rest of the year. This is the first of several forums organized to analyze and discuss the Postal Service and congressional reform efforts.


"To this day – more than 200 years after its founding – the Postal Service remains an important part of our lives and economy," Sen. Carper said. "But it continues to face financial challenges that threaten its future. In fiscal year 2014 alone, the Postal Service reported a net loss of \$5.5 billion largely due to the steady decline of first class mail. We can't stand idly by and let an institution that operates at the center of a \$1 trillion industry and employs over 7 million people falter. While Postal Service management has done what it can to cut costs and compete in the digital age, its needs Congress to help pave a fiscally sustainable path that will enable this American institution to grow and thrive.


"I am committed to working with my colleagues in Congress, the Administration, and stakeholders to build on our efforts and find a solution that works for the Postal Service, its customers and its employees, and give it the tools it needs to survive and prosper in the years to come," he continued. "I hope this briefing provided members an opportunity to better understand the Postal Service's financial status and help begin the process of addressing reform this Congress. I thank Chairman Johnson, Senator Sanders, and our other colleagues who joined us for a constructive and thoughtful conversation, and I look forward to continuing this important dialogue with them and others in the coming weeks."

 **Coconuts Manila:** Who would have thought that "snail mail" would bounce back? "Philippine Postal Corporation (PHLPost) Postmaster General Ma. Josefina de la Cruz said that 'snail mail' remains big business, boasting of a net income of PHP640.43 million in 2014," reports Nathaniel R. Melican in Philippine Daily Inquirer. De la Cruz explained, "Many people think snail mail is dead, but our biggest business is still snail mail. You'd be amazed at the variety of mail we receive and deliver." De la Cruz pointed out that "about 80% of the company's income come from the traditional mail operations, upending the common notion that text messaging and e-mail, among other new communications technologies, have caused the demise of 'snail mail.'"

 **Reuters:** The Italian post office's purchase of a stake in Anima Holding from Monte dei Paschi di Siena was a strategic move and not designed to help the troubled Italian bank, its CEO said on Friday. Poste Italiane, which the government is privatising, agreed on Wednesday to buy Monte dei Paschi's 10.3 percent stake in the asset manager in a 215 million euro (\$231 million) deal that would lift the bank's core capital. Some critics said the deal was masterminded by the government, the sole owner of Poste Italiane, to help Monte dei Paschi ahead of a 3 billion euro cash call the bank will launch to plug a capital gap exposed by European regulators. "We did not do any favours for anyone," Poste Italiane Chief Executive Francesco Caio told journalists. Poste Italiane was studying a partnership to sell Anima's financial products through its own network to attract Italian small investors, he added.

 **Roll Call:** The irony was unmistakable. Just blocks north of the Capitol building, confused taxpayers from D.C., Maryland and Virginia were gathered outside the National Capitol Station post office branch, trying to mail their returns to the IRS late in the evening on deadline day. Until recently, the large postal facility was open late at night, particularly on April 15. But, as more returns have been filed electronically and the Postal Service has faced budget woes, the extended hours have ceased. "Due to the overall drop in first class mail volume and the decline in tax returns filed by mail, no offices in the D.C. area have offered extended hours for the past few years. That said, we regret if customers experienced any challenges in dropping their mail off yesterday evening," a Postal Service spokesman told CQ Roll Call. "Customers are reminded that they should always check the collection box for the posted last collection time before depositing their items in the box." Even on Capitol Hill, literally hundreds of folks seemed utterly unaware, asking why newspapers and television stations hadn't made clear that the post office wouldn't stay open until midnight. There was even a fellow who said he prepared tax returns for a living. One man, between expletives, said that he had always defended the Postal Service since his mother had been an employee for 22 years. "It seems like a cruel joke this night," said one elderly man who said he always completed his tax return on paper and had brought his return to the corner of North Capitol Street and Massachusetts Avenue, late on Tax Day many times before.

 **The Motley Fool:** Investors in FedEx Corp. and United Parcel Service have probably noticed some significant changes in their company's end markets in the last few years. Burgeoning e-commerce demand, changes in global trade patterns, and transforming parcel delivery preferences have adjusted the environment in which transportation companies operate. How have they changed the operations of FedEx and UPS, and what does it mean for investors?

 **Deseret News:** The U.S. Postal Service's woes have been mostly out of the spotlight for a while, but they haven't gone away. The agency's most recent financial statement shows it is \$15 billion in debt and still losing money. It lost \$5.5 billion in 2014. Apologists for the service often point to a congressional mandate requiring the agency to prefund retirement benefits as a source of its problems. Without that requirement, the agency would have a much better bottom line. However, it still would have mounting obligations to its current and future retirees. As a CNBC report on the myths of this obligation points out, Congress imposed the obligation in order to put the Postal Service on a more sound long-term fiscal footing. The agency's real problems stem from a rapidly changing market for first-class mail, which has been disrupted by modern technology. Writing recently for Newsweek, Kevin Kosar said only 5 percent or less of all modern mail is personal correspondence. People generally expect to find bills or advertising in their mailbox, and a growing number of people pay their bills online, instead. The same Congress that is reluctant to approve dramatic reforms today likely will be equally reluctant to approve a massive bailout when the agency's losses become too large to handle. Lawmakers should let the Postal Service contract and reduce days of service. With email and Internet video communications becoming ubiquitous, it's time to acknowledge that the world has changed.

 **From the Federal Register:**

Postal Regulatory Commission	
NOTICES	
New Postal Products ,	
21277-21278 [2015-08775]	[TEXT] [PDF]
21278 [2015-08779]	[TEXT] [PDF]
21279 [2015-08812]	[TEXT] [PDF]
Postal Service	
NOTICES	
Product Changes:	
Priority Mail Express and Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement ,	
21279 [2015-08816]	[TEXT] [PDF]
Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement ,	
21279 [2015-08815]	[TEXT] [PDF]

April 16, 2015

INDUSTRY ALERT *Postal Service Responds to the Postal Regulatory Commission*

The Postal Service today filed [a response to Postal Regulatory Commission \(PRC\) Order No. 2398](#), in which the Commission remanded proposed rates for Standard Mail, Periodicals, and Package Services. The Postal Service's response contains adjusted pricing and further explanation consistent with the Commission's Order. **The scheduled implementation date for the new pricing is May 31, 2015**, pending PRC approval.


All competitive and previously-approved market dominant prices would be implemented at the same time, with the exception of one promotion, noted below, which will be implemented earlier.


It is the Postal Service's intention to provide pricing-implementation webinars after the PRC has made a decision on our response. Additional information will be provided through an Industry Alert at a later date.


As indicated above, the Postal Service Governors have decided to move forward with the Earned Value promotion, effective May 1, 2015 through July 31, 2015. Registration for this promotion has been underway since March 15 and will end on April 30, 2015. This promotion allows mailers to earn postage credits based on receipt of First-Class Mail reply pieces; the postage credit can be redeemed later this year on First-Class Mail and Standard Mail mailings. [Click here for more information](#) regarding this promotion. All other USPS promotions are expected to move forward on their previously scheduled dates, with the exception of the Advanced and Emerging Technology Promotion, which will be delayed one month. This promotion now is scheduled to run from June 1 to November 30, 2015. For more information regarding the Postal Service's response to Order No. 2398, please visit the PRC's website at www.prc.gov.


At the Postal Regulatory Commission:

- **R2015-4 Response of The United States Postal Service to Order No. 2398**
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92076/Attachment%20C%20Part%20I.xlsx>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92076/Attachment%20C%20Part%20II.xlsx>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92076/AttachmentB-Remand2.xls>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92076/Notice and Attachments FINAL.pdf>
- **T2015-1 Order No. 2443-Order Approving the Calculation of the FY 2014 Assumed Federal Income Tax on Competitive Products**
http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92069/Order_2443.docx
http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92069/Order_2443.pdf
- **RM2015-2 PRC-LR-RM2015-2/1 Materials Distributed at Technical Meeting**
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92073/PRC-LR-RM2015-2-1-Materials Distributed at Technical Meeting.pdf>


 **The Connexion:** La Poste wants to make postal services more accessible by opening up more parcel pick-up points and a new network of partner businesses. Faced with a declining number of customers using its 17,000 current 'contact points' – which includes post offices plus counters in mairies and in certain shops – La Poste is looking at expanding relais poste urbains focussed only on simple postal services. Limited to around a dozen at present, this refers to places like supermarkets, caretakers' offices or tobacconists, which are open at weekends and evenings and which can offer parcel and letter post services – buying stamps, sending a parcel or recorded delivery letter etc. La Poste director general Philippe Bajou says they plan to grow this network, with at least 50 more this year. Also on the cards are more consignes Pick-up station - automatic parcel collection points outside post offices or inside lobbies with accessible opening hours (similar to many banks), such as 6.00 to 22.00.


 **Post & Parcel:** Indian postal workers unions have called for an "indefinite" national strike from 6th May. The unions, including the National Federation of Postal Employees (NFPE), the Federation of National Postal Organisations (FNPO), the All India Postal Employees' Union and the National Union of Gramin Dak Sewaks (rural postal workers), have issued an extensive 40-point Charter of Demands. Their key concerns are focused on the demand that should be "no corporatisation and privatisation in Postal Services", as well as issues over pay and pensions. Union members and their supporters have been organising mass rallies and meeting in the run-up to their planned strike.

 **Wall Street Journal:** More than a dozen companies, including those now making military Humvees and luxury sport-utility vehicles, are vying to bring the lowly mail truck into the future. Early contenders suggest the mail service is considering everything from drones to gasoline-powered vans to battery-powered vehicles for its fleet.

 **The Hill:** House Oversight Committee Chairman Jason Chaffetz is establishing himself as a fierce watchdog over federal employees in his first few months atop the panel — and winning bipartisan praise for it. In recent weeks, the Utah Republican has been in the spotlight for investigating the Secret Service, federal employee tax delinquency and

alleged sex parties involving Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agents. All are topics that elicit outrage in both parties, something in itself that sets Chaffetz apart from his polarizing predecessor, Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Calif.). Chaffetz told The Hill in November, upon winning the Oversight gavel, that he wanted to focus on issues related to government waste. He expressed a desire to hold hearings about the IRS, the Postal Service and federal workers on paid administrative leave. ("It's like a paid vacation," Chaffetz exclaimed.) Even Democrats are heaping praise on Chaffetz's tenure, citing improved communication across the aisle and a proactive willingness to consider their ideas on issues such as prescription drug costs and cybersecurity. It's a stark contrast to Issa, who they say disregarded their role on the committee. Cummings, while complimentary of Chaffetz, warned the chairman may come under pressure in the coming months to pursue more partisan issues. "Of course, as with any chairman, the real test will be whether he continues this approach, especially as the campaign season approaches," Cummings said. "I hope and expect that we will be able to work together in a bipartisan and effective way going forward."


 **Main Street:** Mail carrier dropped into the ten worst jobs for the first time this year and has a negative growth outlook of -28.32 in part due to recent declines in total mail volume and cost-cutting measures at the U.S. Postal Service.


 **From the Federal Register:** Postal Service NOTICES Meetings; Sunshine Act , 20515 [2015-08834] [\[TEXT\]](#)


April 15, 2015

 **At the Postal Regulatory Commission:**


- **ACR2014 USPS-FY14-4 - FY2014 Domestic Market Dominant Billing Determination (Revised)**
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92061/FY14-4.BDs.Period.BPM.Rev.4.15.15.zip>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92061/USPS-FY14-4 Preface Rev.4.15.15.pdf>


 **Associated Press:** Police at the U.S. Capitol aren't yet identifying the man who steered a tiny, one-person helicopter onto the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol Wednesday. But a Florida postal carrier named Doug Hughes is taking responsibility for the stunt on a website, where he said he was delivering letters to all 535 members of Congress in order to draw attention to campaign finance corruption. Hughes wrote that he has "no violent inclinations or intent." He says the small aircraft "poses no major physical threat" -- but that it "may present a political threat to graft." The chairman of the House Homeland Security committee, Michael McCaul of Texas, says the pilot landed on his own -- but that if he had gone much closer to the Capitol, authorities were prepared to shoot him down.


 **INDUSTRY ALERT** *Bring Your Mailpiece to the National Postal Forum* As a registered attendee, join us at this year's [National Postal Forum](#), May 17-20, 2015, where you can share your mailpiece with an MDA and receive hands-on technical assistance to ensure that your mailpiece meets the eligibility requirements for discounts. MDAs will be available in the Consultation Area on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday during the Exhibit Hall hours. Bring your samples and have a Mailpiece Design Analyst evaluate your mailpiece on the spot! Schedule your appointment today by emailing Anthony.j.frost@usps.gov; and at the USPS Consultation Area (Booth #343) on the NPF Exhibit Hall Floor! Additionally, plan to attend the PCC Opening Session which is scheduled for 11:00am – 12:30pm on Sunday, May 17, 2015. Pritha Mehra, Vice President, Mail Entry & Payment Technology, will be providing updates about the Mailpiece Design Analyst Program, including some of the changes in the program based upon feedback received from you. Need help sooner? Call the MDA Helpdesk at 1-855-593-6093 or send an email to MDA@usps.gov. Don't miss out on this great opportunity! [REGISTER NOW!](#)

 **Attention Business Customer Gateway Users:** Program Registration Release 13.0.2.0 will be deployed to Production from 10 pm CDT Saturday, April 18 to 2 am CDT on Sunday, April 19, 2015. There will be an outage and the Online Enrollment Service and Incentives Program accessible via the Business Customer Gateway will be unavailable during that time. This Program Registration release will fix the

following issue related to Shipping. Update coding to prevent users from enrolling into 1-click programs more than once.


 [CEP News](#): According to an Italian news report, Poste Italiane "plans to reduce the delivery frequency in 5,000 of the altogether about 8,000 municipalities to every second day. Thereby the days, on which mail is delivered, are to rotate every two weeks (Monday-Wednesday-Friday-Tuesday-Thursday). The public mailboxes in the affected municipalities are also only to be emptied on these days. According to information present to the portal, the postal service plans to cut its operating delivery costs by 30% to 50% by 2017 with this measures. The requested changes to the universal service obligation has been submitted to the regulatory authority AGCOM. The regulator will probably consult with the EU-Commission on these changes, as mail has to be delivered at least on five working days a week according to EU law, 'save in circumstances or geographical conditions deemed exception', the EU's Third Postal Directive reads."

 [JOC](#): Within the massive growth of e-commerce in China is the rise of what is being called "bonded online shopping", the cross-border element of online shopping via government approved websites that enables Chinese consumers to buy products from overseas at lower tax rates. But this cross-border activity is directly translating into demand for bonded logistics storage, at a time when modern logistics space is in tight supply.


 [Post & Parcel](#): The Isle of Man Post Office is planning to increase its basic stamp price by 4.5% from next month. The 2p increase will take the price of sending a standard letter to the UK and Isle of Man to 44p from 5th May, 2015. But, the company said parcel prices will be frozen for another year.




[Dead Tree Edition](#): From dropping off water bottles to running a concierge service, the U.S. Postal Service is increasingly venturing into activities that have little to do with traditional mail delivery What's next, Postal Pizza? The question for USPS's traditional clientele – you know, the folks who send out, like, letters and stuff that go into actual mailboxes – is whether the new ventures will strengthen the Postal Service's finances or distract it from serving the customers who still pay most of its bills.

 [NBCBayArea](#): Several residents of a Pittsburg community are up in arms after the United States Postal Service is requesting they pay for what vandals have done to the neighborhood's mailbox. Earlier this year, vandals targeted a mailbox in the city's Oak Hill Capistrano neighborhood. "They can basically put the crow bar in it and pop the lock up," resident Alex Dongallo said of the neighborhood mailbox. Dongallo captured the theft on his home surveillance camera. He was shocked to find out that he and his neighbors are responsible for repairing the mailboxes. "I was told the we own the mailboxes and because we own the mailboxes us neighbors have to fix the mailbox," Dongallo said. Problem is, postal service rules prohibit Dongallo from fixing the mailbox. Dongallo also said he feels he would be committing a federal crime if he repaired the mailbox.

April 14, 2015

 [Smithsonian](#): The Pony Express Was Short-Lived And Costly The service only lasted 18 months, but became an important icon of the West.

 [Southeast Missourian](#): [U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill and others](#) have asked a congressional subcommittee for time to pass federal legislation that could create efficiency for the financially ailing U.S. Postal Service. In a letter to leaders of the Senate's Financial Services Appropriations Subcommittee dated March 27, McCaskill and fellow senators called for a one-year moratorium on postal service consolidation activities, which include removing processing operations from some facilities and closing others.



Office of the Inspector General:

- [Plant Load Agreements - Central Pennsylvania District](#) --

Background. The U.S. Postal Service offers its commercial customers special arrangements called plant load agreements. These agreements stipulate that the Postal Service will verify and pick up mail at a

customer's plant and transport it directly to a Postal Service destination facility. In return, the customer agrees to provide sufficient mail volume and revenue to offset transportation costs and yield a net cost savings for the Postal Service. Plant loading bypasses handling at a Postal Service facility, which reduces processing time, staffing, and dock space requirements. Plant load agreements should be financially and operationally beneficial to the Postal Service and are a productive way to foster positive relationships with customers. District staff and postmasters help initiate, coordinate, and monitor plant load agreements. They should also monitor performance under these agreements since conditions — such as mail volume and transportation routes — can change. Our objective was to assess how effectively plant load agreements in the Central Pennsylvania District protect Postal Service revenue and control costs. We selected this district because it presented an opportunity for cost savings based on revenue. The district had 40 plant load agreements as of October 2014. In fiscal year (FY) 2014, these 40 agreements were associated with revenue of over \$1.7 billion.

What The OIG Found. The Central Pennsylvania District was not sufficiently approving and monitoring plant load agreements. Thirty-eight of 40 agreement documents were missing information such as signatures, expiration dates, and cost analysis; and some contained errors. Additionally, twenty-two of the 25 plant loads observed did not meet the minimum requirements for volume or weight. District management was also not aware that some plant loads had reduced activity. This occurred because management did not have an adequate system in place to monitor compliance with plant load agreement requirements. As a result, there is an increased risk of unnecessary transportation-related costs. We estimated transportation costs of \$1.14 million in FY 2014 as disbursements at risk.

What The OIG Recommended. We recommended the district manager, Central Pennsylvania District, improve current procedures to ensure compliance with plant load agreements, particularly provisions related to approving and monitoring these agreements.


- [Seamless Acceptance Implementation](#) --


Background. Commercial mail accounted for most of the U.S. Postal Service's revenue – 70 percent (\$47 billion) – in fiscal year 2014. In 2006, the Postal Service began to automate commercial mail entry, verification, and induction. This process included planning and investing in systems and infrastructure to support the future transition to Seamless Acceptance (SA). SA uses electronic documentation from the mailer, intelligent mail barcodes, and various scanning devices to verify that letter and flat mail meet applicable acceptance thresholds and that proper postage is collected. These results are presented in the "mailer's scorecard," which summarizes mail entry-related performance indicators.

What The OIG Found. SA implementation is hampered by ongoing data integrity, customer service, and communication issues. First, data is inaccurate and unreliable as the Postal Service struggles to link mail flow data across multiple information systems. The Postal Service identified 31 data-related SA scorecard issues in August 2014 and eight additional data issues after a major SA-related system (PostalOne!) update in August 2014. The Postal Service also delayed the early November 2014 PostalOne! release to address scorecard data issues. The Postal Service subsequently notified mailers in early December 2014 that scorecard data would not be reliable until mid-December. Second, customer service is not always effective because Postal Service staff responsible for resolving customer issues have limited access to related data. For example, these staff members do not have access to extensive mail processing data, and must rely on contractor assistance for this information. PostalOne! help desk staff also does not have experience in responding to complex SA mailer issues. Third, communication is inconsistent between SA business mailer support analysts and participating mailers. For example, some SA mailers we interviewed said they were not always made aware of data issues until they spent hours reviewing the scorecard data and then contacted the Postal Service. The lack of a comprehensive plan contributed to these issues. Such a plan could have improved implementation through strategies and mechanisms to promote effective data integrity, customer service, and communication. While we recognize the progress in implementing a system as complex as SA, additional delays and challenges could have significant financial implications for the Postal Service. We estimated \$1.9 million of SA funds committed but unspent and \$89.8 million in potential cost savings from the program over the next two years are at risk if corrective actions are not taken.


What The OIG Recommended. We recommended the Postal Service develop a comprehensive plan to effectively integrate the various information systems that support the move to SA; ensure staff has appropriate access to applicable SA reports and data to effectively respond to customer inquiries; and provide periodic communications with all mailer participants.


- [We're Just Askin'](#) -- Audit Asks is actually an update of our audit project pages, initially launched about 6 years ago to get feedback from our readers. With the new Audit Asks format, we have added some eye-catching graphics and changed our writing style to prompt more feedback. Are there specific issues you believe merit a U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General audit?
- [U.S. Postal Service Revenue: Is the Glass Half Empty or Half Full?](#) -- We have all read the negative headlines of U.S. Postal Service's looming financial demise. However, in its new paper, U.S. Postal Service Revenue: Is the Glass Half Empty or Half Full?, the OIG finds that the Postal Service may be turning a corner. An increase in parcel volume, significant cost reductions, and the exigent price increase are collectively driving an improvement in the Postal Service's financial health. Nevertheless, the Postal Service still faces numerous challenges, including the continued and persistent decline in First-Class Mail volume, an ever-increasing number of delivery points, and an increased need to make investments for its future. While significant, these challenges are not insurmountable. In order to further improve its financial position, the Postal Service will need to focus on increasing the revenue yield of its traditional products wherever market forces and conditions allow, including taking advantage of the growing parcel market. In addition, the Postal Service would benefit from diversifying into other areas of business, especially logistics and financial services. [Read the Full Report](#)


 [AKIPress](#): 28 licenses for postal services have been withdrawn in Kyrgyzstan last year, according to a report of the Government for 2014. In total, 16 licenses were issued for implementation of the activities in the field of postal services (not including the state owned Kyrgyz Post). 15 commercial operators are providing the services for transportation and delivery of domestic and international postal express shipments in Kyrgyzstan. The list includes Interpost, Jamku Express, Daily Trans Service, Pin Post, SPSR-Express, ElMirNur, Kyrgyz Express Post, Well Service, Logistic Solutions, Express Postal Services Company, Angara Courier, Trans Asia Express, PE Jumaliyev, Grand Motors Company, Yldam-Express.

 [The Barbados Advocate](#): Steps are being made by the Post Office to extend its updated bill payment system to other utility companies. This disclosure was made by Acting Postmaster General, Nigel Cobham, who stated that all postal counters are now equipped with the swift detail counter system. This service currently allows LIME customers paying their bills at the post office to do so in "almost in real time".


April 13, 2015

 [UN News Centre](#): In a message delivered today to delegates at the World Strategy Conference for the United Nations postal agency, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon underlined the essential role to be played by postal services in global efforts to build a sustainable future.

 [KXLY](#): U.S. Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler has been appointed to serve as vice chairwoman of the Financial Services and Government Oversight Appropriations Subcommittee. It has jurisdiction over a variety of departments, including the executive office of the president and the U.S. Postal Service.


 [Dallas Business Journal](#): The Eastern District of Texas' misguided judicial system makes the towns of Tyler, Marshall, Beaumont and Texarkana the biggest patent-troll nest in the United States, filling the coffers of these tiny towns with money legally extorted from innovators that could otherwise be used to support business growth and create new jobs. One in four patent infringement lawsuits is filed in the Eastern District of Texas. Patent assertion entities, better known as "patent trolls," have built their lair in East Texas. They buy expiring and unused patents, preferably those that are ambiguous and mistakenly granted, and use them to send threatening demand letters – sometimes by the thousands – to businesses tenuously connected to a broad reading of these patents. Patent suits


have proven to be a boon for East Texas, but they're devastating the rest of the country. While towns like Tyler benefit, their role as dens for patent trolls – reputation as places promoting legalized extortion – hurts the American economy, jobs and innovation, perhaps more than any other place on Earth. It's time we shine a light under the bridge and force the trolls out of East Texas.


 **FEDWeek:** The Postal Service could be vulnerable to being sued for patent infringement because it does not have formal written procedures for actively reviewing new products and services for potential infringement, according to an IG report. Instead, it said, the USPS informally educates those departments most likely to be impacted by patent issues and relies on department managers to initiate reviews with its law department. After that review, a Postal Service vice president approves the investment for funding.


At the Postal Regulatory Commission:


- [Annual Compliance Report, 2014 Docket No. ACR2014](#): By motion dated March 27, 2015, United Parcel Service (UPS) requested "continued access to a subset of the compliance-related non-public materials to which the Commission previously granted UPS's outside counsel and consultants access." On April 3, 2015, the Postal Service filed an answer to the Motion. The Motion is granted.

 **ChannelNewsAsia:** Singapore Post will offer a wider range of insurance policies at its post offices. It is partnering insurance provider, Axa, to introduce general insurance solutions starting from Tuesday (Apr 14) at its post offices. Since the start of this year, the partners have been offering life insurance policies through the retail channel AXA@POST located at 34 SingPost branches where individuals can enquire about and purchase insurance products.

 **Post & Parcel:** Scottish firm Critiqom is celebrating being awarded a contract to provide hybrid mail services to the public sector. The company, known as Document Outsourcing Ltd until January this year, was awarded a framework contract as part of a broader series of postal goods services contracts awarded last month. The framework contract was awarded jointly by two local authority procurement agencies — YPO and ESPO — and central government procurement agency Crown Commercial Service. The portion of the overall framework agreement won by Critiqom covers the provision of off-site hybrid mail solutions.

 **EuroWeeklyNews:** CORREOS, the Spanish postal service, will carry out a food raising campaign in 2,400 offices across Spain, scheduled between April 13 and 22. All offices will turn into drop-off points for non-perishable food including, legumes, oil, pasta, rice, canned food and baby food. All items will be donated to the National Federation of Spanish Food Banks (FESBAL). Under the slogan 'Collaborate. Your help matters,' CORREOS is offering offices all around Spain to promote generosity amongst its staff and citizens.

 **Reuters:** United Parcel Service Inc. plans to invest 1 billion euros (\$1.06 billion) in Europe to expand its package delivery network, German magazine Wirtschaftswoche reported on Sunday, without citing its sources. "We will strongly expand our network in Germany and the rest of Europe," the magazine quoted UPS Germany chief Frank Sportolari as saying in the article, adding the number of parcel shops and sorting centers would rise with the investment.


 **Want China Times:** FedEx announced on April 7 that it has offered to buy out its Dutch rival TNT Express for €8 (US\$8.61) per share. The transaction is expected to be completed in the first half of 2016. The deal will undoubtedly strengthen FedEx's competitiveness, especially in the European market, Shanghai's China Business News reported. At present, DHL and TNT are the two leading international courier delivery companies in Europe and China. In China, FedEx, DHL, UPS and TNT together hold 80% of the market. DHL-Sinotrans, a joint venture between DHL and China's Sinotrans Group, has the largest market share on the Europe-China route. Industry analyst Xu Yong told China Business News that the acquisition of TNT will help FedEx expand its business and impact the operations of rival DHL-Sinotrans.

April 12, 2015



Dead Tree Edition: Catalogs are being damaged so frequently in the mail that one company has turned the problem into a new business venture. "A recent project involving a national catalog brand showed that 23 percent of the catalogs received by our field agents arrived in poor condition," a US Monitor press release said recently. The U.S. Postal Service's Flat Sequencing System earned the nickname "Flats Shredding System" from postal workers because of its propensity to mangle magazines, catalogs, and other flat mail. FSS is not the only likely culprit for increased catalog damage, however. Thinner catalogs, more saddle stitching (using "staples") rather than perfect binding, and lighter cover paper – all of which makes them more prone to being damaged in the mail than the big-book catalogs. Full mailboxes may also be a factor.


April 11, 2015


 **The Japan News:** The government has decided to lift a ban on home-delivery services using taxis and buses operated by municipalities as a way to help "shopping refugees," or people who have difficulty shopping in depopulated areas. It will become possible for these vehicles to deliver articles regularly as the government plans to review regulations of the road transportation law as early as this summer. According to the road transportation law, private regular route buses are currently allowed to carry a small quantity of postal items, newspapers and magazines. The Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Ministry plans to expand the eligible vehicles to include taxis and municipal buses. Major supermarkets often have a home-delivery service option, but the service often is not economically viable in depopulated areas. With the deregulation, it will become possible for elderly people without a car to order items from a supermarket by phone and have those goods delivered to their homes by bus or taxi.




Office of the Inspector General: [How Can the Postal Service Improve Management of Its Vacant Properties?](#)
The Postal Service operates one of the largest real estate portfolios in the country. It owns nearly 8,600 facilities and leases over 23,000 facilities ranging in size from 60 square feet to 32 acres. When the Postal Service vacates a facility with an active lease, it can terminate or buyout the lease, or sublease the property. When the Postal Service vacates a property it owns, it can sell or lease the property. We are assessing the Postal Service's efforts to manage its vacant property inventory and hope to identify opportunities to reduce costs or generate revenue. Currently, the Postal Service is working hard to "right size" its infrastructure to meet future needs. As part of this effort, the Postal Service could examine its real estate portfolio and take steps to ensure it is making the most efficient use of its vacant properties.


April 10, 2015

 **International Business Times:** A third of businesses believe that the cost of postage and delivery logistics will stunt their growth over the next year, a survey has revealed. The YouGov survey, on behalf of online marketplace eBay UK, shows that 31% of Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) feel that postage costs and delivery logistics will limit their ability to grow, while three quarters of respondents state that overseas shipping costs hinder their chances of obtaining new customers in other countries.


 **Reuters:** Amazon.com Inc has won approval from U.S. federal regulators to test a delivery drone outdoors, less than a month after the e-commerce powerhouse blasted regulators for being slow to approve commercial drone testing.





Federal News Radio: The Postal Service's Inspector General proposes a novel solution for cutting costs: Adopt augmented reality. The IG says the Postal Service could save time and money by outfitting drivers with augmented reality glasses. AR technology allows mobile devices to superimpose digital information on a real-world view. Kelly Thresher is a public policy analyst at the Postal Service Office of the Inspector General. She joined the [Federal Drive with Tom Temin](#) to elaborate on how augmented reality could help USPS.  [mp3](#)

 **Bloomberg:** European Union regulators said in 2013 that FedEx Corp. was too weak to compete against a merged United Parcel Service Inc. and TNT Express NV. This disadvantage may become an asset as FedEx seeks approval to buy TNT. The European Commission blocked UPS's bid to buy TNT two years ago after it identified several countries where the company would face a single rival, said David Anderson, a lawyer at Berwin Leighton Paisner


LLP in Brussels. FedEx's frailty in these markets was the "main stumbling block." "FedEx's perceived weakness is now likely to be a strength in getting this new deal through," Anderson said.

 **Direct Marketing News:** Postmaster General Megan Brennan paid a visit to the American Catalog Mailers' forum in Washington, tossed aside her notes, and invited the catalogers in the room to air their concerns. The interchange was refreshing, though not surprising. Catalogers wanted to know why the Postal Service couldn't just tear all the red tape off of rates and let catalog volumes and mail revenues flourish. Brennan agreed with a lot of what they had to say, but reminded them, in essence, that unsnarling red tape and process delays is what she does for a living. Brennan began by telling the group that one of her chief goals was to engage with key stakeholders in an effort to find ways to help the mailing industry grow in an increasingly digital age. To that end--despite the financial pressures still mounting on the Postal Service absent legislative relief--Brennan said her current budget includes \$2 billion in capital spending compared to only \$700 million last year. "The reality is that we have 35 cents in assets for every dollar of liability. That's not sustainable," Brennan said. "Innovation is key for us. How can we give print that digital reflection? What can we do to grow catalogs?"


 **Direct Marketing News:** Postal Service VP of sales Cliff Rucker this morning expressed hope that the 2015 slate of price promotions will kick off as scheduled in May. Registration periods for the Earned Value and Emerging Technology promotions were to have begun April 1, but none of the four promotions on this summer's calendar has received approval from the Postal Regulatory Commission. "We are going to try to resolve at the next board of governors meeting why we can't separate the promotions from the rate approvals," Rucker told members of the American Catalog Mailers Association at their annual forum in Washington. "I'm asking the board to make a resolution to have the promos go on as planned. If you keep it separate, you don't interrupt their momentum." Rucker also voiced the opinion that the traditional six-month window for promotions is too short to elicit maximum participation. "In the future, we need to run them for one to two years to give companies an opportunity to get in and get out. By the time some are ready to jump in, the promotions are gone," Rucker said.

 **PBS.org:** The much ballyhooed courier of the future and, according to the Amazon, the near future, the home delivery drone. Now, package transport technology has been speeding up for quite some time, from the mule to the railroad to the Pony Express to Federal Express. But suddenly there's an explosion of same-day or sooner delivery ventures. In December, Amazon premiered Prime Now, a new perk of the \$99-a-year prime subscription. In four cities and counting, one-hour delivery costs \$8. Wait two hours, and you pay nothing. Next to launch? Drone delivery. Get your package within minutes. And where Amazon rushes in, Google fears not to tread.

 **At the Postal Regulatory Commission: Postal Regulatory Commission NOTICES Meetings:** Modifications to Proposal Nine , 19370-19371 [2015-08216] [\[TEXT\]](#)


 **Cato Institute:** For more than a century, the federal government has pursued a misguided witch hunt against perceived monopolies in the private sector. But in a glaring hypocrisy, Congress has long protected one of the nation's largest businesses against competition. The legal monopoly conferred on the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is a relic. Government-run mail makes no sense in our email-dominated economy, and other nations are showing that postal privatization works. If the centuries-old Royal Mail can be privatized, then so can our USPS.


April 9, 2015


 **INDUSTRY ALERT** *USPS Shipping Products and Services Webinar Series April 14, 2015, 11a.m. EDT* – USPS Package Intercept Join us as the Postal Service continues to host its series of informational webinars on a variety of products and services. The webinars will focus on service enhancements, features, benefits, how to get started, and onboarding information to acquire the knowledge and skills to effectively use the service. Tuesday, April 14, 2015 at 11a.m. EDT – USPS Package Intercept USPS Package Intercept service provides a method for customers to authorize redirection of any mailable domestic mailpiece with a USPS tracking barcode. Speaker: Derek Hatten, Product Development Specialist Sr. Participant information is provided below: Dial-in: (866) 381-9870 Conference ID: 17345093 Attendee Direct URL: <https://usps.webex.com/usps/onstage/g.php?MTID=e051da08f11b19145482c6fc72cbf0737>


Attention Postal One! Users:


- **PostalOne!® Release 40.0.7.0 Production Deployment-** PostalOne! Release 40.0.7.0 will deploy on Thursday Apr 9, 2015 between 5:00PM Central and 7:00PM Central. This release is intended to address several known issues. The PostalOne! system will remain available during the patch. There is no mandatory Mail.dat® client download required.
- **PostalOne! Release 40.0.7.0 Deployment to Test Environment for Mailers (TEM)** will also occur on Thursday Apr 9, 2015 between 5:00PM CT and 7:00PM CT. TEM will remain available during the release. TEM validation will occur tomorrow Friday Apr 10, 2015 between 9:00AM CT and 11:00AM CT.


 **The Connection:** The Law Enforcement Commendation Certificate and Medal were presented to Chief Inspector Guy Cottrell of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service at the George Washington Chapter meeting of the Sons of the American Revolution on March 14. #The award was presented by chapter President Dwight E. Whitney, Ph.D., at the banquet luncheon meeting held at the Belle Haven Country Club. Paul Wagoner, vice chairman of the chapter's awards committee assisted in the presentation.

 **News Weekly:** Some postal services, such as the United States Post Office, are lumbering dinosaurs, which cost taxpayers billions of dollars in subsidies to provide numerous services, including distributing pension funds. The U.S. Post Office, even though it enjoys a monopoly on deliveries where post boxes are marked "U.S. Mail", faces stiff competition in parcel deliveries from Universal Parcel Service and FedEx. One would have to say that the old model is broken; but it is very demanding on political willpower to let an enterprise employing hundreds of thousands of people go to the wall. The U.S. Post Office is the third largest civilian employer in the United States after the U.S. government and Walmart, the world's biggest retailer. Compared to the U.S. Post Office, Australia Post is doing quite well. To survive as an organisation, it must innovate. Australia Post has a monopoly on letter deliveries, but it is a monopoly it doesn't really want. Australia Post management is now proposing a \$1 stamp fee for rapid mail-delivery and a reduced fee for slower second-class mail. The problem with this is it will give mail-users an increasing incentive to turn to other forms of communication in order to maintain contact with their correspondents. A related problem is that, under this proposed scheme, Australia Post's fixed costs would be spread over fewer and fewer letters. This would fairly quickly make mailing a letter become exorbitantly costly.

 **What They Think:** Greg Salzman, President of Chicago-based Aleyant, would not normally be considered a political activist, but he got involved in a great program put together by NPES and PIA and found it to be a good use of his time. Print's Voice is planning its 2015 Capitol Hill Fly-In for June 2-3. During the event, members of NPES, PIA and allied industry associations will convene in Washington, D.C. to bring top priority graphic communications industry business concerns directly to their elected representatives and other congressional leaders. There's still time to register. What's It All About? In its 5th year, PRINT'S VOICE has grown into a signature event that brings printers and suppliers together for a powerful program of public policy education, issue advocacy, interaction with Members of Congress and social events on Capitol Hill. During this year's PRINT'S VOICE 15 Capitol Hill Fly-In participants will advocate for: Restructuring and revitalizing the U.S. Postal System Curtailing abusive "patent troll" practices Reducing burdensome government over-regulation Preserving pro-growth business tax policy, and Strengthening U.S. exporters' competitiveness in international trade.


 **Post & Parcel:** Lithuania Post has pledged to increase wages for its lowest-paid staff from this month, with a EUR 1m addition to the company salary fund. The state-owned postal service said around 3,000 employees will benefit from a salary increase, including staff running post offices as well as customer service staff, mail delivery staff, sorting staff and operators. The money will be paid as a basic salary increase, rather than a bonus.


 **Financial Times:** UK Mail, the British postal business, has delivered the unwelcome news that a boost to its parcels business following the collapse of rival City Link has created a rise in operating costs that will hurt its sales and profits this year. The post, parcels and logistics company has said that its full-year and fourth quarter financial performance will hit the lower end of analysts' expectations after its rose unexpectedly following a surge in demand for its services. UK Mail explained that, partly due to City Link's collapse, it had seen an increase in parcel volumes that went above what it was able to handle, resulting in an increase in costs.


 [Financial Times](#): Tuesday's announcement that FedEx of the US is planning a €4.4bn takeover of the Netherlands' TNT Express highlights the delicate economics behind such operations. Both FedEx and UPS have struggled with the shift from focusing on serving mainly clusters of high-volume corporate customers to delivering ecommerce packages to widely dispersed consumers. These challenges pushed TNT Express, despite it controlling 12 per cent of the European economy and express parcel markets, to a €195m net loss for 2014. FedEx hopes by building scale in Europe to benefit from feeding extra parcel volume into facilities such as TNT's air cargo hub in Liege, Belgium.


 [From the Federal Register](#):


Postal Service	
NOTICES	
Meetings; Sunshine Act ,	
19096 [2015-08241]	[TEXT] [PDF]
19096 [2015-08242]	[TEXT] [PDF]

 [Postal Technology International](#): Research conducted by Royal Mail has shown that consumers in the UK have developed certain behavioral traits when buying and returning goods online. The research was conducted to coincide with the postal operator's new Tracked Returns service that allows shoppers to easily print off a returns label and monitor the progress of their item back to the retailer. The four main behavioral traits are: the returns addict – someone who orders online frequently, safe in the knowledge that they can return products for free if they are unsatisfied; the duplicate dealer – shoppers who order the same items of clothes in multiple sizes to ensure the best fit; the bargain hunter – generally young city dwellers aged from 18 to 34 who continue to look for the best deal online even after a product has arrived; and the swap shoppers – who use easy online returns to change unwanted gifts.

 [Postal Technology International](#): ipostparcels, part of the UK Mail Group, has launched its new Depot-to-Depot service which aims to provide a cost effective solution for consumers and SMEs to send and receive parcels. The Depot-to-Depot service allows customers to drop a parcel at their local depot with the recipient collecting the parcel from a designated depot the following day. The recipient will receive a notification once the parcel has been shipped, advising them of the chosen destination depot and the date the parcel will be available for collection.

 [Biz News](#): The SA Post Office's (Sapo) annual rates increase has occurred without much publicity both through the media and at Post Offices around South Africa. SA postal services, having hiked postage prices, has also released special stamps to raise awareness on animal poaching in southern Africa. Photo taken from Facebook. The increases took effect on April 1, with most basic postal services increasing by between 30c and 70c. Sapo did not publish any press release and its rate card is not easily visible on its website, while there are allegedly no brochures in Post Offices around South Africa. Small ordinary mail increased from R3 to R3.30, medium mail from R5.95 to R6.55 and large mail from R7.30 to R8. In one of the major changes to its rates card, Sapo cancelled its popular econoparcel option, increasing that size of mail's price from R22.80 to R40.90. Fin24 user Paul Knight alleged that Sapo had not even informed its staff. But Sapo told Fin24 that Post Office staff did receive a message on the point-of-sale system before the service was suspended.

 [Times Live](#): The prolonged postal strike last year negatively affected 63% of sellers on South Africa's largest online marketplace, according to the 2015 bidorbuy shipping survey results. "Hardest hit were the small business owners, who find it difficult to compete with larger retailers and are concerned that the uncertainty of reliable delivery spells disaster for their online businesses," bidorbuy said in a statement. Of 1,137 sellers who took part, 66.5% sell regularly on the South African online marketplace, while 33.5% sell from time to time. Sellers on bidorbuy range from small one-man businesses through to large retailers. The sellers who were affected by last year's strike estimate their losses at between 20% and 70%.


 [New York Times](#): The Postal Service said Wednesday that it had no plans to reissue a stamp honoring Maya Angelou that features a quotation from a book by another author. The quotation "A bird doesn't sing because it has


an answer, it sings because it has a song," has often been attributed to Ms. Angelou, the poet and author who died last year at age 86, but it is actually from a 1967 book of poems by Joan Walsh Anglund, a writer of children's books. Postal Service officials said they had not heard of Ms. Anglund's book, "A Cup of Sun," until asked about it by The Washington Post, which published an article about the stamp on Monday. Ms. Anglund, 89, told The Post that she was a fan of Ms. Angelou's and hoped that the stamp would be successful.


April 8, 2015

At the Postal Regulatory Commission:


- PI2015-1 Comments of the Association for Postal Commerce, Idealliance, and National Association of Presort Mailers
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92001/PCOM-IDEA-NAPM PI2015-1.pdf>
- PI2015-1 Public Representative Comments Concerning Service Performance Measurement Systems for Market Dominant Products
http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92005/PI2015-1_PR_Comments_Final.docx
http://www.prc.gov/docs/92/92005/PI2015-1_PR_Comments_Final.pdf
- PI2015-1 Initial Comments of American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/91/91995/APWU 0100 Comments to PRC.pdf>


 **Office of the Inspector General:** The Postal Service used good business sense when consolidating rural delivery operations at two rural North Carolina facilities, but the agency overstated the amount of money it would save, says a recently released USPS inspector general report. In July 2012, USPS consolidated rural delivery carrier operations at the Indian Trail post office with carrier operations at the Monroe, NC Carrier Annex. The offices were eight miles apart in the Mid-Carolinas District, the report says, and the consolidation increased rural carrier operations at the Monroe Carrier Annex from 37 routes and 34 carriers to 56 routes and 51 carriers, the report (pdf) says. The carriers deliver mail to more than 69,000 people and service over 34,000 delivery points. The consolidation worked because no employees lost their jobs and it had minimal community impact. But the IG says USPS did overestimate the cost savings of the consolidation. The IG estimates that USPS saved \$27,554, which is \$28,790 less than management's estimate of \$56,344.


 **Business Wire:** The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has issued a Complaint against the Postal Service alleging that it violated federal labor law by failing to bargain with the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA) and provide information to the NRLCA concerning last year's massive Postal Service data breach. The Complaint, issued on March 31, stems from an unfair labor practice charge filed by the NRLCA on November 19, 2014. The 2014 Postal Service "cyber intrusion" involved hackers who obtained unauthorized access to large amounts of sensitive information about Postal employees. The Postal Service has admitted it knew about the breach for months before notifying the NRLCA, other Postal unions and the public. It is the NRLCA's contention that former USPS Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe's deliberate decision to keep this information from Postal employees and to respond to the crisis without the involvement of the NRLCA or other unions prevented Postal employees from immediately acting to monitor and protect their private information. As part of its remedy, the NLRB General Counsel is demanding that the Postal Service post notices about the violations and its obligation to follow the law in all post offices with rural letter carriers. Also, the NLRB General Counsel is demanding that a high-level management representative record a reading of the notice and post it on the Postal Service's Lite Blue website for all employees to see. Finally, the NLRB General Counsel is demanding that the Postal Service bargain with the NRLCA "for a minimum of 15 hours a week until an agreement or lawful impasse is reached or until the parties agree to a respite in bargaining."

 **Direct Marketing News:** 2007 was the year the catalog nearly faced extinction. The newly passed Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act was not yet in force, and the Postal Service used its old powers to levy a crippling price increase on catalog mailers. Within three years some 7,000 catalogs ceased publication and mail volume took a nose-dive from 25 billion pieces a year to under 4 billion. The reason: Catalogers had little to no juice on Capitol Hill. At yesterday's annual forum of the American Catalog Mailers Association, which was born out of that troubling time, its chairman cautioned catalogers not to be lulled back to sleep and surrender the foothold


they've secured on the Hill. "We face a [postal] board of governors inclined to capitulate to increases across all classes of mail. With the Marketplace Fairness Act, we're outgunned and outfunded by Amazon and Walmart," GiftTree.com president Martin McClannan (below) told the group. "Look for causes and opportunities to get involved. The industry was asleep in 2007, and it's incumbent upon us to remain awake, remain vigilant, and the easiest way to do that is to have some engagement [with legislators]."



 **Post & Parcel:** Omniva — the company formerly known as Estonian Post — said yesterday it has passed a significant milestone in its history. For the first time, the national postal operator in the Baltic Republic of Estonia has generated more of its sales from international mail and small parcels than domestic items. The achievement comes against a backdrop of declining letter volumes, and as the result of the state-owned company's investment in pursuing the growing e-commerce delivery market. Omniva said it significantly expanded its network of self-service parcel locker terminals in Estonia and Latvia during 2014, taking its total number of locations to 189, including 89 in Estonia. Use of the company's parcel machines increased by 38% year-on-year in Estonia, 198% in Latvia and 177% in Lithuania last year.


 **Business Recorder:** Pakistan Post has introduced a number of new computerized mail and financial services during recent past which are competing with private courier services. Senior official of the department told APP that Pakistan Post is providing a number of economical services to meet the present day requirement of postal clientele especially commerce and industry. "Pakistan Post having country wide network where others simply cannot reach provides efficient, cost effective, secure services to the people and organizations," he said.


 **Washington Post:** Digital eyewear such as Google Glass is far from cheap, but the devices might help the financially struggling U.S. Postal Service save millions of dollars each year if its employees wear them. That's according to an analysis from the agency's inspector general's office, which released a report this week outlining various ways the USPS could apply "augmented reality" technology to its operations.


 **From the Federal Register:** **Postal Regulatory Commission NOTICES** Postal Products; Amendments , 18873 [2015-07975] [[TEXT](#)]

 **Reuters:** TNT Express Chairman Antony Burgmans said on Tuesday he is highly confident that the FedEx offer to buy TNT Express will not meet the same fate as a bid from UPS which was blocked by European regulators in 2013. "This is a much simpler deal," he told a news conference in Amsterdam. "We've pored over this in all detail and we feel very confident. Last time we thought it was doable, but complex, but this time we are as certain as can be in life that this deal will close in Brussels."


 **Direct Marketing:** PRC Chief Robert Taub on the Near Future of the Postal Service 
http://media.dmnews.com/audios/117/urbanski_podcast_4215_29064.mp3

 **Reuters:** Royal Mail , the privatised postal group, is drawing up plans to increase the remuneration of its Chief Executive Moya Greene, which has remained the same since she joined the company in 2010, Sky News reported citing people familiar with the matter. Final discussion with leading stakeholders, including the British government, which holds a 30 percent stake in Royal Mail, were still to take place, but it was "likely" that Greene would be awarded a 5 percent increase to her 498,000 pounds (\$737,488) base salary, Sky News said.

 **InForum:** A new audit shows the U.S. Postal Service in North Dakota rarely met national service standards in recent years, and high employee turnover contributed to delayed mail delivery and excessive customer wait times. The audit was performed in response to a request from Sen. Heidi Heitkamp, D-N.D., who has asked residents to submit their concerns about mail delivery through her Fix My Mail campaign. Difficulty hiring and retaining employees in western North Dakota contributed to many of the complaints raised by customers, the audit found.

 **Washington Post:** The U.S. Postal Service on Tuesday released a new Maya Angelou stamp featuring a quote from a different author's book, propagating a popular misconception about the original source of the line. Nonetheless, the Postal Service moved forward with its release of the stamp at Tuesday's event, which featured

dignitaries such as first lady Michelle Obama, Oprah Winfrey and the poet Sonia Sanchez. USPS said it didn't know about Anglund's book until Monday, when a Washington Post article pointed out that the quote in question didn't originate with Angelou. "Had we known about this issue beforehand, we would have used one of [Angelous's] many other works," USPS spokesman Mark Saunders said in an e-mail on Monday. The release of the stamp comes less than four years after another fumbled attempt to honor an historic African-American figure. Controversy erupted in 2011 over an abbreviated quote on the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial that critics thought would make the civil-rights leader appear immodest.

 **Federal Times:** The Postal Service wants to build a next-generation delivery fleet that will help the agency adapt to a rapidly changing world and better serve its customers. The vehicles would need to last at least 20 years, carry a minimum of 1,500 pounds and pass all safety and emissions requirements across the country. The Postal Service wants to cater to the increasing demands of its customers — who are ordering more packages and asking for more detailed delivery information — by improving the connectivity of the delivery drivers to Postal Service distribution centers. Each vehicle could have a dashboard screen redirecting drivers if customers decide the package needs to go somewhere else or dynamic routes could be downloaded into the vehicle each day to allow the Postal Service to deliver packages faster and more efficiently.

April 7, 2015




PostCom Members!! The latest issue of [PostCom's Postal Executive Summary](#) is available online.





The latest issue of [Postal Technology International](#) is now available online.




PostCom welcomes its newest member: [Aflac](#) 1932 Wynnton Road Columbia, GA 31999 Contact: [Jim Jackson Senior Project Manager](#)


 **Press Release:** Ramesh Ratan, CEO of Bell and Howell, has announced that Vice President and Chief Technology Officer Brian Bowers has been elected to the Board of Directors of the National Association of Presort Mailers. Bowers is a recognized expert in the sorting industry and will serve a two-year term on the board.


 **Government Executive:** In recent years, U.S. Postal Service management and lawmakers have spoken of the need to make changes that "reflect the reality" of a world in which the demand to send mail has diminished. To the USPS inspector general, however, reality could be the very dimension holding the agency back from improving services and cutting costs. The auditor suggested the Postal Service leverage "augmented reality" to grow business, an emerging technology that adds a "digital layer of information on top of real world images."


 **Post & Parcel:** Jersey Post is increasing its postal rates later this month, with the basic letter price rising by just over 2%. The Channel Island postal operator said the move was a response to the continuing financial impact of its declining letter volumes, along with the growing number of households to which it has to deliver five days per week. Local letter rates for the first 100g will rise by a penny (2.17%), to 47p, from Thursday 24 April. Letters going to the UK mainland, the Isle of Man and other Channel Islands will also rise by a penny for the first 100g, to 57p (a 1.78% increase). European letter rates (20g letter) will rise by 2p, or 3.2%, to 64p. The international letter rate (10g) will rise by 3p, or 4.16%, to 75p. Price changes took account of a 1.3% rate of inflation as of December 2014.


 **The Local:** As many as 7,000 French post offices in cities around the country are to find a new home in supermarkets, according to reports on Tuesday, as the state-run service seeks to make €500 million in savings. La Poste, the state-run French postal service, is lining up to move 7,000 post offices in urban areas and into supermarkets. Thousands of branches in the country's biggest cities like Lyon, Bordeaux and even Paris will be relocated to supermarkets by the year 2020. The modernisation of the firm's urban presence would result in savings of €500 million. Under the new scheme, supermarket staff would be able to carry out basic postal services, but La Poste's banking arm would remain separate and have its own offices. The good news for customers is that opening hours would be extended to mirror the hours of supermarkets. La Poste is under pressure to make cost-cutting

measures after the Cour des Comptes, the accountants for French public services, set the postal service a target to decrease the number of its offices from the current 9,692 to about 3,000 while maintaining its 17,000 points of contact across France. This modernisation process is a response to the sharp decrease in the number of letters sent and the rise of online postal services.


 **eCommerceBytes**: While product returns are a problem for online sellers, one business's headache is another's opportunity. The USPS Office of Inspector General (OIG) pegged the U.S. returns business for shipping carriers at \$3 billion annually and said it's expected to approach \$4 billion by 2016. The OIG report noted that the Postal Service has been developing a "compelling suite of returns products."


 **Bloomberg**: FedEx Corp. is in discussions to acquire financially struggling Dutch logistics company TNT Express NV to expand package deliveries in Europe, people familiar with the matter said. An agreement may be announced this week, said one of the people, who asked not to be identified because the details are private. Talks are continuing, and it's still possible no accord may be reached, the people said. TNT's market value as of April 2 was 3.29 billion euros (\$3.6 billion). The planned acquisition comes more than two years after FedEx competitor United Parcel Service Inc. scrapped its own bid to purchase TNT after European regulators moved to block the deal. Adding TNT will bolster the European air and ground network for FedEx, the operator of the world's largest cargo airline. Expansion in Europe is one pillar of Chief Executive Officer Fred Smith's 2012 plan to boost profit by \$1.7 billion.

 **Forbes**: The Netherlands-based TNT Express accepted a friendly \$4.8 billion bid for all of its shares by Fedex FDX +0.27% Corp on Tuesday as it aims to uphold a quality and sustainable logistics operation in a cut-price environment dominated by giant global clients such as Amazon.com AMZN +1.24% Inc and other online retailers.

 **Chicago Tribune**: The news that the U.S. Postal Service was honoring Maya Angelou, poet, author and civil rights advocate, with her own "forever" stamp was welcomed by her fans. Angelou, who died last year, was a cultural icon and mother figure to a generation of writers. Jabari Asim, associate professor of writing, literature and publishing at Emerson College in Boston, was excited. Until he read the quote on the Angelou stamp: "A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer, it sings because it has a song." Funny thing, he had always thought the quote came from Joan Walsh Anglund, the prolific children's book author. Asim, a former editor for The Washington Post's Book World, had seen the quote attributed to Angelou on social media but was highly skeptical. The Internet is full of misattributions. But the Postal Service?

April 6, 2015


 **Office of the Inspector General: [Driving Toward Success](#)** --DRIVE is a portfolio of strategic initiatives the Postal Service is implementing to meet ambitious performance goals and close its \$20 billion financial gap. Each initiative is made of specific projects, goals, and milestones all leading toward a broad, overarching goal. The Postal Service began its DRIVE initiatives in 2011. So, how are the DRIVE initiatives working out? Well, the 19 initiatives are in various stages of development, funding, and implementation, and the Postal Service has about \$2 billion in available capital to support all of them. The Postal Service said it generated \$4.9 billion in new sales opportunities and cut \$868 million in costs through DRIVE. It also reported that it has revitalized its Priority Mail package service and reduced its facilities footprint by more than 3 million feet. We've been keeping an eye on this process and have completed three DRIVE audits. Our reports looked at overall management of DRIVE ([DP-AR-13-008](#)), Initiative 6 ([DP-AR-14-001](#)), which aims to improve employee availability, and Initiative 42 ([DP-AR-14-005](#)), which focused on marketing new and existing services.


 **Federal Times**: A budget resolution that ups federal employee pension contributions and cuts the federal workforce is on the fast track for passage. Both the Senate and the House versions would increase federal employee pension contributions to six percent or more of salaries. The House version would also cut the federal workforce by 10 percent through attrition and increase Postal Service employee contributions to their health insurance premiums. The budget proposal also decreases the rate of return on the Thrift Savings Plan's government securities fund (G Fund) and encourages the elimination of the Federal Employee Retirement System annuity supplement.


At the Postal Regulatory Commission:


- **RM2015-2 Order No. 2425 - Notice and Order Concerning Technical Meeting**
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/91/91985/Order%20No.%202425.docx>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/91/91985/Order No. 2425.pdf>


"A technical meeting will be held in this docket on Tuesday, April 14, 2015, at 1:00 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), in the Commission's main conference room. The purpose of this meeting is to allow Commission staff to review modifications to Proposal Nine and their impact on supporting financial workpapers with United States Postal Service personnel. The technical meeting is open to interested persons."

 **Federal News Radio:** Over the past three decades, Congress has passed and proposed several pieces of legislation designed to make it easier for deployed military members to vote. But a large group of lawmakers suspects that military and overseas voters are still being disproportionately disenfranchised, and recent research appears to support their concerns. On Wednesday, the members of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee sent a unanimous, bipartisan letter to the Government Accountability Office asking for a new review of the Federal Voting Assistance Program, the DoD office in charge of helping military members and civilians living abroad cast their ballots. The committee notes that GAO has issued several reports on FVAP since 2001, but says that "continued management attention to FVAP still remains a priority." Most of the worries expressed in the letter are based on statistics from the 2008 presidential election cycle — for instance, 33 percent of the absentee ballots sent to overseas voters never made it back to elections officials, and 22 percent of voters who requested ballots never got them. In Wednesday's letter, the oversight committee hints at concerns that recent relaxations to the Postal Service's delivery standards could make matters worse, and asks GAO to study whether the 45-day deadlines for mailing ballots need to be moved back even further.


 **A presentation by Gene Del Polito**, President of the Association for Postal Commerce, at the Brookings Institution on March 25th at a panel discussion regarding "The Future of the Postal Service."


 **The Hindu:** Employees under the banner of the National Federation of Postal Employees and the Federation of National Postal Organisations have expressed concern over moves by the Central government to privatise the postal sector. In protest against the move, postal employees and their family members are organising a human chain here on April 7.

 **CNN:** Even if corporations can be held criminally liable, should a courier service like FedEx be held liable for "possessing" what bad guys may send through the service? The answer, according to FedEx, is not just "No," but a "No" so conclusive that this case should never see a courtroom. The company maintains that it is innocent. It has a point.

 **Dead Tree Edition:** A slow appeals court, delays in the usual inflation-based rate increase, and the end of the exigent surcharge could converge to create a wild ride for postal rates during the next few months.


April 5, 2015



 **Financial Express:** The Department of Posts is incurring a loss of over Rs 7 per postcard and about Rs 5 per inland letter as the revenue earned is far lower than the actual cost. As per the 2013-14 figures of the Department of Posts (DoP), the average cost of a postcard is 753.37 paise while the revenue is 50 paise, whereas for inland letter the cost is 748.39 paise and the revenue earned is 250 paise. Most of the services of the postal department are incurring losses barring competition postcard, letter and book post of periodicals.


 **International Business Times:** A total of 33,083 unclaimed mails lying beneath the dust gathered in the last three years will soon be put out for auction as the true claimants have not yet shown up at the Returned Letter Office of


the postal department in Delhi. The thousands of mails and couriers lying unattended at the post office include jewellery, watches, cell phones, cameras, books, imitation jewellery and stationary items. Of these 33,083 unclaimed mails, 8,070 are from 2012, 11,938 from 2013 and 13,075 of them are from 2014, according to an RTI response from the postal department to PTI. These mails are lying for years and months now as the department failed to deliver it to either the sender or the recipient. If no one comes to claim their parcels or mails, the department will put them up for auctioning soon following the law under Rule 435 of the P&T Manual that allows auctioning of parcels/articles which remain unclaimed.

April 4, 2015

 [New Indian Express](#): A plea to sanction a fleet of dedicated aircraft for the Postal Department to deliver e-commerce shipments was made by M S Ramanujan, Chief Postmaster General (CPMG) of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala postal circles. "With the booming air cargo business, we need dedicated aircraft for the transfer of air mail cargo," he said. The department has been facing hurdles in using private airlines and Air India for the purpose, he added. He later told Express that three freight aircraft had been taken on lease from Air India for a four-year period, which expired in 2010. Since then, consignments booked through the department have been facing delays as private airlines and Air India gave priority to human organs being shipped for transplantation and transportation of perishable goods like flowers and vegetables as they are high value goods Ramanujan said. "These offer airlines high premium and so articles booked by the Postal Department are offloaded and dispatched later. This results in delayed delivery to customers," he said.

  [AMEInfo](#): A workshop and symposium on latest trends in EMS — the Express Mail Service offered by postal operators around the world — organized by the Universal Postal Union (UPU) concluded with the Dubai Declaration that urged the postal sector in the Arab region to take advantage of the global growth of e-commerce by joining the UPU's E-Commerce Special Delivery Program (ECOMPRO). The Declaration called for enhancing the customer experience, meeting the requirements of customs and security authorities regarding electronic data for parcels and EMS shipments through improved tracking systems and adopting the manifest system for electronic data exchange between postal operators and customs authorities.

 [Adelaide Now](#): It's been lovely to see the Easter spirit alive and well this year. I especially like the lengths Australia Post has gone to in an effort to treat us all like Bunnies. In particular, may I say congratulations to the egghead responsible for sending an entire mail-out of "Letters to Householders" around the country, explaining that "letters" as a form of communication were dead. Simply brilliant. The letter explained, through a wonderful combination of gobbledeygook, doublespeak and obfuscation that "letters" as we know them are on their death bed, currently hooked up to a life-support machine called the "taxpayer", but unless we all pay more money they have zero chance of resurrection. It's Australia Post's way of using blackmail to pay for regular mail. Or, as they put it, the new "non-urgent" service. If you're slightly confused, and who wouldn't be, let me try to translate. The bottom line looks like serving up a stamp at \$1 for the non-urgent service and north of that for the new, or should I say old, renovated service now called "priority".

 [Adelaide Now](#): Australia Post seeks the stamp of approval for new postal charges and services. We'll pay more for less. Instead of the 70c stamp for a letter with (sort of) next-day delivery, Australia Post will charge \$1 for the regular service and \$1.50 for a priority service and this is expected to increase to \$2. The priority service will mean (sort of) next-day delivery and the regular service may take up to five days. Australia Post lost \$1.6 billion in mail-service revenue over the past six years and threatens to lose \$6.6 billion over the next decade. There's only one problem: the salary of Ahmed Fahour, Australia Post's managing director and CEO. We are expected to cover the losses of the postal service while Mr Fahour reportedly earns (are you sitting down?) \$4.8 million a year in salary and bonuses. That's \$92,307 a week or \$18,461 a day for a five-day week or \$2307 and hour. He's the highest-paid public servant in Australia — possibly the world. He's in good company at Australia Post with the top 10 executives earning more than a total of \$20 million a year and there are 409 Australia Post executives earning more than \$195,000 a year. In 2013, Australia Post workers received a 1.5 per cent pay rise while Mr Fahour had a 66 per cent pay rise. Later Mr Fahour sacked 900 postal workers.


 **From the Federal Register:**

Postal Regulatory Commission	
NOTICES	
New Postal Products ,	
18445-18446 [2015-07616]	[TEXT] [PDF]
18446 [2015-07728]	[TEXT] [PDF]

April 3, 2015


 **At the Postal Regulatory Commission: Docket No. R2013-11 [Second Response Of The United States Postal Service To Order No. 2411, On Plans For Future Reports](#)**

In accordance with Order No. 2411, issued on March 24, 2015, the Postal Service hereby submits its "plan to ensure future submissions, including the quarterly reports required by Order No. 2075 and bi-weekly estimates required by Order No. 2319, are timely." The quarterly report filed on March 27, 2015, shows that, since the exigent surcharge was implemented, **the Postal Service has collected \$1.985 billion** in cumulative surcharge revenue.² Assuming Quarters 2, 3, and 4 surcharge revenue amounts are similar to what they were in FY2014, **the revenue limit of \$3.238 billion would be reached during FY2015, Quarter 4.**

 **Breitbart:** What is the root of the Postal Service's trouble? Regrettably, it is trying to expand into new business ventures, many of which lack proven financial sustainability. Most of its primary services, however, have consistently succeeded. Mail delivery is profitable, yet standard mail flats and parcels (services where competition is intense) are losing money. This prompts legitimate queries about the intertwined financial relationship of the successful products –which are only provided by Postal Service – and other items where the agency is one of many suppliers. The broader systemic questions lie in where the Postal Service's dominance in the market may end and where competition begins. In a recent study, this matter came under close examination, finding that the Postal Service's monopoly advantages involve \$18 billion in annual subsidies. Systemically, a lack of limitations in place for simultaneously operating in competitive and non-competitive spheres, as the paper points out, results in diminished quality of service and accuracy in pricing that is needed for providing products that consumer consistently demand.

 **At the Postal Regulatory Commission: Positions Available:**

Title	Vacancy Number	Closing Date
Econometrician	PRC 08-15	4/24/2015
Deputy Director, Accountability Division	PRC 07-15	4/24/2015
Attorney Advisor/ Attorney Advisor, Associate	PRC 05-15	4/15/2015
Legal Assistant	PRC 06-15	4/10/2015

 **Times of India:** The government is looking at setting up a Postal Bank of India which will have a structure that is distinct from other payments banks and will compete with universal banks. The new line of activity for the centuries-old department of posts is expected to help leverage the institution's valuable real estate infrastructure and distribution and, at the same time, further the government's plan of financial inclusion.

 **Times of India:** The postman will now deliver your Amazon orders a tad faster. From April 6, he'll be at your doorstep the same day that you place the order. The Karnataka Postal Circle has collaborated with the e-commerce

major to deliver shipments to all Bengaluru PIN codes. They'll be handed over to the Amazon booking centre at 10am and delivered to respective addresses through nodal delivery centres by 8pm.

At the Postal Regulatory Commission: Cost Coverages For Classes, Subclasses And Products

- [PRC-LR-ACR2014/1 - FY 2014 Postal Service's Product Finances](#)
- <http://www.prc.gov/docs/91/91862/PRC-LR-ACR2014-1.zip>
- <http://www.prc.gov/sites/default/files/Financial Report 2014.pdf>

Office of the Inspector General:

- [Hardware Inventory Management–Greater Boston District March 25, 2015 Audit Report](#)

What The OIG Found. Management does not have an accurate inventory of hardware assets connected to the Postal Service network. Specifically, management could not physically locate 49 of the 182 (27 percent) active systems sampled at the three facilities we visited. In addition, 33 network assets or 18 percent of our sample that we physically located had inaccurate and incomplete data in the Asset Inventory Management System. We also determined the inventory list of sensitive property (such as laptops, computers, and switches) is not reconciled with physical assets. These circumstances occurred primarily because the Postal Service does not have a process to effectively track all IT assets and enforce existing policy. We estimated about \$3.9 million for incomplete data in the Asset Inventory Management System and assets potentially at risk. Management needs an accurate and complete inventory to physically locate and disconnect a compromised or unauthorized device attached to the Postal Service network.

What The OIG Recommended. We recommended the Postal Service implement validation controls to the Asset Inventory Management System application and procedures to verify assets are authorized for connectivity before adding to the system. We also recommended management implement a scheduled inventory verification process for sensitive property and complete plans to prevent unauthorized devices from gaining access to the network.

- [North Dakota Postal Service Operations](#)

What The OIG Found. Found The Postal Service has taken action to improve mail service in North Dakota, such as hiring additional employees, detailing personnel to supplement the workforce, authorizing overtime, and adding retail units. However, more improvements can be made. Specifically, the Postal Service did not always timely process, deliver, and transport the mail in North Dakota. In addition, it lacked sufficient retail windows to meet demand and some box up-times (the posted time mail is available to the customer at their PO Box), were inaccurate. These conditions occurred because the Postal Service did not have an established contingency plan to address rapid changes in the population growth and staff turnover. We found that North Dakota's postal facilities lacked adequate mail processing equipment and processing floor space and sufficient delivery staff and retail operations. In addition, Postal Service mail received from FedEx at the Grand Forks, ND airport did not always allow for the timely transport of mail. Additionally, changes in box up-times were not always adequately communicated. Due to these operational challenges, the Postal Service in North Dakota rarely met national service standards. Furthermore, delivery staff was overworked, with rural carrier overtime increasing by 241 percent between fiscal years (FY) 2011 and 2014. Additionally, carriers returning from their routes after 5 p.m. ranged from a low of 23 percent to a high of 56 percent between FYs 2012 through 2014. Finally, customers experienced excessive wait times at some retail locations.

What The OIG Recommended. We recommended the district manager, Dakotas District, install additional mail processing equipment, consolidate Fargo operations, develop a contingency plan to

address staffing levels during periods of rapid economic growth or retraction and ensure accurate postings of box up-times. We also recommended the vice president, Network Operations, modify the transportation network.


- [Management Alert – Retail Systems Software Application Requirements \(Report Number IT-MA-15-002\)](#)


We recommend the vice president, Information Technology, direct the manager, St. Louis Information Technology Solutions Center, to: (1) Implement and provide training and instructions to the Retail Systems Software System Integration Test (SIT) team on the Technology Solutions Life Cycle Agile Scrum testing process, as well as the requirements in Handbook AS-805, Information Security, to ensure the team follows the process when developing SIT testing. We recommend the vice president, Engineering Systems, direct the manager, Delivery and Retail Technology, to: (2) Implement and provide training and instructions to the Retail Systems Software Customer Acceptance Test (CAT) team on the Technology Solutions Life Cycle Agile Scrum testing process, as well as the requirements in Handbook AS-805, Information Security, to ensure the team follows the process when developing CAT testing.

 **From the Federal Register:**

Postal Regulatory Commission	
RULES	
Update to Product Lists ,	
18117–18119 [2015–07680]	[TEXT] [PDF]
NOTICES	
New Postal Products ,	
18267–18268 [2015–07615]	[TEXT] [PDF]
18268 [2015–07678]	[TEXT] [PDF]
Postal Service	
NOTICES	
Product Changes:	
Parcel Select Negotiated Service Agreement ,	
18268 [2015–07667]	[TEXT] [PDF]
Priority Mail Express, Priority Mail, and First-Class Package Service Negotiated Service Agreement ,	
18269 [2015–07660]	[TEXT] [PDF]
Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement ,	
18268 [2015–07671]	[TEXT] [PDF]

April 2, 2015

 **Newsweek:** At most, 5 percent of all mail sent is personal correspondence. Magazines of all stripes (The Economist, the now sadly defunct Cat Fancy, etc.) are a mere 3.5 percent of what USPS delivers. More than half of all sent mail is advertising. Mail is what the Postal Service does and it no longer "binds the Nation.... through correspondence." Mail today is not a communications medium; it is a broadcast medium for businesses. Indeed, from a 21st century perspective, the USPS looks like a hopelessly retrograde enterprise.

 **Taipei Times:** Lawmakers yesterday accused Chunghwa Post of being a sweatshop after the Ministry of Labor found numerous violations of the Labor Standard Act in postal offices nationwide. Working conditions at the state-run company was under scrutiny at a meeting of the legislature's Transportation Committee yesterday following the

publication of a ministry report showing that 42.5 percent of Chunghwa Post's violations over the past three years involved failure to pay employees for working overtime or give them compensatory days off. Moreover, about 28 percent of the violations stemmed from the company's failure to provide attendance sheets for employees when they clocked in or out.



[Sen. Thomas Carper](#): "The report from the Postal Regulatory Commission confirms much of what we already know: the Postal Service continues to suffer unsustainable losses that threaten its long-term viability. According to the report, the Postal Service ended fiscal year 2014 with a net loss of \$5.5 billion, bringing its total net deficit since fiscal year 2007 to \$51.7 billion. The report also shows that despite modest gains in net operating income, volume, and revenue, the Postal Service does not have enough assets or liquidity to counter the ongoing decline of First Class Mail or make investments to help keep it competitive in the future, like modernizing its fleet of 190,000 aging vehicles and its 300 mail processing centers. For an institution that operates at the center of a \$1 trillion industry and employs over 7 million people, a financial outlook this bleak is alarming -- and shouldn't be ignored. The only way to alleviate the Postal Service's financial challenges and put it back on a path to solvency is for Congress to pass comprehensive postal reform legislation. While we were not successful last Congress, we made important progress. We need to continue our momentum and act on this critical issue early this year. Our economy still depends on a healthy and robust Postal Service. It's our duty to pave a fiscally sustainable path that will enable this American institution to thrive."

INDUSTRY ALERT [Mail Spoken Here April 2, 2015](#) -- Keeping up with all the news affecting the mailing industry can be a bit challenging at times, isn't it? Mail Spoken Here is brought to you by the Office of Industry Engagement and Outreach, Consumer and Industry Affairs; bringing you the latest news on mail coming from the Postal Service. It is our intent to provide an ongoing news recap of all mailing requirements, Federal Register notices, Postal Bulletin articles, and webinars. We'll keep you posted on any comment-period requirements, and let you in on upcoming events or changes to standards when the information is available.




[Fin24](#): Publishers big and small have suffered huge financial losses due to the operational issues facing the South African Post Office (Sapo) and, while they want answers from the regulator, they're now looking to a future without Sapo. Corporate publishers like Media24 and Times Media Group (TMG) as well as small business-to-business (B2B) publishers told Fin24 that their operations suffered huge financial losses due to the strike at Sapo, which battled to resume operations and was placed under administration due to financial constraints. "In the last 12 months, they just about bankrupted us," said Leisure Books general manager Lana Barnett. "Our losses ran into the millions."





Office of the Inspector General: [Can the Fleet Credit Card Program be Better Managed?](#) The Postal Service uses over 180,000 vehicles for delivery operations. Most of these vehicles are fueled regularly by a carrier during the day while on his or her assigned delivery route. Each vehicle has a fleet credit card the carrier uses to pay at the gas station. Fleet credit cards are managed at the Post Office or Station and the charges are reviewed on a regular basis to help ensure they are used for appropriate purchases. There are some tools in place to help identify potentially questionable purchases using fleet credit cards, such as purchases that are for high dollar amounts or fuel purchases for more gallons of fuel than the vehicle can hold. Our audit will evaluate how these cards and associated purchases are managed. In addition, we will try to determine whether there are ways to better manage these cards. What is the best way to ensure credit cards are used only for appropriate purchases? What other tools should be considered to improve the management of credit cards?




[Expatica](#): Postal workers in Germany carried out a second day of strikes in several regions Thursday, their trade union said, stranding millions of letters and thousands of packages. Ahead of the Easter holiday long weekend, the Verdi services union called industrial action in Berlin and the surrounding region of Brandenburg, as well as the western states of Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate, North Rhine-Westphalia and Saarland. Verdi is seeking a reduction of working hours for 140,000 Deutsche Post employees to 36 hours per week from 38.5 hours currently, at the same salary. It also opposes Deutsche Post plans to shift around 20,000 parcel delivery staff to contracts covered by logistics sector wage agreements.

 [Workers Compensation](#): On Jan. 14, the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Chicago North Area Office initiated an inspection of the mail sorting facility after receiving a complaint alleging unsafe working conditions. OSHA found workers were exposed to various electrical hazards and issued two repeated, four serious and one other-than-serious violation with proposed penalties of \$63,540. Investigators found workers were exposed to electrical hazards because electrical power taps were not used in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations and electrical equipment such as an industrial fan were not grounded properly, resulting in the two repeated violations.

 [The Hill](#): The Postal Regulatory Commission said in its annual financial report that USPS's \$1.4 billion operating profit in fiscal 2014 was its first in six years. USPS, its unions and other stakeholders applauded the operating profit when the service announced it last year. But the postal regulator reiterated on Tuesday that there wasn't much more the agency can do to streamline its operations.


 [Washington Post](#): Postal banking could make the postal system's troubles worse The problem with postal banking is a certain inherent tension between its policy objectives: Is the primary purpose to help low-income people, or is it to help the postal service make more money to offset the irreversible decline of its bread-and-butter business, first-class mail? Payday lenders don't charge high fees and interest, or encourage revolving credit, because they're evil. They do it because unsecured lending to borrowers who have no assets and little earnings is a highly risky business, and they have to compensate for those risks. These same costs and risks, more or less, would face the Postal Service, too. If it couldn't charge small-dollar borrowers enough to offset them, it would have to raise the money from other customers, like bulk mailers, or ordinary first-class letter-writers or, perhaps, taxpayers.


 [The Motley Fool](#): *"How Are FedEx Corporation and United Parcel Service, Inc. Shaping Up for 2015?"*


April 1, 2015


At the Postal Regulatory Commission:


The [Postal Regulatory Commission today released its second Financial Analysis report of the Postal Service's financial results and 10-K statement](#). The report was developed using information from the Postal Service's FY 2014 10-K and measured against its FY 2013 and 2014 Integrated Financial Plan; Cost and Revenue Analysis report, Cost Segments and Components report, and the Revenue, Pieces, and Weight report. In FY 2014, the Postal Service had a total net loss of \$5.5 billion. This is the Postal Service's eighth consecutive financial loss, bringing its total net deficit since FY 2007 to \$51.7 billion. The report notes that in FY 2014 the Postal Service recorded \$1.4 billion in net operating income, the first positive net operating income since FY 2008. This net operating income was primarily due to Market Dominant rate and surcharge increases implemented in the second quarter of FY 2014. First-Class Mail revenue increased 0.5 percent compared to FY 2013 and Standard Mail revenue increased 3.0 percent compared to FY 2013. The Postal Service was also able to reduce operating costs through a reduction in work hours and average hourly compensation in addition to reductions in purchased transportation costs. The Postal Service also increased its volume and revenue for Competitive products by more than 10 percent in FY 2014. However, those Competitive products only make up 2.0 percent of total volumes and generate a lower markup than First-Class Mail. The decline in First-Class Mail volumes continues to drive overall net income.


 [Post & Parcel](#): PostCon (not PostCom), the German mail company owned by Dutch postal operator PostNL, is restructuring its head office with plans to cut 140 jobs. The company known as TNT Post Germany until last year will be closing its administrative offices in Berlin and Hanover, it said this week. Restructuring will see more corporate management and sales operations shifted to the company's headquarters in Ratingen, near Düsseldorf. The company said it had a market share of around 8% in Germany, providing one of the largest alternative mail services in a country dominated by Deutsche Post.


 **From the Federal Register: Postal Regulatory Commission NOTICES** New Postal Products, 17516 [2015-07355] [\[TEXT\]](#)


 **Postal Technology International:** According to International Post Corporation's (IPC) UNEX results, the standard of postal services in Europe has exceeded European Union (EU) targets for a 17th consecutive year. The EU sets a target of 85% of intra-EU mail delivery within three days of posting and a reliability objective of 97% within five days. In 2014, 90.6% of international priority and first-class letter mail was delivered within three days of posting and 97.8% within five days. The results cover a total of 31 countries including the 28 EU member states together with Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. Herbert-Michael Zapf, president and CEO, IPC, said, "In the 20th anniversary year of the UNEX measurement, 2014 was the 17th consecutive year that the end-to-end performance for priority letter mail in Europe exceeded both the speed and reliability objectives set by the 1997 Postal Directive. "The consistent high level of performance demonstrates that postal operators continue to work hard to maintain the same reliable high-quality services for customers, even if letter mail volumes are under pressure."

 **Minneapolis Star Tribune:** The state Attorney General on Tuesday sued four companies for fraud after they allegedly sent Minnesotans false notices to renew magazine and newspaper subscriptions at exorbitant prices. The companies, all from Oregon, have been conducting the campaign nationwide with mailings that appear to be invoices for publications. The mailings quote renewal prices much higher than regular subscription rates. Some newspaper renewals are for \$499 for a one-year subscription, nearly double the regular rate. The fraudulent renewals have been occurring for several years. One company, known as United Publishers Network, has nearly 50 aliases, so the BBB aggregates them as Publishers Payment Processing. It has 13 unanswered complaints, six unresolved complaints and has an "F" rating with the bureau.

 **Tire Business:** Retreaders that supply tires to the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) are watching closely as the agency prepares to select vendors for a new commercial van to replace its current "Long Life Vehicles," (LLV) which have been in service more than 25 years. At stake is business valued at nearly \$12 million last year but which could require affected retreaders that use mold-cure systems to invest tens of thousands of dollars in new molds. That would be the case if the USPS should specify that newly designed vehicles use tires larger than the 14- and 15-inch diameter tires used now, which some observers consider a likely possibility. The USPS reported it procured in fiscal year 2013 more than 200,000 retreaded tires, in sizes 195/75R14 and 215/75R15, worth \$13.9 million. "The beads are pretty flimsy on the Long Life Vehicle tires, and they get a lot of abuse," Mr. Bozarth said. "But we can get them retreaded if they know how to dismount them."

 **MLive:** Taxpayers will save money and Michigan companies that rebuild automotive and truck parts will benefit from legislation sponsored by a bipartisan team of U.S. Sen. Gary Peters, D-Mich. and U.S. Rep. Bill Huizenga, R-Zeeland. "Encouraging the federal government to use less expensive remanufactured auto parts when repairing their vehicles helps save taxpayers money and supports remanufacturing suppliers in Michigan and across the country," said Peters, who appeared at North America Fuel Systems Remanufacturing on Tuesday, March 31. The bill encourages federal agencies to use remanufactured vehicle components such as engines, transmissions, alternators, and starters. The U.S. Postal Service and Department of Interior already give preference to remanufactured parts, according to Peters' staff. The bill cleared the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee unanimously last week and now awaits a vote before the full Senate. Huizenga has introduced companion legislation in the U.S. House.

 **BusinessTech:** The South African Post Office is set to launch a fleet of drones as it looks to a more effective mail delivery services following protracted strikes which have crippled the company. The post office has been given the all clear by the South African Civil Aviation Authority (Saca), to fly approximately 30 drones around Johannesburg and promises to deliver your mail within an hour of dispatch.

 **The New Daily:** Australians will soon be able to "mail" themselves to more than 50 destinations across the country under a new Australia Post program aimed at reversing its falling profitability. The scheme, to be called AirMale and AirFemale, will see the ailing postal service partner with a low-cost airline to deliver customers for a one-way fee of just \$35 to any airport in Australia serviced by the carrier. Jetstar, Virgin and Tiger Airways are all believed to be bidding for the partnership.



[Federal News Radio](#): The U.S. Postal Service's financial problems are widely known. The solutions are still in progress and may be years away. But the problems may not be management problems. Robert Shapiro is founder and chairman of Sonecon, and former Under Secretary of Commerce for Economic Affairs. On In Depth with Francis Rose, he said the Postal Service's problems may be incentive problems.